

**Peace** be with you. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In the previous lesson, we heard the Lord Jesus tell His disciples that **He must die in Jerusalem and rise from the dead on the third day**. Jesus knew that He had been born into the world to shed His blood as a sacrifice that takes away sin. Last time, we also saw the Lord Jesus display His great glory when He was on the mountain with three of His disciples. The face of Jesus shone like the sun, and His clothes radiated a shining pure light. Thus, the glory of God, which resided in Jesus revealed itself.

Today we would like to continue in the holy Gospel and hear how the Lord Jesus compared those who followed Him with **contented sheep**. We have already seen in the Writings of the Prophets that God repeatedly compares the children of Adam to **lost sheep without a shepherd**. However, God does not want the children of Adam to perish like sheep without a shepherd. That is the reason He sent down from heaven a mighty Shepherd to guide us in the way of peace and to save us from our most vicious enemies: Satan, sin, death and hell. **Do you know the Good Shepherd**, whom God sent to the children of Adam? If you do not, we invite you to listen carefully to today's lesson.

We are in the Gospel of John, chapter ten. One day, Jesus said to the crowd gathered around Him:

*I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a **thief and a robber**. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep... Jesus used **this figure of speech**, but they did not understand what he was telling them. Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I*

*am the gate for the sheep... **I am the gate**; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. **I am the good shepherd**. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me--just as [God] the Father knows me and I know the Father-and I lay down my life for the sheep... The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life-only to 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 authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."*

*At these words the Jews were again divided. Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?" But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"*

*The Jews gathered round him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. **I and the Father are one.**" Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from [God] the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"*

*"We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, **claim to be God.**" Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? If he called them 'gods', to whom the word of God came--and the Scripture cannot be broken--what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'? Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, **even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.**" Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.*

Did you hear what Jesus said to the Jews? Since our time does not allow us to explain all the words of Jesus in detail, we will centre our thoughts upon **two of the names** by which Jesus referred to Himself. Did you hear them? Those two names are: **The Gate for the sheep** and **the Good Shepherd**.

First we heard that, after Jesus compared the children of Adam with **sheep**, He said to the crowd, *"I am the gate for the sheep...whoever enters through me will be saved."* Why did Jesus call Himself *"the Gate for the sheep"*? In those days, a shepherd would make an enclosure of thorny branches or rocks, constructed with a single doorway by which the flock could enter. When evening came and the sheep had entered, the shepherd himself would sleep in the doorway of the sheep pen to guard his sheep. Thus, before any wild animal could enter the pen and kill a sheep, it would have to come through the doorway where the shepherd lay. The shepherd would then chase the wild animal away before it could harm the sheep. In this way the shepherd himself was *"the gate for the sheep."*

The Lord Jesus called Himself *"the Gate for the sheep."* This means that Jesus cares for all those who belong to Him. This also means that before you can become a part of

God's "flock," **you must come through Jesus**. Whoever wants to be saved from the snares of Satan, from the penalty of sin, from the power of death and the punishment of eternal hell must pass through Jesus. He alone is the door that can admit sinners into eternal life. That is why God's Word says: *"Salvation is found in **no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.**"* Jesus is the one and only door to Salvation.

Can you remember what we read some time ago concerning the prophet Noah and the flood? How many doors did God command Noah to make in the boat which would be a refuge to all who wanted to escape the judgment of the flood? **Only one door**. Anyone who wanted to escape the flood had to go through the one door of the boat. Whoever entered through the door was **saved**. Whoever did not enter through the door **perished!** Similarly, concerning the Day of Judgment, the Holy Scriptures confirm to us that God has opened only one door of salvation for the children of Adam. The Messiah Himself is the Door that can admit people into eternal life. That is why Jesus said, *"**I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved...but the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber!**"*

The second name by which Jesus referred to Himself is much like the first one. Jesus is not only *"the Gate for the sheep,"* He is also *"**the Good Shepherd.**"* Jesus is the Good Shepherd, because He is the One who loved us and gave His life for us. Oh, what a wonderful Shepherd He is! Concerning Him, the prophet David, wrote in the twenty-third Psalm, or *Zabur*, saying:

*"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the*

*shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever!"*

What we need to realize is that the Messiah Himself is the Good Shepherd of whom David wrote. That is why Jesus could say, *"I am the good shepherd!"* and, *"I and [God] the Father are one!"*

However, when Jesus declared that He was **one with God**, the Jews accused Him of blasphemy and picked up stones to throw at Him. They could not accept the idea that Jesus was God in a human body. To this very day, most of the children of Adam stumble over these words of Jesus. Some mistakenly think that to say Jesus is one with God must mean that there are two Gods. But that is not the way it is, for the Scriptures of the Prophets clearly declare the unity of God, saying: *"The Lord our God is One!"* **But the fact that "God is One" did not prevent God from revealing Himself on earth as a man.**

Perhaps **an illustration** will help. Think about the sun that shines on the earth giving us light and heat. How many such suns do we have? Only one. Where is the sun? It is far out in space, yet it is also here on earth, penetrating our lives with its life-giving sunshine. The fiery sun and the warm sunshine are one. In the same way, God and Jesus are one. Jesus said, *"I and [God] the Father are one!"* The Lord Jesus came into our world to communicate the light of God's love and salvation to us. Listen to what the Holy Scriptures declare about God and Jesus:

*"Our God is a consuming fire...who lives in unapproachable light!...No man has ever seen God, but God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known....The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his*

*being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven!...God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in [Jesus Christ]!...**In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form!**"*

Yes, that is what the Word of God declares: "***In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form!***" Thus, the Lord Jesus could say, "*I and [God] the Father are one!*" Christ Jesus is **the Good Shepherd** who came from heaven, became a man, lived on earth, and laid down His holy life in order to redeem us from the curse which our sin brought. He is also the One who rose from the dead and offers eternal life to all who believe in Him. That is why Jesus could say:

*"I am the good shepherd...I lay down my life for the sheep...only to 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 authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."*

Beyond all question, Jesus is "*the Good Shepherd,*" because **He is the One who loved us enough to give His life for us!**

Before we say goodbye, let us listen once more to the wonderful words of the Lord Jesus, who said:

***I am the gate;** whoever enters through me will be saved... but the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. **I am the good shepherd.** The good shepherd **lays down his life** for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away... *I am the good shepherd... **My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand!***"*

**Who are you following?** Are you following **the Good Shepherd**? Or are you following someone else?

Thank you for listening. Please join us for the next program to hear what Jesus taught about the compassion that fills the heart of God....

God bless you as you remember what Jesus the Messiah said about Himself:

*"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved! ...I am the good shepherd.*

*The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep!"*

If you would like more information about *The Way of Righteousness*, please visit the website: [TWOR.com](http://TWOR.com). That web site again is [TWOR.com](http://TWOR.com)