

For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little.

Isaiah 28:10

First Love Ministries, Inc.

PRAYER STUDY #198

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

CHAPTER 10

1. Jesus as the good Shepherd: Verses 1-21
2. Jesus affirms His deity: Verses 22-41

PART ONE-VERSES 1-21

1. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.
2. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
3. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out.
4. And when he putteth forth His own sheep, he goeth before them and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.
5. And a stranger will they not follow but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers.
6. This parable spake Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.
7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.
8. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.
9. I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture.
10. The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill and to destroy; I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.
11. I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.
12. But he that is an hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep.
13. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling and careth not for the sheep.
14. I am the Good Shepherd and know My sheep and am known of Mine.

15. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep.
16. And other sheep 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.
17. Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.
18. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.
19. There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.
20. And many of them said, He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye Him?
21. Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

In this first section, let us look at four different classes:

- A. **The thief:** Of course this is the enemy of our souls, Satan, whose kingdom of darkness constantly is out to steal, kill, and destroy your blessings, whatever they are, whether your job, your happiness, your health, your finances, your marriage, your joy, your beliefs, and even your life. If you are born again and covered with the blood of Jesus, Satan no longer has legal right to steal, kill, and destroy, unless you allow him to do so or unless you have opened a door because of your sin. You have the authority to stop him and tell him that he has no place and no ground in you according to the Word of God, the name of Jesus, and the blood of Jesus.

Rick Renner, the Greek scholar, tells us the word *thief* comes from the Greek word *klepto*, which means *to steal*. From this we get the English word *kleptomaniac*, which is a persistent, neurotic impulse to steal. Renner tells us that *klepto* “*speaks of one who is so artful in the way he steals that his exploits of thievery are nearly undetectable.*”

Renner also tells us that *to kill* comes from the Greek word *thuo*, which means to sacrifice as in an animal sacrifice. Renner says that this “*suggests that if the thief hasn’t already walked away with everything we hold precious and dear, he will try to convince us that we need to sacrifice or give up everything he hasn’t already taken from us.*”

Finally, *to destroy* comes from *appollemi*. Renner tells us that this means “*something that is ruined, wasted, trashed, devastated, and destroyed.*”

Renner translates the passage this way: *The thief wants to get his hands on every good thing in your life. In fact, this pickpocket is looking for any opportunity to wiggle his way so deeply into your personal affairs that he can walk off with everything you hold precious and dear. And that’s not all-when he’s finished stealing all your goods and possessions, he’ll take his plan to rob you blind to the next level. He’ll create conditions and situations so horrible that you’ll see no way to solve the problem except to sacrifice everything that remains from his previous attacks. The goal of this thief is to totally waste and devastate your life. If nothing stops him, he’ll leave you insolvent, flat broke, and cleaned out in every area of your life. You’ll end up feeling as if you are finished and out of business! Make no mistake-the enemy’s ultimate aim is to obliterate you...*”

Praise the Lord! This chapter also says that Jesus came “*that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*” Renner translates John 10:10 as follows: “*...But I came that they might have, keep, and constantly retain a vitality, gusto, vigor, and zest for living that springs up from deep down inside. I came that they might embrace this unrivaled, unequalled, matchless, incomparable, richly loaded and overflowing life to the ultimate maximum.*”

B. The Good Shepherd: Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and the Holy Spirit has called earthly shepherds to shepherd their flocks and to pattern their leadership after the *Pattern Son*. Someone enumerated some of the characteristics of a good shepherd:

1. He loves the sheep and develops a close, intimate relationship with them so that they know his voice and trust him.
2. He understands the needs of the sheep better than they do.
3. He understands what threatens sheep and what makes them sick.
4. He works tirelessly to provide protection and security.
5. He leads them to fresh pastures and fresh water.
6. He searches out sheep when they stray.
7. He defends sheep against all their enemies.
8. He provides protection when they sleep.
9. He shears them and examines each one for injury or disease.

10. He goes ahead of sheep and prepares the path.
11. He disciplines and corrects them.
12. He comforts sheep when they are hurt or fearful.
13. He keeps sheep on the move so they don't get in a rut.
14. He liberally anoints them with oil to prevent disease or to heal an injury.
15. He keeps sheep from fighting and hurting each other.
16. He cares for and loves the sheep and sacrifices his life for them.
17. He rejoices in the health, well-being, and prosperity of the flock.
18. He will leave the flock to search for lost sheep.
19. He experiences great joy in finding lost sheep.
20. He carries the lambs close to his heart.
21. He gently leads those with young.
22. He gets deep satisfaction from seeing that sheep are content, well-fed, and safe.

In addition, the good shepherd provides at least two other services. Sheep are prone to wander, putting themselves in great danger when they are separated from the flock. When a sheep wanders from the fold, the shepherd goes after that sheep leaving the other sheep behind. When he finds that sheep, he breaks the sheep's legs to keep that sheep from wandering and leading other sheep astray. He then lovingly carries this sheep on his back, thus allowing the sheep to form an even more intimate relationship with the shepherd.

The shepherd also lays in the doorway of a walled sheep pen, when a fenced in pen is available, to guard against thieves and beast of prey. Those thieves and predators have to come through the gate to get the sheep. Often several flocks are put together, but the sheep are easily separated because the sheep follow only the voice of their shepherd. If a stranger enters the pen, they will not follow him because his voice is unfamiliar.

C. **The Sheep:** We are the sheep. The same unknown person enumerated characteristics of sheep.

1. They are timid, fearful, and easily panicked.
2. Sheep are not very smart.
3. Sheep are very vulnerable to fear, frustration, pests, and hunger.
4. Sheep are easily influenced by a leader sheep and by the shepherd.

5. Sheep are very vulnerable to mob psychology and stampede easily.
6. Sheep have little or no means of self defense. All they can do is run, and they are slow runners.
7. Sheep are easily killed by their enemies.
8. The shepherd is the most effective calming influence to the sheep.
9. Sheep are jealous and competitive for dominance.
10. Sheep constantly need fresh water and fresh pastures.
11. Sheep have very little discernment in choosing food or water.
12. The best water source for sheep is the early morning dew.
13. Sheep, left unsupervised, will insist on their own way, even eating poisonous plants or drinking dirty water.
14. Sheep easily flip over on their back and are unable to right themselves. They will die of starvation if not turned over by the shepherd.
15. Sheep frequently look for easy places to rest.
16. Sheep don't like to be sheared or cleaned.
17. Too much wool can cause sheep to easily flip over.
18. Sheep are creatures of habit and get into ruts easily.
19. Sheep need the most care of all livestock.
20. Sheep need to be "on the move."
21. Sheep are totally dependent on the shepherd.
22. Sheep need "rod and staff" guidance.

Unlike sheep, goats can be loners and do not need other goats or a shepherd. They are head-strong and independent. They will eat anything. They don't follow and will compete with the shepherd for leadership of the flock. They are never content with what they have and are constantly trying to be free from any kind of confinement.

D. The Hireling: Hirelings are usually in the ministry for money. Some, however, are looking for things like reputation and status or an avenue to proudly flaunt their intellectual understanding of the scriptures. They will not stand when things get tough because they really don't love the people. We see many pastors today getting rich off their books, tapes, and lectures, living in gated communities with several car garages, and becoming TV celebrities because they teach a Gospel that is so watered down or seeker friendly that it does not convict or exhort or offend the congregation.

PART TWO-VERSES 22-42

22. And it was at Jerusalem the feast of dedication, and it was winter.
23. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.
24. Then came the Jews round about Him and said unto Him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.
25. Jesus answered them, **I told you and ye believed not the works that I do in My Father's name; they bear witness of Me.**
26. **But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you.**
27. **My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.**
28. **And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.**
29. **My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand.**
30. **I and my Father are one.**
31. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.
32. Jesus answered them, **Many good works have I shewed you from My Father; for which of these works do ye stone Me?**
33. The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God.
34. Jesus answered them, **Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?**
35. **If He called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scriptures cannot be broken,**
36. **Say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?**
37. **If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not.**
38. **But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works; that you may know and believe, that the Father is in Me and I in Him.**
39. Therefore they sought again to take Him, but He escaped out of their hand.
40. And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized and there He abode.
41. And many resorted unto Him and said, John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this man were true.
42. And many believed on Him there.

The Feast of Dedication was in December. This feast celebrated the taking back of the temple from the Syrians who had polluted it. It was winter. J. Vernon McGee says of this time: *“And it was winter. Jesus is through with the nation. From here on, in the Gospel of John, He talks to*

His own. He will not make another public call. It is now too late for the harvest. The Lamb of God is being shut up in preparation to go to the cross and die for the sins of the world. Friend, may I remind you that you can play at this thing too long. Winter is coming for you. There will come a day when you won't be able to witness. If you are going to do anything for Him, you had better do it now. If you have never sincerely accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, may I remind you that winter can come for that too. There does come a time when it is too late, my beloved, too late to be saved."

Interestingly, Solomon's porch was where the Gentile believers were allowed. It also is the only part or remnant of the Temple of Solomon. It seems that the Lord is making a point here that He is the One who joins the Jew and Gentile for in Him is "*neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus*" (Galatians 3:28). Also, I think He is saying something about the "remnant." There has always been a remnant that passionately loves Him and is true no matter what.

The Jews in this passage are not interested in truth. They had already made up their minds. They could not be convinced otherwise by scripture, by signs, by witnesses, or by any other way, because of the hardness of their hearts. Many today are not open to truth. They are more interested in holding to what they have been taught and holding to religion and tradition than they are truth. We must always examine all that we believe by the inerrant Word of God.

This passage gives a beautiful picture of the relationship of God the Father and God the Son. They have such an intimate relationship that, like a man and woman in a godly marriage, They are One. The Father so loved the world that He gave the Son. The Son so loved the sheep that He gave Himself and laid down His life in His own free will.

Notice how Jesus is often led by the Spirit to supernaturally get through dangerous situations, going through the midst of angry crowds ready to stone Him and escaping injury and harm. I believe that some of you in days to come will have this kind of supernatural protection on your lives.

Promises
By Dottie Rambo

He didn't promise that I would never stumble,
But He did say He'd be there if I fall.
He didn't tell me He'd grant all my hopes and wishes,
But He did say He'd hear me if I call.

He didn't promise my cross would not be heavy,
But He did say that He my load would share.
He didn't tell me He'd hear complaints I whispered,
But He did say He'd hear my earnest prayer.

CHORUS

Promises, promises, and all of them true.
He's done exactly what He said He would do.
He didn't tell me my heart would not be broken,
But He did say He'd mend it again.

(You can hear a performance of this song on Youtube. Type in Promises-Mark Lowry. You can skip the first couple of minutes of Mark talking and go straight to the song.)