

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY
“The Gospel of John”
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Lesson 43: John 10:7-21 “Abundance or Deprivation?”

⁷ So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² 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. ¹³ He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

- a. **“I am the...”** – Jesus broadens their understanding of the difference between Himself and counterfeits, and why to trust in Him!
- b. **“All who came before Me are thieves and robbers”** – Jesus’ condemnation of those religious leaders, who mandated perfect obedience to God’s Law as a condition to receive God’s love. They ‘robbed’ the people of the joy and security found in being God’s ‘beloved’ as an unconditional gift from God.
 - a. **“thieves and robbers”** – Two kinds of:
 - i. Thieves & robbers, which **break into** our lives, unwelcomed...
 - 1. Philosophies & theologies which obviously corrupt or deny God’s promise of grace: teaching
 - a. that obedience to God makes us worthy of grace
 - b. that, since God loves all people, there is no need for believing exclusively in Jesus
 - c. God doesn’t exist, so live for yourself
 - d. that God’s Word is not the final authority or the universal Truth
 - ii. Thieves & robbers, which **we unwittingly invite** into our lives:
 - 1. Philosophies & theologies which stealthily corrupt or deny God’s promise of your worth: teaching
 - a. Your value & identity is based on what you have accomplished
 - b. Your loveability is based on how much public approval you have
 - c. Your worth is based on how useful you are (utilitarianism) and how much power you have.

- d. How you feel is evidence of God’s presence and the basis for your confidence in His promises.

“thieves and robbers”	“Shepherd of the sheep”
“sheep did not listen to them”	“I am the door...enters by Me”
	“saved, go in and out, find pasture”
“steal and kill and destroy”	“have life and have it abundantly”
	“the good Shepherd”
“sees the wolf, leaves, and flees”	“lays down His life for the sheep”
“wolf snatches...and scatters them”	
“hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep”	

- c. **“If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved”** – the verb indicates both the action of being saved (from sin and death), as well as, the effect (being “kept safe” from the fear, shame, and guilt as products of sin and death).
- d. **“find pasture.”** – *“He makes me lie down in green pastures”* – **Psalm 23.**
- e. **“thief...steal...kill...destroy** – Thieves in today’s world come in “sheep’s clothing,” appearing to offer life, appealing to people’s basic insecurities, promising a better outcome – but whose intent is to destroy the relationship you have with the shepherd.
- f. **I...have life and...abundantly”** – Jesus contrasts the true intent of the false shepherd (thief) versus Himself.
- a. **“Abundantly”** – living life in spiritual oneness with Jesus; a reality in Christ, which provides a state of mind/heart, which “sees” God’s goodness
 - i. In the joy of forgiveness
 - ii. Empowered to serve
 - iii. Knowing you are loved and not alone!
 - iv. Knowing that eternity in heaven awaits you, and
 - v. Knowing you can trust in God’s presence, mercy, and love EVEN IF you don’t feel it or perceive it in the world around you.
 - b. **Psalm 145:8-20.** *The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹ The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The LORD is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.]^[b] The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. ¹⁶ You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. ¹⁷ The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works. ¹⁸ The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ¹⁹ He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them. ⁰ The LORD preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.*
- g. **“the wolf”** – the devil or any other spiritual threats to the sheep

- a. **“snatches”** – grabs the sheep, slaughters it, and eats it
- b. **“scatters”** – frightens the sheep into leaving the safety of the flock, rendering it alone and vulnerable to attack.

¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ 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.”

- a. **“I am the good Shepherd”** – the real Shepherd, who truly loves His sheep.
- b. **“I know...the Father knows...”** – to intimately “know,” not mere knowledge or information about.
- c. **“I lay down My life for the sheep.”** – the ultimate evidence of the “true shepherd,” is His love and willingness to sacrifice His own safety and life – in order to protect and save His sheep. Jesus modeled, for His disciples, the true nature of spiritual leadership: self sacrifice
- d. **“I have other sheep”** – as Jesus speaks to His Jewish audience, He lays claim to the fact that Gentiles will also believe in Him. His openness to non-Jewish people was a struggle for people who had been taught, from childhood, that being the “*chosen people*” consisted of being born a Jew.
- e. **“one flock, one Shepherd”** – believers in Jesus, regardless of their heritage, race, or nationality, were included in Jesus’ flock.
- f. **“I lay down my life that I may take it up again.”** – Jesus’ willingness to sacrifice His own life, in the knowledge that He will rise again.

¹⁹ There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” ²¹ Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

- a. **“again a division...because of these words.”** – Jesus’ assertion of Himself as “the good shepherd” resonated with the people. The Pharisees and others who opposed Jesus, refused to listen – and in fact – accused Him of being demonic.
 - a. Notice a shift occurring in the thinking/attitudes of Jesus’ detractors: they are hardening their positions against Jesus, thus reducing the possibility of their coming to faith in Him.
 - i. What started out as the fear of losing their identity as Jews (i.e. adherence to religious laws and sabbath observances), now is becoming a hardened resolve to kill His reputation among the people.
 - ii. Hardening of one’s heart always begins with the choice of choosing self over God; then building a life around that selfishness; then defending it; and if need be, killing off any threat to it.