



Supper-time Conversations

Through the Gospel of St John

by

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"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."

John 10:11

— GJ3 —



CHRIST-CONFESSING
METHODIST CHURCH

AGAINST THIS CHRIST-DENYING WORLD

John 10:1-2 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep."

The Lord Jesus Christ emphasise the absolute truth of what He is about to say. The King James version reads: "Verily, verily I say unto you." This means: "From the depth of my heart and in complete sincerity I am telling you . . ." In these terms Jesus makes it a clear statement that He is the ONLY WAY to the Father and door into the Kingdom of God.

Our Lord goes further and states that all who try to enter His Church (sheepfold) except through Him are wanting to plunder and destroy His sheep's relationship with the living God. That includes Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and Buddhism. It also includes "Christianity" as a religion but not a relationship with the living God. They strive for one world religion and "Christian" ministers and teachers who encourage dialogue with thieves and robbers. There are also thieves and robbers who preach and teach the Christian faith for the sake of money.

Read: Jer. 23:16-40 and 1 Peter 5:2. "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve.

Pray: My Father, thank you for Jesus the good shepherd who unlike the birds who had nests and foxes their holes had no place for His head, but He died for me. Amen.

John 10:3 “To Him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out.” The **doorkeeper** is the one who guards the only entrance to the sheepfold. The sheep are brought into the outer area of the owner's property. It was a large area that surrounded his home. This was fenced or walled for the greater protection of his sheep. Only a thief or robber would try to breach the wall or climb over it. The shepherd would also bind up the injured sheep and care for the sick ones. The Shepherd who owns the sheep knows them intimately and by name. The sheep also recognize His voice and discern what He has in mind for them.

Isa 1:3 The doorkeeper readily opens for the shepherd because He has the authority to enter and exit through the gate or door and they follow Him. He leads them to green pastures.

Read: Ezekiel 34:1-31 and note verse 31 “You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.

The Church which is the body of Christ in the world is the Sheepfold. They are the faithful congregations and the Children of God who have been scattered by false shepherds, teachers and prophets — who have fed themselves and not the flock of God. We shall note later that Jesus said “I am the **door of the sheepfold.**” i.e. The door of the Church.

Pray: Dear God help me to know You, Your Word and guidance and not to be fooled by my own likes and dislikes. You are my Shepherd, O Lord lead me. Amen.

John 10:4-6 “And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

When the Good Shepherd brings His sheep to the green pastures he turns them loose, but does not desert them or drive them ahead of Him but He goes before them and they follow Him gladly.

Matthew Henry points out how sheep fitly describes the children of God. They depend entirely on their creator, as they are the sheep of HIS pasture. They are harmless, inoffensive, meek, quiet, patient under the hand of both the shearer and the butcher. Also they get on with one another. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him. Those who heard Jesus did not understand what He was talking about. To understand it read Psalm 23. Note that the Lord who is the shepherd is referred to in the third person in verses 1 - 3. The third person - he, she or it - is commonly understood as referring to someone impersonal and distant. In the first three verses the shepherd is distant by the still waters, in the restoration of his soul, in the paths of righteousness and for the sake of the shepherd's name. When the sheep pass through the valley - not of death, but its shadow - the shepherd is very near and it is an “I - You” relationship and not a “I - He” relationship to the end. This is possible through the suffering of the cross.

Pray: Lord, you are my good shepherd. You laid down Your life for me and I owe my life to YOU! Amen.

John 10:7-9 Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door; whoever enters through me will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. It may sound strange and confusing that in this parable Jesus is claiming to be both the door and the shepherd. Note John 10:7 and 9 as the DOOR and verses 11 and 14 as the GOOD SHEPHERD. Christ is probably striking at those who are trying to establish their own righteousness (Romans 10:1-3). They are like the Sodomites who wearied themselves to find the door where it was not to be found (Gen. 19:11-12). To them Jesus emphasizes that He Himself is the door. The Pharisees who convinced themselves that they were the only qualified shepherds of the flock but that flock of sheep belonged to God and Jesus had the authority given to Him by His Father, to be both the High Priest and the Sacrifice.

Jesus enters the Holy of Holies by His blood that was shed for our salvation. He pleads with the Father for mercy on our behalf and He speaks to us on behalf of the Father. Jesus clearly implies to be THE DOOR of the Church. "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn." Zech. 12:10

Pray: Lead me Good Shepherd, whom I pierced, to the door Yourself. Amen.

John 10:10-11 "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. **I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.** I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.**

You only have one life to live and it will soon be past. Only what God has done through your life will last. The meaning and fulfilment of life is only to be found in you doing the will of God.

While you are in bondage to your own will, meaningful and abundant life will pass you by. You will never have a fulfilling life because the reason for which the Creator made humankind will remain unattainable and undesirable. Your life, no matter how successful you have been, will be void of logic, reason or meaning. God made you for Himself and for that to become a reality you must be released from the power of your own will. Christ came that we might have LIFE to the full. We have to be liberated from bondage to our own will and desires. It is not difficult but impossible! If you are serious about your inabilities then Jesus Christ says to you "The thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come that you may have life, and that you may have it more abundantly." If you are in bondage then give your life fully to the Lord.

Pray: Lord, You laid down Your life for me. Please take this life of mine and make it Yours. Then shall I have life abundant. Amen.

John 10:12-15 “But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.”

The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. “I am the good shepherd and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father and I lay down My life for the sheep.

Ex 33:17 So the Lord said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.”

Ps 37:18 The Lord knows the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever.

Read: John 17:3. The ONLY valid entry into heaven is knowing intimately the Father and the Son and that they know you by name. The identity and destiny of those Christians who do know Him and are not known by Him are found in Matt 7:20-23; Matt 25:11-13; Luke 13:22-23 and John 5:41-42. An eight year old lad went for a walk in the snow when a sudden blizzard struck. Five days later his lifeless body was found tightly clutching his ring finger. His Sunday School teacher had taught him Psalm 23. He would hold a different finger for each word of the first line and died clutching the word “MY” Shepherd.

Pray: Lord when I pass through the valley of death and not its shadow — please be MY shepherd, near to me. Amen.

John 10:16 - 21 “And **other sheep I have** which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and **there will be one flock and one shepherd**. Therefor **My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again**. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down Myself. **I have power to lay it down; and I have power to take it up again. This command I have received from My Father.**” Therefore, there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. And many of them said, “He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?” Others said, “**These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?**”

Other Sheep: This has no connection with Christ ever wanting to unite all religions. But rather from freeing people from all religions. Then there will be one Shepherd and one flock. Christ knew that the mission of Israel was to bring light to the Gentiles. It was for the fulfilment of God's purposes that God preserved them as a nation. By His blood Christ purchased the Gentiles. He called them His sheep. It was not a little flock of the Jewish Church but another world wide flock (Eph 2:11-22). Christ takes down the pride and vanity of the Jews by telling them that He has these other Sheep, whom they called dogs. Was He demonic? Neither His actions, manner or teachings could endorse that idea.

Pray: My feeble, selfish ambitions and vain conceits, have so powerful a hold on me. Lord save me. Amen.