



Sheep

“Symbols, Metaphors, and Similes”

“Then said Jesus unto them again, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.’” John 10:7

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. John 10:9

In the Bible, we are often referred to as sheep. Do you want to be thought of as a sheep. According to what we are told, they are stupid and foolish. They get lost and can’t find their way home. They have to be watched constantly. But as I think about it, whether we like or not, we are like sheep.

Christ continues in John 10:27 & 28 to tell us “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” That is quite a promise for a dumb animal. He goes on to tell us that his sheep not only hear His voice, they know it and they recognize it. A friend who has traveled in Scotland a lot told me that sheep graze freely over the mountainside and are only identified by a red or blue spot painted on their backs, but an intimacy develops between the sheep and the shepherd. They know their Shepherd’s voice and run from a strange voice. But also note that in this passage of Scripture, Christ also says “I know them.” He knows us so well, better than we know ourselves. That is scary, but it is also really assuring. We can’t escape from Him. We can try, but we can’t do it.

In a sermon by Charles Pickell, a Presbyterian minister, he writes, “In ancient times shepherds actually lived with the sheep. They got to know each sheep individually—they knew its quirks, its strengths and weaknesses—whether it was stubborn or submissive, whether it would follow or was prone to stray. At night the shepherd would lay at the opening of the sheep pen and literally act as a gate. That is why Jesus says, “I am the gate for the sheep.” As the shepherd watches over the sheep, cares for them, guards them, protect them, and rescues them from danger—so Jesus does for us.”*

A song written by Orien Johnson tells of God’s love. Some of the lyrics are:

“In God's green pastures feeding, by His cool waters lie;
Soft in the evening walk my Lord and I.
All the sheep of His pastures fare so wondrously fine,
His sheep am I.

Waters cool, (*In the valley*)
Pastures green, (*On the mountain*)
In the evening walk my Lord and I;
 (*In the evening walk my Lord and I*)
Dark the night, (*In the valley*)
Rough the way, (*On the mountain*)
Step by step my Lord and I.
 (*Step by step my Lord and I*)”

I know that I have that wonderful love, love that never fails, never sleeps, never forgets me.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to not only know Your love, but to want to share it with others every day of my life. Thank You for the assurance that my sins are forgiven, that You walk with me in the low places and in the high places, in the dark and in the light, step by step. Amen

1. What do we do when we hear His voice?
2. Do you mind being a sheep? What sustains you? What empowers you?
3. What are the promises of being one of His sheep?
4. What comforts you as you face your daily tasks and live amid the moral, spiritual, and political ambiguities of our day?

*“The Shepherd’s Voice” by Charles Pickell, A Harvest of the Years.

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