Beyond the Pulpit

RESOURCES FOR CONTINUED STUDY

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN *Presbyterian Church*

The Good Shepherd — *October 25, 2026*

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SERMON SERIES
The Gospel of John
PASSAGE
John 10:1–21

NOTES

John 10 continues Jesus' response to the Pharisees following the healing of the man born blind in John 9. The focus shifts from *"Who Sees?"* to *"Who Hears?"* The man born blind, now able to see, becomes an example of one of Jesus' sheep who recognizes and responds to his voice, while the religious leaders who cast him out are exposed as false shepherds who fail to recognize the true Shepherd. In John 10:1–21, Jesus reveals himself as **the Good Shepherd**, whose sheep hear his voice, know him, and follow him. Through the Good Shepherd's familiar voice, the gate that provides and protects, and his care that serves and sacrifices, Jesus reveals both his divine identity and the abundant life he gives to his people.

1. The shepherd's voice: familiarity and intimacy (vv. 1-6, 14)

The shepherd is one of Scripture's most enduring images for the relationship between God and his people. Throughout the Old Testament, Scripture depicts God's people as sheep and entrusts Israel's leaders with their faithful care. The biblical narrative also continually exposes those leaders who exploit God's flock. It's against this backdrop that Jesus emerges as the true Shepherd. As PCA pastor Nick Batzig notes: *"The Scriptures draw our attention, at the beginning of redemptive-history, to the fact that the very first person martyred for his faith in Christ was a shepherd. Abel was a righteous shepherd who was envied, despised and murdered by his brother. Jesus is the righteous shepherd who was envied, despised and murdered by his brethren (Matthew 21:38; 27:18; Mark 15:10). Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. Additionally, the fact that shepherding was one of the very first occupations in human history shows us that it was God's plan to set this apart for an analogy to reflect his relationship to his people."*[1] These rich OT patterns frame Jesus' dialogue in John 10 so that the original audience would recognize him as the true shepherd-king God had always intended to provide.

READ Numbers 27:16-18; Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23-24

DISCUSS How do these passages prophetically point to Jesus?

READ Genesis 4:2; Exodus 3:1; 1 Samuel 16:11-13; 2 Samuel 5:2; Matthew 1:1

DISCUSS Shepherds appear throughout the biblical narrative: from Abel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, to David. David, Israel's shepherd-king, was called from tending sheep to shepherd God's people. What is the significance of this chain of shepherds and how do they foreshadow Jesus?

2. The sheep's gate: provision and protection (vv. 7-10)

Jesus deepens the imagery by declaring, "*I am the door of the sheep*" (v. 7). Through him, his sheep find salvation, security, and sustenance. Compared to the thieves who come to steal and destroy, Jesus comes that his people "*may have life and have it abundantly*" (v. 10). According to Paul Tripp, the abundant life flows from reconciliation with God and belonging to his flock. God does not call his people *"to a dour, lifeless, miserable existence that squashes human potential,* [but] *the good shepherd wants his people to thrive with lives that are rich in meaning and purpose with the constant blessing of his presence and grace."*[2] Jesus alone provides the way into this life, protecting his people from the power of sin and death and sustaining them in his care.

READ John 14:6

DISCUSS How does Jesus' declaration that he is "*the way, and the truth, and the life*" clarify his claim to be the door?

READ John 5:24-29, 11:38-44

DISCUSS What does the authority of Jesus' voice reveal about his power over spiritual and physical death? What implications does this have for our hope of resurrection?

[1]Nick T. Batzig. *A Biblical Theology of the Good Shepherd*. January 2014. Feeding On Christ. feedingonchrist.org. October 21, 2026
[2]Paul D. Tripp. *The Best Shepherd Ever (John 10:1-42)*. December 16, 2024. PaulTripp.com. October 21, 2026.
[3]Timothy S. Laniak. *Shepherds after My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*. 2006, Downers Grove, IL InterVarsity Press. 58.

3. The shepherd's care: service and sacrifice (vv. 11-21)

In verses 11-21, Jesus reveals the defining characteristic of the Good Shepherd: he lays down his life for his sheep. Unlike a hired hand who abandons the sheep when danger comes, the Good Shepherd remains faithful even at the cost of his own life. With his sacrifice, he gives his life willingly, accomplishing the Father's saving purpose. And in verse 16, Jesus intends for his mission to reach beyond the immediate boundaries of his present audience, anticipating the gathering of people from the nations into one people of God through faith in Christ.

READ Meditate on Psalms 22 and 23.

DISCUSS Jesus said, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."* When studying Psalms 22 and 23, Spurgeon wrote that we cannot know the Good Shepherd's care without the bloodshed of the cross: *"It is only after we have read, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' that we come to 'The Lord is my Shepherd.' We must by experience know the value of blood-shedding, and see the sword awakened against the Shepherd, before we shall be able truly to know the sweetness of the good Shepherd's care."*[2] How does placing the agonizing cry of Psalm 22 before the peaceful rest of Psalm 23 reveal that the sweet security of the Shepherd is purchased only at the cross?

READ Read Ephesians 2:11-22

DISCUSS How does Paul explain the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles through Christ? What does John 10:16 teach us about the scope of Jesus' mission and the unity of his people?

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

Jesus: The Good and Just Shepherd-King

Jesus' teaching provoked division among the Jewish people, as they wrestled with his identity and the source of his authority. Was he truly sent from God or was he demon-possessed? In John 10, Jesus draws on a familiar Old Testament image to explain who he is and how he relates to his people: the Shepherd-King. Throughout the ancient world, rulers often described themselves as shepherds of their people, reflecting their responsibility to provide for and protect those under their care. As Old Testament scholar Timothy Laniak notes, "*shepherd language was used … to define a king's role as just ruler, benevolent provider and/or powerful defender.*"[3] Yet Israel's prophets, including Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, condemned the nation's leaders for neglecting the flock entrusted to them. These shepherds pursued their own interests and failed to care for the vulnerable. It is against this backdrop that John identifies Jesus as the Good Shepherd who comes to give his sheep abundant life.

READ Ezekiel 34:1-10; Jeremiah 23:1-4; Zechariah 11:4-17

DISCUSS God condemns the shepherds who exploit, neglect, scatter, and destroy his people rather than care for them. How does Jesus' description of himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10:1–18 contrast with these failed shepherds? What do these contrasting portraits reveal about God's heart for his people and the kind of leadership that reflects his own?

PRAYER SPOTLIGHT

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