

John

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[0 : 0 0] trusting in the help of the Lord I would again ask your attention to the 10th chapter in the gospel of John and the 27th verse the gospel according to John the 10th chapter and the 27th verse my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me I want to try and link this word with the word that we were considering this morning as the Lord shall help me I feel that there is a very definite link you will remember that we were considering verse 10 this morning the thief that cometh not but for to steal to kill and to destroy and by contrast the Lord Jesus Christ who came expressly to give life

I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly one dear friend mentioned to me after the morning service that the thief comes as a thief and it is as well for us to remember this Satan is the father of thieves and so all that thieves have ever known they've learned from Satan and every subtlety subtlety and guile that a thief may use in doing his evil work Satan is the master of them all he knows how to be more subtle he is more full of guile than any thief that has ever lived upon this earth he is the master thief and so as I said this morning he comes before we even realize that he's there and he plays havoc in the lives of men and at times in the lives of the people of God in their thoughts and so on

Satan comes and he can do damage in our thinking even before we realize that he is present he can lead us astray so easily and a great deal of harm can be done before we even realize that the thief the robber the one who is the adversary of our souls is at work once again consequently we need to be constantly on guard we need to be constantly watching the Saviour said if the man if the husbandman had known at what time the thief would come he would have watched watch ye therefore I know that in that context he's speaking about his own coming again but we need to be constantly on the watch constantly on guard a verse of a hymn which was much upon my mind and I was going to read it this morning but didn't

I will read it now and what a wonderful word this is by way of warning the hymn writer says prone alas I am to wander in pursuit of earthly joys prone my fleeting hours to squander amongst the world's alluring toys now that really sums up in a few words much of what I was trying to say this morning we are prone to wander we are prone to while away our time to squander our hours our money and so on we are prone to squander these amongst the world's alluring toys and all of the while we are serving Satan and he is robbing us and then there is this prayer in the following verse let not earth with its devices steal my youth my best of days Lord preserve when sin entices make me shun its dangerous ways we need to pray that prayer every day of our lives indeed every hour of our lives that the Lord would keep us from being drawn away and enticed away by sin and the devices of the earth the devices of Satan whereby he steals and robs now

I want to notice also before we pass on to the verse that I have read as a text reverting back to verses 9 and 10 which we looked at this morning notice the balance that there is here I didn't emphasize this point this morning but I feel we must notice it particularly in our verse this afternoon the balance that we have in verses 9 and 10 I am the door by me if any man enter in he shall be saved if any man enter in he shall be saved in other words we can say this from scripture that Jesus is the door and that all may come but we know that only the lords will come because they only come as they are drawn by the holy spirit of God but my dear friends

[6 : 10] I say that because I would have none to despair oh if you feel the desire and the need to come seeking this salvation the door will never be closed against you that is an impossibility if you feel the desire and the need and the concern to come to enter in by this door that you may be saved it is the Lord that has put that desire in your heart and the door will never be closed against you there will never be a sinner perish who has sought salvation in Jesus Christ the thing is an impossibility now in balance notice that in verse 10 the Savior says I am come that they might have life he is specifically now saying that they might have life he does not say here that all might have life the Savior came that he might call his sheep and that his sheep might have life he came that he might call and redeem all of those whom the

Father had given him now notice how this is brought out again in the verse which I have read as a text this afternoon my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me now why did the Savior say this well we notice from the context that he was in Solomon's porch he was walking there at the feast of the dedication we're told that it was winter and the Jews came about him those Jews the Pharisees and the Sadducees that were so often trying to question the master and get him in a corner as it were they hoped to trip him up by some answer that he would give and they come at this time and they say how long does thou make us to doubt if thou be the Christ tell us plainly they wanted the Lord to say something so that they could accuse him of blasphemy they were continually doing this and how does the

Lord Jesus Christ answer he said well I told you and ye believe not the works that I do in my father's name they bear testimony of me in other words all of the miracles and the wonderful things that Jesus had done they testified as to who he was and many bore record and said that no man could do these things except he came from God they recognized that this was indeed the son of God and yet these Pharisees and Sadducees they would not receive him they would not acknowledge his works they would not accept him as the son of God and so they ask him if thou be the Christ tell us plainly and Jesus answers my works they testify as to who I am and then he goes on to say why it is that they do not believe now notice how solemn these words are but ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep as I said unto you you Pharisees and you

Sadducees you do not believe you do not recognize or accept who I am as the son of God you do not believe on my works because ye are not of my sheep and my dear friends I must say this afternoon to each one of you that if you believe not it is because you are not of his sheep now the Lord Jesus Christ was not saying here that none of these people would ever become one of his sheep he was saying that at this particular time they had not been made manifest and so I say to you any of you that do not believe at this particular time you are not of his sheep some of you maybe listen to these things and you just let them go out of one ear as they come in at the other and you attach no importance to them you say well we've heard all these things before we don't really accept them believe them nor feel any need or necessity for them and what does the scripture say about you it says this and if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost if you find no need and you feel no need for the gospel of

Jesus Christ it is because it is hid from you and it is hid from you because you are lost you do not believe because you are not of his sheep and I must say this that if you live and die like that you will be lost not only in time but for eternity and words cannot describe how awful that will be the bible gives us very graphic picture word pictures of what hell is like but even those must come short in describing the awfulness of being lost if you live and die feeling no need for the gospel it is because it is hid it is because you are lost it is because you are not of the saviour's sheep oh my dear friends how awful is your condition and if any here feels to be in that condition this afternoon

[12 : 59] I implore you to seek unto God that he would yet be gracious to you and open your eyes and show you these things even if you don't feel any need for them now even if you just think they are of no significance whatsoever I ask you to seek the Lord that he would reveal them to you that he would show you your need and to show you the preciousness of Jesus Christ because to live and to die without the knowledge of these things is awful beyond words to describe so my friends our chief concern must be do we believe but ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep well now how may we know if we believe and consequently are of his sheep what

Jesus goes on to tell us and he tells us very beautifully and very simply my sheep hear my voice these sheep then of the Lord Jesus they are his in the original Greek the wording is slightly different and it says something like this the sheep of mine I think there is a great emphasis there on the possession the sheep of mine they are the saviour sheep my sheep they are his by possession why are they his well first of all they are his because the father gave them to him notice verse 29 my father which gave them me is greater than all they are the saviour sheep because the father gave them to him when did the father give them to him well as we read the father gave them to him before the foundation of the world they were given to the lord jesus christ in eternity before ever the world was made or before ever any of them were born my sheep given him by the father before the world began and then we can also say that they are his sheep because he gave himself for them not only did the father give them to him but he gave his life for them in verse 11 we read

I am the good shepherd the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep the hireling he will run away when trouble comes but the good shepherd he will give his life for the sheep and the Lord Jesus Christ gave his life he came we have already read I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly and in order that they might have life the Lord Jesus gave his own life he died in his people's place he died upon the cross of Calvary to cleanse them from their sins oh how wonderful this thought is my sheep his because he purchased them he bought them with his own precious blood he died upon the cross to save them from their sins so that the apostle can say ye are not your own ye are bought with a price and what a tremendous price the saviour paid for these sheep as he gave his life for them he gave his life then for the sheep and you know the reason why he gave his life was because all of these sheep were lost all of them were lost by sin by nature all of them had gone away they had erred and strayed like lost sheep they had turned every one to his own way so the prophet

Isaiah says and the Lord hath laid on him on Jesus the iniquity of us all oh these sheep they are not sheep by nature they are made sheep as the Lord calls them by his grace or by nature they are vastly different but by his grace as he works in them he makes them his sheep we read in this verse that they follow him well they didn't follow him originally oh no as we were born into this world as I say we had nothing much of the characteristics of sheep we certainly had no concern or desire to follow the good shepherd but when the good shepherd comes and he deals with us then he makes us his sheep and we are told that his sheep follow him so then they are his because the father gave them to him they are his because he gave his life to save them from their sins now we must say that some here this afternoon are the

Lord's sheep some here this afternoon I trust a goodly number are among the Lord's sheep some of you have heard his voice some of you have been given that life you have received that life that the saviour came to give some of you have not some of you are not his sheep some of you are yet living your lives going your own way and with no real concern about these things as I have already said you are living in the world without God you are lost you are without hope as yet the gospel is hid from you but you know there is a wonderful verse here in the tenth of John concerning some of you I trust and it says this and other sheep

[20 : 32] I have which are not of this fold them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd oh what a wonderful thought that is what an encouragement this is for us to pray my friends to pray for those who has yet shown no evidence of having any desire after the things of God here is a scripture which is relevant to the present day and which still has to be completely fulfilled it hasn't been absolutely fulfilled yet and other sheep I have which are not of this fold them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice oh there's no question about it some of you here this afternoon you may say ah well these things we've heard them so often

I shall never be interested in these things no as soon as I have the opportunity I shan't listen to them anymore I'm determined to go my own way and live my own life I have no need no desire for them they will never have any effect upon me my dear friend you may feel like that you may say that now but if God by his grace begins to deal with you he can break the most stubborn hardened heart and you can think of some illustrations where this has happened I was reading only just the other day of Voltaire the great French writer who wrote volumes and volumes and volumes he died as an infidel and trying to explain away

God's word and the very existence of God and when he died he died not having fully completed the work that he set out to do that is not having written all of the books he intended to write he could never explain away God but it says that he died in knowing that his young assistant, an even more brilliant man apparently than Voltaire, would carry on his work.

And as that younger man, his name escapes me for the moment, as that younger man began to apply himself to the work of explaining away the Bible, God met with him.

And instead of becoming one who challenged the Word of God, by God's grace he became one who upheld it and supported it and devoted his life to the very reverse that Voltaire had done.

[23 : 37] You see, even the most stubborn, stoutest rebel must resign before the sovereign grace of our God.

Oh, we bless our God that his grace is sovereign grace, that it is invincible grace. And it matters not how some of his people may set themselves against him.

God can break even the most stubborn heart. It's said that often when Whitefield was preaching, men would come and they would get as near to him as they could with their stones, with their pockets full of stones.

Often with the intention of not just simply throwing them at him, but trying to kill him. And more than once those men went away with the stones still in their pocket, but with broken hearts.

You see, they came with the sole intention to kill God's servant, but while they were there, the most hardened of men, God met with them. And instead of them breaking Whitefield, God broke them.

[24 : 45] He broke their hearts. Oh, my dear friend, if you feel that you want nothing to do with these things, then I can tell you this on the authority of God's word, that if you're one of his sheep, the time will come when the Lord will deal with you.

If you are his, he will have you in his own time and in his own way. And my friends, we must pray on that these other sheep may hear his voice, that we may see them being brought in, that there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

I shall never forget the thrill it was to me when one afternoon in London with a couple of hours to spare, I was wandering through Westminster Abbey and I didn't even realize it was there, but right in the center of the abbey is the tomb of David Livingstone.

And this text is written around the edge. And oh, what a thrill it was to read it. There, in the center of that important ecclesiastical church, there is this wonderful text.

Another sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring. They shall hear my voice and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

[26 : 12] They shall hear his voice. Now, I want to notice something now about hearing his voice. My sheep hear my voice.

We are concerned to know whether we are among those that believe or not. And the evidence of whether we believe or not is whether we hear his voice.

Do we know what it is to hear the shepherd's voice? Well now, what does the shepherd say to us? Well, first of all, we must say this, that he calls us.

He calls us. Whenever the gospel is preached, then there is the general call of the gospel which goes forth.

As the gospel falls upon people's ears, there is the general call of the gospel. Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

[27 : 21] But then as the gospel is preached, there is the particular call of the gospel and that is the shepherd's voice. As the gospel is preached, the shepherd sends his voice into the ears and the hearts of his sheep and they hear him calling them.

I suggest with many of you that you heard the gospel preached many times in a general way. But a day came when you first heard the shepherd's voice.

When something that was said first went home to your heart and your heart began to be awakened to the things of God. when the shepherd calls, what is the first thing that we hear him calling, generally speaking?

The first call of this shepherd, I believe, is that of condemnation. You may say, well that's a strange thing to say.

I don't think it is really. The call of the shepherd, first and foremost to the sinner, is that of condemnation.

[28 : 43] In other words, the Savior as he calls us in the gospel, he causes us to see just what we are as sinners before a holy God.

To some, this experience is very deep and it lasts for a long, long time. To others, it may be not so deep and it lasts not for so long.

I was only saying to a friend just the other evening that with some people it seems that God so convinces them of their sin that they are literally shaken over hell fire.

But with others it's a much more gentle thing. But it's been my experience with those that were led gently into a conviction of sin that it is something that has increased with them as they have gone on in life's journey.

They have had fresh openings up of the corruption and the wickedness of their heart. But the shepherd as he calls us, first of all, he condemns us.

[30 : 00] And you see, we cannot really appreciate his salvation unless we have been made to feel our sin. We cannot appreciate a remedy if we've never experienced the malady.

it is not until we are sick and ill that we need a physician, a doctor. Christ came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

They that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick. And there must be the wounding effect of the Spirit of God.

And this is the Master calling us, My sheep, hear my voice. How about you, my friends? Have you heard his voice in this way?

Have you heard this voice of condemnation? All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. That soul that sinneth, it shall die.

[31 : 06] There is none righteous, no, not one. all of our righteousnesses are as filthy backs. And when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants.

Oh, have you heard the voice of the Good Shepherd condemning you, convincing you of sin? Oh, if you have, then thank God for it.

That is the beginning of life. That is the beginning of life within the soul to be convinced and condemned for our sin.

And then secondly, as the Master calls us, as this Good Shepherd calls his sheep, there is the constraining voice, the constraining voice.

This is the voice that draws us to him. this is the voice that draws us to the Saviour, the voice that bids us look to him that we may live, the voice that bids us look to Calvary, to see the Lamb of God crucified upon the cross for our sins.

[32 : 24] Oh, have you heard the constraining voice? Oh, it's wonderful, isn't it? You know how it is with a child maybe, when they have done something wrong and the parents speak to them and there is that inflection in the voice which condemns them.

They know by the very sound of their parents' voice that they have done wrong. You only have to call their name and the inflection of the voice as you call their name, they know that they have done wrong and that they are probably in for some punishment.

But then how different, oh, how expressive the voice can be. How differently when out of love we call to the children and we want them to come to us.

Oh, how our voice can express that love that we feel and the desire that we have. Well, the Saviour's voice is just like that.

Oh, what an alluring voice it is. What a charming voice it is. And oh, how we love to hear the Saviour's voice constraining us and drawing us to himself.

[33 : 47] Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me and ye shall find rest unto your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

As the hymn writer says, I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest. Lay down, thou weary one, lay down thy head upon my breast.

I came to Jesus as I was weary and worn and sad. I found in him a resting place and he has made me glad.

The constraining voice of the Lord Jesus. Oh, have you felt that drawing to him? Have you felt yourself and your soul being constrained toward Jesus Christ?

Have you felt him drawing you to himself to the footstool of his cross there to seek pardon through his precious blood? And then there is the comforting voice of the shepherd.

[35 : 06] David speaks of it in this way in his psalm, he restoreth my soul. That's the comforting voice of the shepherd. It's said that the eastern shepherd while the sheep were laying down at rest during the hottest part of the day, he would call them one by one by name and he would call the sheep to him and he would sit down and the sheep would come and he would look over it, he would fondle it and he would feel it and make sure that it was fit and well that there was nothing wrong with it and that is what David is referring to, restoring our soul.

Those times when the Savior comes to us and he blesses us, he restores our soul, it is as if he fondles us and we feel the intimacy of his presence, we feel the delights of his love.

Oh, have you heard the comforting voice of the shepherd, my sheep hear my voice. And then I must pass on quickly, my sheep hear my voice and I know them.

Oh, I love to think of this knowledge and I know them. This knowledge is eternal in its nature. It must be because the Father gave his sheep to him before the foundation of the world in eternity.

And so this knowledge, it is an eternal knowledge. The Lord knew his sheep before all ever the world was made. And then not only is it an eternal knowledge, it is a personal knowledge.

[36 : 57] Oh, he knows them personally and he knows them individually. He knows each one of his sheep by name and he calls them by name we are told.

He knows you, each one of you by name and he deals with these sheep individually just as I said just now, the eastern shepherd would call his sheep to himself, so he deals with us as individuals.

God and the Lord Jesus does not look down upon his church as a great mass of people and deal with them in a collective sense, he does that, but he also deals with them individually.

He can see each one of them in their need and their problems and their difficulties, he sees into our hearts and he sees the things that are necessary there and he deals with us, his knowledge of us, it is personal, it is individual, and then we can say this, it is intimate, it is intimate.

Oh, the good shepherd knows his sheep far better than they know themselves. The Lord knows us better than anyone knows us. He knows what goes on right deep down within our hearts.

[38 : 19] Never forget that there is nothing hid from him. You may manage to hide something from everyone else, but you can never hide it from him.

Everything is known to our God, to the Lord Jesus Christ. The most intimate details of our lives, of our thoughts, are known to him.

This knowledge, it is an intimate knowledge. But my friends, that is not something to fear, that is something to cherish. Because if he has an intimate knowledge of us, he knows just how to deal with us.

He knows all about our fears. He knows all about our cares. He knows our problems and our difficulties. He is perfectly, intimately acquainted with everything concerning us, if we are his sheep.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them. And then, I must say this, it is a loving knowledge. It is a loving knowledge.

[39 : 28] You know, the Good Shepherd loves his sheep, otherwise he wouldn't have given his life for them. Oh, if he gave his life for them, then he loves them, and he will never give one of them up.

He will never let one of them escape. If they wander away, he'll go and he'll bring them back again, just as we have in the parable. Oh, he's not content with the 99 in the fold.

He wants that 100th one that's out on the mountains far away, and he will go and search and seek until he finds that one, and he'll bring it back home on his shoulder with rejoicing.

Oh, his knowledge, it is a loving knowledge. And so he deals with us in love, in every respect. And then we can say this, that it is a careful knowledge.

By that I mean that he cares for us, and he cares for us carefully. He will never inflict one punishment to many, only that which is necessary.

[40 : 45] The Saviour will only bring those things into our lives which are necessary for our good. He watches over us with care and with love, far beyond anything that we can understand.

But then I must notice this last point. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me, and they follow me.

You remember from our text this morning that the Saviour says I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. Well this is where the abundant life comes in.

And they follow me. Oh the abundant life is to be experienced as we follow the Master. Oh and what a wonderful life, abundant life it is.

We follow him as our guide. it is he who leads us onward. We are to commit our way to him and he will direct our paths.

[41 : 58] We are to commit our all to him. He is our guide. He is our friend. He is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

You see the worldling he does not have such a guide. He does not have such a friend. Oh he has a natural life but he knows nothing of this abundant life.

The life of the child of God should be something far and above that of the life of the man that is within the world. Because he has this guide, he has this friend and then he's not only our friend but he is our provider.

He provides for our every need. Just as the good shepherd went before his sheep, he was their guide, he was their friend and it was he who led them to the pastures where they could feed and to the waters where they could drink and to the places where they could rest.

And it was he that led them safely home again to the fold in the evening. And then he is our healer. He it is that healeth us.

[43 : 14] With his stripes we are healed. It is he that heals the broken hearted. It is he that heals the wounds of sin.

It is he that heals the wounds of sorrow and of pain that his sheep sometimes know he is our healer. and then he is our protector.

They follow him. They follow him because he is all these things to them. And in following him they know this abundant life.

I referred to David Livingstone just now and you know some of you what tremendous suffering he endured out there in Africa and yet refusing to give up.

Just pressing on and saying that these people were his people and his burning desire was to bring the gospel to them. To preach the gospel to all to whom he came to all with whom he came into contact.

[44 : 27] And you will remember that that great man of God died on his knees in prayer. That is where they found him kneeling by his bed in the morning.

And although he knew such extenuating circumstances and such suffering and trivation and often loneliness to him it was an abundant life to serve his Lord and Master.

But then notice concerning this following and they follow him. This following means to follow him wherever he leads. This is no half measure following him.

These sheep they desire to follow him wherever he may lead. No bypasses, no shortcuts, no, we must follow him and they follow him.

Do you know one of the first steps of following the Master is to put him on? To put him on in an open profession of his name?

[45 : 38] I must say this my friends, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. To be faithful to the Word of God I must say that one of the first steps is to put him on in an open profession of his name.

What did the Apostle Peter and the Apostles as they preached so often say, repent and be baptized every one of you. They were called to repentance, to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and then to put the Lord Jesus on in an open profession of his name.

They followed him. The Master called and they followed. And they were told how that they were commanded to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Oh, how sad it is, my friends, if the shepherd calls us and we do not heed his voice. However he may call us, how sad if we do not heed his voice.

Just think, if you called one of your children to you and you called that child in a loving way because you wanted to give it something and do something for it, you got some special thing for it and you called that child lovingly, how sad you would be if that child just turned a deaf ear and walked away from you and went off in some other direction.

[47 : 14] You would be very sad. Well, what do you think about the good shepherd? Don't you think that his heart is saddened if when he calls his sheep they just turn a deaf ear and walk away from him?

Because you know this, this does happen. If we're honest with ourselves, we know that sometimes the shepherd has called us and we've turned a deaf ear.

We've found all sorts of excuses why we ought not or cannot follow him. or if the shepherd has called you, then you must follow him and I say, how sad if when this dear shepherd calls, you do not follow him, but you turn around and go some other way.

To follow the shepherd is to know this abundant life. I am come that they might have it more abundantly and you know there is no blessing so great as knowing that you are following in the footsteps of the master, of knowing that you are following where he is calling you and where he is leading you.

But then my friends, just one last point for a moment and then I will leave the subject. My sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me. There will at last come that great call father I will that those also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.

[48 : 54] So we read. There will come that final call and the sheep will rise up. I am certain of this, the sheep will rise up at that time gladly to follow the master.

When Jesus calls us by the hand of death, oh you may feel some of you, and we all do, do we not at times, that if the Lord should call us by the hand of death we wouldn't be willing.

We can't feel that we are willing yet to lay down our lives in death, but I'm assured of this my friends, that when the shepherd calls we'll be ready, ah when it's his voice calling we shall be ready to leave and to follow him.

I'm sure that when the Lord comes with that last great call he will give the willingness to follow. Oh there will be no holding back then, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better, so the apostle says, that dying grace which we need will be given in that hour, and oh what an entrance there will be then into that abundant life.

I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. Oh what a wonderful call, and what an abundant life that will be, to be forever with the Lord, to enter upon an eternity where there is no sorrow nor sighing, and where they have flown away, where there will be no more tears, no more pain, to be forever with the Lord, to spend an endless eternity in singing God is love, to go to be forever with him.

[50 : 50] Well now my dear friends, have you heard his voice? Oh that's the great thing, my sheep hear my voice, have you heard his voice?

Oh if you have, then bless him for it, and however he may call you, and however he may lead you, do follow. Oh seek by his grace to follow him, and you will know increasingly what it is to have that abundant life.

May God help us to think on these things. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.