

Theme: There is only one way into the fold of God, only one Shepherd who can bring us to safe, abundant pasture, and only one good Shepherd who gives his life for the sheep. He calls his sheep to follow him, and the world, to this day, is divided over that call.

Background: Welcome back to John’s Gospel! John ties this teaching to the healing, and subsequent circumstances, of the man born blind and healed by Jesus.

Introduction: Shepherding in the Middle East today.

I. Sheep “Rustlers” and Shepherds

A. On the edge of danger

1. A dangerous place
 - Protecting your flocks on the edge of the desert
 - The sheep pen
2. We need a shepherd
 - a. God is the shepherd of Israel – Psalm 23, Isaiah 40:10-11; Psalm 80:1-3
 - b. Israel’s leaders as shepherds – Ezekiel 34, Zechariah 11

B. Robbers and thieves

1. Sheep stealers
 - Coming over the wall
2. Israel’s leadership
 - Remembering the man born blind
3. Anyone who doesn’t come through the door
 - a. Danger to the church from within
 - Leadership from “over the wall”
 - b. Danger from outside
 - A “dedicated” college professor

C. A faithful shepherd

1. *He comes to his own!*
 - a. Enters by the Door (*thuras*)/Gate! (1-3)
 - b. The legitimate/true shepherd
 - With God’s authority to lead
2. *He knows his own sheep! And they know him!*
 - a. They know his voice (John 6:37; 44)
 - He knows their names (3)
 - He “calls” out his sheep (Matthew 11:28)
 - b. Those who don’t know his voice?
 - Do not hear
3. He *is* the Door
 - a. To enter his flock
 - b. To salvation

II. The Calling of the Good Shepherd (NOTE: “Good” in the sense of Philippians 4:8)

- A. Provision for the sheep
 - Leads them out to pasture (9)
 - He knows what I need most!
 - Abundant life! (10)
- D.A. Carson – “...life at its scarcely imagined best, life to be lived.”
- B. Protection for the sheep
 - 1. Danger without!
 - From robbers and thieves
 - Hirelings who care more for themselves than the sheep
 - 2. Danger within!
 - a. My bondage to sin
 - b. Laying down his life (11,15)
- C. Gathering all His sheep
 - 1. They know his voice –
 - You can’t miss it!
 - 2. He knows them by name (3)
 - The call is irrevocable, irresistible, with *intrinsic* power
 - 3. Intimate knowledge (14,15)
 - Total comprehensive knowledge!
 - 4. Those from another fold (16)
 - Others outside of Israel and the Jews
 - Jews and Gentiles in one fold (Ephesians 2:14)

III. The Authority of the Good Shepherd

- A. Over entry into the fold
 - He is The Door – We must enter through him
- B. Over life (17,18)
 - 1. His own
 - a. Laying it down
 - Sacrifice, not martyrdom
 - b. Resurrection
 - Taking it up again
 - 2. And ours
 - We are bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:19,20)

IV. Division Over the Good Shepherd

- A. His works
- B. Words
- C. His demands (Authority)

NOTE: We live on the edge of the wilderness. We can follow his voice to good pasture – or wander in the desert following our own.