

A WORD ON WORSHIP

REVIEW OF MESSAGE FROM MAY 1, 2016

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John 10:14-17

“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. “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.”



One of the most common images in the Bible is that of the shepherd and his sheep. Even if we have not grown up on a farm, we should have little trouble grasping this imagery, because it is so commonly spoken of in the Bible. We should remember that God’s chosen people were shepherds. Abraham was a keeper of sheep (*Genesis 13:3*). Jacob, too, was a shepherd, and this is how he became wealthy while working for Laban, caring for his flocks (*Genesis 30:43*). When Jacob and his family went to join Joseph in Egypt, they were shepherds which is part of the reason why the Egyptians avoided intermarrying with the Hebrews (*Genesis 46:33-34*). If Judah married a Canaanite and allowed his sons to do likewise (*Genesis 38*), it would not have been long until the tribe of Judah (from which the Messiah would come) would have ceased to exist as a distinct tribe. Since the Egyptians loathed shepherds, they would not have considered intermarrying with the Hebrews.

The imagery of a shepherd and his flock thus provided a picture of the way God cared for His people, and thus this imagery also serves as a model for human leaders. God cares for His people as a shepherd cares for his flock. Human leaders are likewise to rule over men as a shepherd tends his flock. I believe we can safely infer that God prepared Moses to lead the Israelites by first having him serve as a shepherd in the wilderness for 40 years. God likewise prepared David for leadership by his experience as a shepherd in the days of his youth.

The best thing about being a sheep is that we belong to the “Good Shepherd.” Sheep belong to the Shepherd, who owns them. Under His care, they are tenderly looked after, and all of their needs are met. As David put it, “The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing” (*Psalms 23:1*). He leads us; He protects us, and He goes after us when we wander too far from Him. And best of all, He gave His life for the sheep, so that we might have eternal life.

God is infinitely bigger than any leader the world has ever seen. Who could resist if He chose to rule over men as a cosmic tyrant? And yet He has chosen to lead His own people as a shepherd tends his flock. He loves His church as a groom loves his bride. He leads His church as a shepherd tends his flock. There is no other kind of leadership I would rather be under than that of the Good Shepherd.

Sunrise Community Church
Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst
EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.

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