

# THE SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP

John 10:1-6

Introduction:

## 1. The Context

A) John 10:1 most likely follows immediately the events of chapter 9

- > No transitional phrases
- > “Most assuredly” never begins a new section in John’s gospel
- > John 10:21 seems to connect the healing of the blind man to this section

B) Jesus contrasts the attitude of the religious leaders with that of the Good Shepherd (John 9:34; 10:11)

- > Who cares for an abandoned sheep – the formerly blind man? Jesus.

## 2. The Background

A) The Old Testament speaks often of shepherds and sheep

- > Sheep were staples for life and worship - the Passover Meal (Exodus 12:1-11)
- > Sheep were valued and loved by their owners (2 Samuel 12:1-6)
- > Shepherding sheep was good training for leading people
  - Moses’ training with the flocks of Jethro (Exodus 3:1)
  - David’s training with the flocks of Jesse (1 Samuel 16:11; 17:32-36)
- > A shepherd’s care for the sheep pictures God’s care for His people (Psalm 23)
- > God’s appointed leaders were to care for Israel as shepherds care for sheep
  - The failure of Israel’s shepherds (Ezekiel 34:1-10)
  - The promise of God’s care for His sheep (Ezekiel 34:11-16)
  - The promise of the Messiah who will shepherd His people (Ezekiel 34:23-24)

B) The New Testament also speaks often of shepherds and sheep

- > Jesus’ concern for the “sheep” (Mark 6:33-37)
- > Jesus’ admonition to Peter to feed His “sheep” (John 21:15)
- > Paul’s exhortation to the Ephesian elders to guard the “sheep” (Acts 20:25-31)
- > Peter’s exhortation to the elders in the church (1 Peter 5:1-4)

### 3. Distinguishing Marks of the Shepherd – the Illustration

#### A) Jesus' story in John 10:1-5

- > The shepherd enters through the door of the sheepfold
- > The doorkeeper opens the door for him
- > The shepherd knows his own sheep and their names
- > The shepherd leads his sheep and they follow him because they know his voice
- > The sheep refuse to follow a stranger

### 4. Distinguishing Marks of the Shepherd – the Significance

#### A) Jesus enters through the door of the sheepfold

- > This seems to be a reference to His coming in fulfillment of the O.T. prophecies
- > Jesus is the Shepherd of His sheep

#### B) The doorkeeper recognizes Jesus as the Shepherd and opens the door to the sheepfold for Him

- > This detail would seem to point to the work of the Holy Spirit

#### C) Jesus knows the names of His own sheep

- > There are two big truths emphasized in this detail

They are “His own” sheep before He calls them

He calls them by name (Phil. 4:2-3; Revelation 17:7-8)

#### D) Jesus leads His sheep out and they follow Him because they know His voice

- > The connection to the story of the blind man is obvious (John 9:35-38)

#### E) Jesus' sheep refuse to follow a stranger

These religious leaders had urged the formerly blind man to follow their lead (John 9:24)

But he knew his Shepherd's voice ... and this wasn't it

\* Listen for the voice of Jesus in John 10:24-30