

## JOHN 10:11-21

### JESUS, THE GREAT I AM: I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.’

“There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, ‘He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?’ Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’”<sup>1</sup>

**I**n a previous message, we witnessed the Master presenting Himself as the Door for the sheep. During this particular exchange with the religious leaders, Jesus also portrayed Himself as “the Good Shepherd.” Of course, Christians instantly know that the Son of God is sometimes identified as “the Good Shepherd.” However, what do we know of this Shepherd? Are there aspects of His care for the flock that we have not known? Join me as we explore some of the ramifications of Jesus as the Good Shepherd.

**THE GOOD SHEPHERD** — On three separate occasions, writers of Scripture present Jesus as the Shepherd. Here, in our text, He refers to Himself as “the Good Shepherd.” In **HEBREWS 13:20** Jesus is identified as “the Great Shepherd.” In **1 PETER 5:4**, Peter points those who pastor the flock of God to Jesus “the Chief Shepherd.” Three presentations; three different adjectives—the good, great and chief Shepherd. As *the Good Shepherd*, Jesus offers His life as a sacrifice for the sheep. As *the Great Shepherd*, Jesus, risen from the dead, serves His people. As *the Chief Shepherd*, Jesus shall return to reward those who have faithfully served Him. That first designation of “the Good Shepherd” is the focus of our study this day. Unless the Shepherd sacrifices Himself for the flock, He can neither serve His people nor reward them.

We might well ask, “In what way is the Shepherd good?” What the original readers of this Gospel understand when they read Jesus’ words? The Master used the Greek word *kalós*, which is translated “good,” but here it takes on the implications of “authentic” or “genuine.” Jesus repeatedly emphasises His sacrifice for the benefit of the sheep; so we need to contrast the Shepherd that willingly sacrifices His life for the sheep and the hired hand that watches the sheep for remuneration. “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” [verse 11]. “I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep” [verses 14, 15]. “For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord” [verses 17, 18].

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible, English Standard Version**, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

*The Good Shepherd dies for His sheep.* "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." The death of the Shepherd merits the designation "good." In our text, Jesus emphasises the presentation of His life because of the helpless condition of the sheep. Underscore in your mind this emphasis—Jesus will sacrifice Himself because of the need of the sheep. However, His death will not be a tragedy; neither will His death be futile. Later, the Master will say, "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself." In order to clarify His intent in saying this, John adds, "He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die" [JOHN 12:32, 33]. The death of Jesus our Lord was deliberate—He willingly presented His life in the place of His sheep. The Shepherd will give His life for the sheep.

There are scholars and commentators, not a few, who recognising the nuances of the Greek term, suggest translating this designation of the Master as the "Noble Shepherd," or as the "Worthy Shepherd," or as the "Model Shepherd." What makes the Shepherd's sacrifice such a powerful concept is that Jesus did not die only as a sacrifice, He conquered death by bursting forth from the tomb. This is the reference the Master makes when He says in verses 17 and 18, "I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again." This promise to rise from the dead was a constant theme throughout Jesus' ministry in the flesh.

At other places in John's Gospel, Jesus spoke of giving His life as a sacrifice. For instance, in JOHN 3:14, 15, we read, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life." Again, while presenting Himself as the Light of the world, the Master spoke of being crucified when He said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me" [JOHN 8:28].

What is important for us to see is that only by laying down His life can the Master take it up again—the two are conjoined. Mark makes this quite clear as he records a series of sayings by the Master concerning this truth. These are not mere prophecies, though they are prophetic; these sayings present necessary truth, for it is inconceivable that the Son of God will die unless He conquers death and comes to life again. Though He repeatedly taught the disciples that He would die and rise to life again, they could not truly understand what the Master was saying. Think of the constant repetition of the theme of dying and rising from the dead.

Jesus "began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again" [MARK 8:31].

"The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise" [MARK 9:31]

The disciples "were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, 'See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise'" [MARK 10:32-34].

When Jesus says He "lays down His life for the sheep," the preposition "for" speaks of sacrifice. Throughout John's Gospel, *hupèr* always occurs in a context indicating sacrifice, whether referring to the death of Jesus [JOHN 6:51; 10:11, 15; 11:50 ff.; 17:19; 18:4], referring to Peter [JOHN 13:37, 18], or speaking of a man prepared to die for his friend [JOHN 15:13]. Never does this suggest a death with mere exemplary significance; the death is always on behalf of another.

D. A. Carson aptly observes, "The shepherd does not die for his sheep to serve as an example, throwing himself off a cliff in a grotesque and futile display while bellowing, 'See how much I love you!' No, the assumption is that the sheep are in mortal danger; that in their defence the shepherd loses his life; that by his death they are saved. That, and that alone, is what makes him *the good shepherd*. He carries a cross, not plastic explosives or an Uzi sub-machine-gun."<sup>2</sup>

I suspect that many western Christians have been influenced by artistic renderings of "the Good Shepherd." Pictures of a laughing, effeminate man cuddling a sheep in his arms are presented as "the Good Shepherd." However, shepherding is hard work, and Jesus is quite clear that for the Kingdom to come and for the new life that will permit participation in that Kingdom, the Shepherd must die; otherwise, there is no way for the sheep to enter into that Kingdom.

One of the best-known shepherds in biblical history was David, and one reference from his life will remind us of the cost of shepherding. When David was overheard questioning what should be done about Goliath, he was brought before Saul, who doubted his ability to defend himself against a seasoned warrior such as the raging Philistine. But the shepherd boy was well prepared. "David said to Saul, 'Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. Your servant has struck down both lions and bears'" [1 SAMUEL 17:34-36A].

***The Good Shepherd loves His sheep.*** "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." When the text speaks of knowing, it is evident that Jesus is speaking of intimacy between Himself and His sheep. In fact, he says that the knowledge shared between Himself and the sheep is like that shared between Himself and the Father. This is true fellowship that reflects and is rooted in a shared relationship. For Christians, this describes a union initiated by the Creator and growing out of His redeeming love in which the creature responds in love through Christ. In Christ, man and God meet and share sweet fellowship.

Because of the proliferation of false ideas concerning our union with God, it is necessary to say that as believers, we are not stirred into some cosmic gimish; rather, we enjoy a radical oneness that does not obscure our person. Just as the Triune God is both One and Three, so the believer is one with God, and yet distinct from God. We do not suddenly lose our personality because we are joined to Christ. This relationship is grounded in the love of the Master—love for the Father and love for His flock. Likewise, we both love and are loved by God in Christ.

Let me push this concept just a little farther to point out that as we are added to the congregation, so we enjoy a relationship of love with one another. When one hurts within a congregation, each member hurts; when one rejoices, all rejoice. Whenever you witness a congregation that is run like a business—leaders chosen and dismissed by the power-brokers, focused solely on the numbers attending or the amount of the offerings, measuring effectiveness by commendation from the denominational serpents—you know that the people either have never known the love of God, or they have permitted themselves to be corrupted by illicit desires for power or personal glory, thus jettisoning the love rightfully expected through their practise.

The evidence of Christ's love for the Father is obedience to the will of the Father; the evidence of the Master's love for His sheep is His death for the sheep. We need to remember some truths concerning the death of the Saviour. First, **the Shepherd's death was vicarious**—that is, Christ did not die for His own sin, but rather for ours and in our place. This is evident when He says, "The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."

<sup>2</sup> D. A. Carson, **The Gospel According to John** (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI 1991) 385

Again, in His words, Jesus indicates that **the Shepherd’s death was voluntary**. He said, “I lay down My life that I may take it up again. No one takes it for Me, but I lay it down of My own accord.” Moving inexorably toward the dramatic events of the Passion Week, the Master “set His face to go to Jerusalem” [LUKE 9:51]. As He walked, He spoke of His pending death. Earlier, He had said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised” [LUKE 9:22]. In a short while, He would again inform them that He would shortly offer His life on the cross. “Taking the twelve, he said to them, ‘See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise’” [LUKE 18:31-33].

We know also that **the Shepherd’s death was specific**—that is, Christ died for His sheep. The death of the Saviour was for a specified number of people identified as His sheep. We have no way of knowing who these sheep are; and so we are responsible to seek out His sheep. We do this through evangelising and discipling people. Though we do not know those for whom Jesus died, He knows who belong to Him. We are very foolish if we attempt to determine who is to be saved and who will not be saved—we would do a terrible job. We would have judged Lot as unsaved because of where he lived and how he lived, but the Bible says He was righteous [2 PETER 2:7]. On the other hand, we would have undoubtedly united with the other disciples in saying that Judas was one of Christ’s sheep. However, Jesus said he was a devil [JOHN 6:70]. We are no better with people that surround us. Therefore, we should reach out to all people, calling them to faith and urging them to walk in the grace of God.

Finally, we know **the Shepherd’s death had purpose**—Jesus says it is because He loves the sheep. Admittedly, He says this through speaking of the reason that the hired hand flees, but by implication the Good Shepherd loves the sheep. It is doubtful that any Christian can adequately explain how the Shepherd can love a sheep, but each Christian can tell you that Christ loves him or her. Does not the children’s hymn communicate this truth eloquently?

Jesus loves me, this I know;  
For the Bible tells me so.

***The Good Shepherd unites His sheep.*** “I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.” With these words, Jesus introduced a thought that is hard to grasp. The sheep of which He speaks are already His sheep, for He says they have been given to Him by the Father [verse 16]! This is but an anticipation of a statement the Master would soon make at the Feast of Dedication. You will undoubtedly recall Jesus’ words, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will 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” [JOHN 10:27-30].

In the past, I have often been hard on the hired hand. It is true that Jesus says the hired hand cares for his own safety and not the welfare of the sheep. I said he was working only for what he could get out of the job. I’m not so certain now; after all, the hired hand was appointed by the Good Shepherd. I previously taught that the hired hand was a charlatan, a pretender that had never known the grace of God in Christ the Lord. On reflection and after studying the issue, I believe the hired hand speaks of people that have a legitimate place within the flock of God.

In fact, the hired hand can be any one of us who performs the duties assigned by the Holy Spirit while seeking praise for ourselves, seeking power over others rather than opportunities to serve, or serving for any reason other than a desire to honour the Master. It is very difficult to have perfectly pure motives in our service. That does not, however, excuse us. The Good Shepherd serves the interest of His sheep; and we, also, must serve the interest of the flock. Perhaps we anticipate impure or mixed motives in political life, or even in the business world; but among the assemblies of our Master another, purer motive are expected.

Rather than brash exclusiveness that is often exhibited among evangelicals, we should work at accepting one another as brothers—fellow sheep gathered by the Master. Barclay, in his commentary on the Gospel of John, gives an example of Christ uniting His sheep. He writes, “Egerton Young was the first missionary to the Red Indians. In Saskatchewan he went out and told them of the love of God. To the Indians it was like a new revelation. When the missionary had told his message, an old chief said: ‘When you spoke of the great Spirit just now, did I hear you say, “Our Father?”’ ‘Yes,’ said Egerton Young. ‘That is very new and sweet to me,’ said the chief. ‘We never thought of the great Spirit as Father. We heard him in the thunder; we saw him in the lightning, the tempest and the blizzard, and we were afraid. So when you tell us that the great Spirit is *our Father*, that is very beautiful to us.’ The old man paused, and then he went on, as a glimpse of glory suddenly shone on him. ‘Missionary, did you say that the great Spirit is *your Father*?’ ‘Yes,’ said the missionary. ‘And,’ said the chief, ‘did you say that he is *the Indians*’ Father?’ ‘I did,’ said the missionary. ‘Then,’ said the old chief, like a man on whom a dawn of joy had burst, ‘*you and I are brothers!*’”<sup>3</sup>

There is one truth that deserves our focus. The Master said of the other sheep, “I must bring them also.” It is that *must* that demands attention. When I say I “must” do something, it may be done. However, when the Master says He “must” to something, it will be done. So, there are other sheep that He must bring in. Throughout this Age of Grace, the method God has chosen for bringing in the sheep given His Son has been the preaching of the Good News: “God was pleased to save those who believe by the foolishness of preaching”<sup>4</sup> [1 CORINTHIANS 1:21].

Should preaching be denigrated or relegated to a mere anachronistic liturgical function within marginalised congregations, we may conclude that either the full number of sheep sought is nearing completion or the Faith is dying in our day. However, so long as the people of God call all who hear to faith in the Living Son of God, the Spirit of Christ will still be at work. Until the Master removes His people from this earth, His Spirit will work through them—now calling and now saving all who respond to His call.

Frankly, this knowledge energises me. I hear Jesus saying that He must bring in the other sheep—my Gentile brothers and sisters—and I am constrained to “go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in” to the banquet He has prepared [see LUKE 14:23]. I speak, knowing that some will hear and respond because they are His sheep. I do not know who they are, but I know that they are waiting to be brought in by His Spirit. Perhaps this includes you. Quite possibly some who listen today will find their hearts opened to receive life in God’s One and Only Son, and so I speak with boldness to tell you the truth. I know that if I proclaim the message of the cross, some will believe. I know that if I point all men to Jesus, His sheep will believe. I know that if I speak, exhibiting the power of the Spirit, some will believe. Therefore, I proclaim this message, knowing that God is at work, even in the lives of some that now listen.

<sup>3</sup> William Barclay, *The Gospel of John: Volume 2, The Daily Study Bible Series* (Westminster, Philadelphia, PA 1975, rev. ed., 2000) 64, *italics* in the original.

<sup>4</sup> **NET Bible, First Edition** (Biblical Studies Press, 2006)

**FULFILLING THE FATHER’S WILL** — “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

As we read these words, it becomes obvious that the Father’s love for the Son is intimately related to the sacrifice of His life for the welfare of the sheep. This offering of His life was not an accident; rather, it was determined before the creation of the world. Peter instructs us as Christians to, “Conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God” [1 PETER 1:17b-21].

The love of the Father for the Son is eternally linked with the unqualified obedience of the Son to the will of the Father. The utter dependence of the Son of God on the Father culminates in His death on the cross. His willingness to bear the humiliation and disgrace of crucifixion, accepting the bitter cup of rejection and separation from the Father, was the ultimate demonstration of Jesus’ love for the Father—love revealed through His obedience.

One of the most precious portions of the Old Testament is the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the suffering servant. Wrapped up in that prophecy are truths that are difficult to understand, but that are nevertheless vital to our spiritual well-being.

He was despised and rejected by men;  
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;  
and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised,  
and we esteemed him not.

Surely he has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed him stricken,  
smitten by God, and afflicted.  
But he was wounded for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with his stripes we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned—every one—to his own way;  
and the LORD has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so he opened not his mouth.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away;  
and as for his generation, who considered  
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people?  
And they made his grave with the wicked  
and with a rich man in his death,  
although he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;  
he has put him to grief;  
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,  
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;  
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.  
Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;  
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,  
make many to be accounted righteous,  
and he shall bear their iniquities.  
Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,  
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,  
because he poured out his soul to death  
and was numbered with the transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of many,  
and makes intercession for the transgressors.

[ISAIAH 53:3-12]

Focus especially on the fourth, sixth and tenth verses. "We esteemed Him smitten by God, and afflicted." "The LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "It was the will of the LORD to crush Him; He has put Him to grief." The Master accepted this task out of love for the Father, and in order to redeem those whom the Father would give Him. What is vital for us to see is that the Father's love is not conditioned on the obedience of the Son, for God is love. Therefore, the Son's continued sinless obedience maintains the harmony of relations between Himself and the Father.

This same condition is revealed in our relationship to the Son. He does not stop loving us because we sin, but when we sin we have removed ourselves from the sphere of His active love. This is the reason Jesus says to His disciples, "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love" [JOHN 15:10]. This is also the reason we need the promise given in 1 JOHN 1:8, 9. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

**CONTROVERSIAL TO THE WORLD** — “There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, ‘He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?’ Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’” John writes, “There was *again* a division.” There had been a division after Jesus had healed the man born blind [JOHN 9:17], and there had been a division after He had offered Himself as the Light of the world and as the Fountain that satisfies thirsting souls [JOHN 7:43]. Throughout the day, as He spoke, Jesus generated controversy and His words divided the people. The division was along the major fault line that separated those who believed He was the Messiah and those who thought they could use Him if He would only listen to them.

His gracious words rebuked those who trusted in themselves, as it must surely have stung those who were hoping to garner glory for themselves. So, some within the crowd levelled a serious charge—that Jesus was insane. Since insanity was thought to be caused by demon possession, they also charged that He was demon-possessed. However, before Jesus could respond, some within the crowd responded to this blasphemous attempt to slander the Master, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?” Their assumption was that demons caused illness, not healed illness. All who were present that day would have agreed with that assumption under other circumstances; but rage distorts reason, and the Pharisees, in particular, were enraged.

The reference to Jesus giving sight to the blind appears to hearken back to JOHN 9:1-41. This provides a timeline, indicating that the text records a discourse that took place during the Feast of Booths. The account of Jesus’ words and actions during that day began with JOHN 7:10 and continue through to the end of our text. The Pharisees were chafing at the assertion that they were spiritually blind, and they seized the opportunity to ridicule Jesus because of His teaching.

In the same way, the Word of the Master divides mankind to this day. Many are insulted by the thought that they are helpless to do anything to make themselves acceptable to God. Therefore, they attempt to be religious, labouring to perform religious duties, in a vain effort to compel God to accept them. Others respond to the knowledge that they need a Saviour by rejecting any suggestion that someone would need to die because of them. They argue with Holy God that they are just as good as anyone else, though they are unwilling to accept that they are just as bad as anyone else.

It is one thing when mankind in general is divided by the call of the Master to believe in Him; but it is even more tragic that within the evangelical world are a disheartening number of church members who reject the teaching of the Word. They do not want to be confronted with the need for repentance; they only want to hear pleasantries that make them feel good about themselves. They do not want to be challenged by great thoughts; they are content to listen to soothing platitudes that change nothing. Even among the churches of our Lord, it becomes evident that Christ the Lord continues to be divisive.

This situation is nothing less than the fulfilment of the Apostle’s warning to Timothy. “The time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths” [2 TIMOTHY 4:3, 4]. Who would have thought that the Master would be divisive among His professed followers? Perhaps some of these of whom Paul writes are unsaved, but the indication is that these are actually redeemed people who have determined that they will not tolerate strong teaching, much as the people around Jesus on the day of our text were unwilling to listen to what He said.



However, I am convinced of better things for you. I am convinced that you want to hear the Word of God taught in power, that you want to receive sound exposition of the Word, and that you want to know the will of God. I am convinced that you long for the Master to be glorified through His people as they obey His Word. Therefore, I am very bold to proclaim Him and to declare His Word in your presence.

But, what if you are offended by this presentation of Christ as Lord of life? Is it possible that you do not know Him? Is it possible that you have yet to be born from above? The Good Shepherd died because of your sin, and He lives to give you life. He gave His life as a sacrifice for your sin, and He rose from the tomb on the third day. Because He lives, you, also, can live. The Word of the Living God declares, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved" [ROMANS 10:9, 10].

That is not difficult. One need only confess Jesus as Lord, believing that He was raised from the dead. It is by faith in Him, the Risen, Living Saviour, that we are forgiven all sin and born from above and into the Kingdom of God. The call of God through the Apostle promise, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" [ROMANS 10: 13].

Believe the message. Receive the Master. Accept the life that is now offered to everyone, thus proving to be one of His sheep. Amen.