

DAY TWENTY-EIGHT 28

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10:1-42

Jesus is the perfect picture of leadership. He cares for His sheep. He protects them from predators. He wants His sheep to experience true peace and rest.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the resting place of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. When he sends out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will run from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”

Jesus spoke to them in this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was referring to. Jesus therefore said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.

“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and runs, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters them. He runs because he is hired, and is not concerned about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, which are not of this group of sheep; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd.

“For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

There arose a division again among the Jews because of these words. And many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?” Others were saying, “These are not the sayings of a demon-possessed man. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?”

At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in

The Feast of Dedication (or “Lights”) commemorates victory and independence under Judas Maccabeus in 160 B.C. The roots are in the deliverance God provided for Israel through Esther and Mordecai. The feast lasts eight days, and is known today as Hanukkah.

the portico of Solomon. The Jews therefore gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered them, "I told you and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these works testify of who I am.

"But you do not believe, because you are not one of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."

Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), why do you say of Him, whom the Father set apart and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works I do, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I am in the Father."

Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him and He eluded their grasp. He went away again beyond the Jordan to where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. And many came to Him and were saying, "While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true." And many believed in Him there.

DAY TWENTY-NINE 29

RAISING LAZARUS

John 11:1-42

Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. And it was the same Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. The sisters therefore sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." But when Jesus heard it, He said, "This sickness will not result in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it."

God has been speaking to humanity since His first act of creation. Astronomy, nature and animals, the oceans, and people...from the vastness of space to the complexity of our DNA - our Father is speaking.

As powerful as His voice comes through the things we have just listed, Jesus, God's Son is the crowning jewel of His communication with mankind!