

What Saith the Scripture?

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His Sheep Hear and Follow

"My sheep hear My Voice, and I know them, and they follow Me"

(John 10:27).

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Preface

It is an absolute fact of Truth straight from the mouth of God, that His sheep are the ones who hear His Voice and respond with the obedience of following. This is the plain and simple of it. If you belong to Him, your life will show it. If your life does not show it, if obedience to Him is not the Standard in EVERY aspect of who you are, if His Opinions, Desires, and Laws do not command your opinions, desires, and laws-- then you are "none of His" (Romans 8:9). "Them that believed were of one heart and of one soul" (Acts 4:32).

Sheep are followers. They are not free thinkers nor creative innovators. They simply follow their shepherds. As members of the non-moral animal kingdom, sheep instinctively follow. But in using the Parable of sheep and shepherds, the LORD Jesus applies morality when He calls Himself "the Good Shepherd" (John 10:11). "Good" as opposed to bad is a moral issue. A shepherd has responsibilities to his sheep, and whenever responsibility enters a discussion, morality enters, "as the duty of every day required" (2Chronicles 8:14). And where morality is concerned, the concepts of right and wrong are definitive. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). It is for this reason, of showing moral duty, that the Saviour calls Himself "the Good Shepherd" (John 10:11). And where there is moral duty, obligation is also definitive. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His Commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Since the title "Good Shepherd" equals the Saviour, Who "giveth His Life for the sheep" (John 10:11), His sheep are those who truly follow the Saviour, who are those grateful beings for whom He gave His Life. And when referring to "sheep" as a parallel to human beings, the LORD's Parable symbolizes "moral" "sheep", complete with duty and responsible to Him. "My sheep **hear** My Voice, and I know them, and they **follow** Me" (10:27). This obedience identifies **conclusively** who are the sheep "the Good Shepherd" (10:11) has "in hand." "Whoso KEEPETH His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: **hereby know** we that we are in Him" (1John 2:5).

"28 And I give unto them Eternal Life; and they shall never perish,
neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.

29 My Father, which gave them Me, is Greater Than All;
and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand.

30 I and My Father are One."

(John 10:28-30).

And disobedience identifies conclusively who are the backslidden or falsely professing sheep belonging to the false shepherd. "These speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" (Jude 1:10). If you say you are

a Christian, a sheep of the Good Shepherd, but do not follow in obedience the Voice of the Good Shepherd, then you are either a "backslider in heart" (Proverbs 14:14), with *no right* to bear His Name (e.g., "The LORD knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity" [2Timothy 2:19]), or you never were saved in the first place (e.g., "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us" [1John 2:19]). The ONLY way to PROVE your profession in Christ, is to OBEY CHRIST. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the Devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God" (1John 3:10). [For help in overcoming sin and the deception of false doctrine, PLEASE read, "[That Ye May Know That Ye Have Eternal Life: The Biblical Doctrine of the Assurance of Salvation, Or, Only Those Who Abide in Christ May Know That They Have Eternal Life](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/That.Ye.May.Know.That.Ye.html)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/That.Ye.May.Know.That.Ye.html> -- and also read "[Must We Then Sin? : A Response to the Doctrine of Sin Nature or the Doctrine of Original Sin, Or, A Clarification of What is Sin, Why We Sin, and How Not to Sin](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/Must.We.Then.Sin.html)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Fellowship/Must.We.Then.Sin.html> --.]

Sheep are *professing* Christians. They *call* themselves Christian. Scripture tells us that the lost of this world are referred to as "goats". "32 Before Him [King Jesus] shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world... 41 Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:32-34,41). Real Christians are fully known by their Good Shepherd, for "He calleth His Own sheep by name, and leadeth them" (John 10:3).

(John 10:1-6) "1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep **hear** his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. 4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep **follow** him: for they **know** his voice. 5 And a stranger will they NOT follow, but will FLEE from him: for **they know not the voice of strangers**. 6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them."

Sheep, we call ourselves. But, truly, do we follow our Good Shepherd, or a "thief and a robber"?

The Struggle

In the spirit world, there are "spiritual blessings in Heavenly Places" (Ephesians 1:3), and "spiritual wickedness in high places" (6:12). In the invisible "world to come" (Matthew 12:32), there are two forces, two laws, which determine two destinies. The One is Good, and that is Jehovah, for "there is none Good but One, that is, God: but IF thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments" (Matthew 19:17). This verse clearly shows the One, and what He expects of those who hope to live with Him. The other is evil, and that is Satan. "He was a murderer from the beginning, and ABODE NOT IN THE TRUTH, because there is no Truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). The choice is between these two ONLY. "9:50 Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us... 11:23 He that is not with Me is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth" (Luke 9:50; 11:23). The sheep are either gathered to the LORD, "that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no Shepherd" (Numbers 27:17), or

scattered from Him to the Devil. Jesus said, "37 Ye seek to kill Me, because My Word hath NO PLACE in you. 38 I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father... 44 Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (8:37-38,44).

The struggle between the two spirit shepherds is for the sheep-- the One, the True Shepherd, is to do good for them, the other, the counterfeit shepherd, is to destroy them.

- For the Good Shepherd, the goal is to give Life to His sheep, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive Forgiveness of sins, and Inheritance among them which are sanctified by Faith that is in Me [Jesus]" (Acts 26:18).
- For the evil shepherd, "whose own the sheep are not" (John 10:12), the goal for the sheep is destruction and death by sin, for "he that committeth sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil" (1John 3:8).

(John 10:7-13) "7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am The Door of the sheep. 8 ALL that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did NOT hear them. 9 I am the Door: by Me **if any man enter in, he shall be saved**, and shall go in and out, and find Pasture. 10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly. 11 I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His Life for the sheep. 12 But he that is an hireling, and not the Shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep [the punishment for disobedient "professing" sheep who follow not the Good Shepherd]. 13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth NOT for the sheep."

The Responsibilities of the Good Shepherd and of His Sheep

- The Good Shepherd **MUST** know the sheep in His fold. The sheep **MUST** know their Shepherd from among those who claim to be their shepherd.

(John 10:14) "I am the Good Shepherd, and **know** My sheep, and **am known** of Mine."

- The Good Shepherd **MUST** give of Himself entirely for the benefit of His flock.

(John 10:15) "...and I lay down **My Life** for the sheep."

- The Good Shepherd **MUST** bring in His complete flock, and the sheep **MUST** follow or they can't be a part of the fold.

(John 10:16) "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: **them also I**

MUST bring, and they shall hear My Voice; and there shall be one fold,
and One Shepherd."

- The Good Shepherd has the responsibility to reveal the True Path to His sheep, but He will not force those who will not follow Him.

(John 10:19-21,24-27) "19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these Sayings. 20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye Him? 21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?... 24 Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. 25 Jesus answered them, I TOLD YOU, AND YE BELIEVED NOT: the **Works that I do** in My Father's Name, they **bear witness** of Me. 26 But YE BELIEVE NOT, BECAUSE YE ARE NOT OF MY SHEEP, as I said unto you. 27 My sheep **hear** My Voice, and I know them, and they **follow** Me."

Therefore, as sheep of the Good Shepherd, Christians MUST "11 put on the whole armour of God, that [we] may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers [demons] of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:11). Our history is our warning, "wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:" (2:2). But our Saviour From Sin And Sinning assures us, "as the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My Life for the sheep" (John 10:15).

"3 Blessed be the God and Father of our LORD Jesus Christ,
Who hath blessed us with ALL spiritual blessings in Heavenly Places in Christ...
3:10 To the intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in Heavenly Places
might be known by the Church the Manifold Wisdom of God...
Col. 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness,
and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His Dear Son"
(Ephesians 1:3; 3:10; Colossians 1:13).

The Good Shepherd's Power is His Holy Spirit, securing His sheep to Himself, "17 that the God of our LORD Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Him... 19 what is the Exceeding Greatness of His Power to us-ward who believe, according to the Working of His Mighty Power, 20 which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His Own right hand in the Heavenly Places, 21 far above ALL principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:17,19-21).

"24 Now unto Him that is able to **keep you from falling,**
and to present you **faultless**
before the presence of His Glory with exceeding Joy,
25 to the Only Wise God our Saviour,

be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and for ever. Amen"

(Jude 24-25).

Conclusion

Again, obedience to the Good Shepherd answers vividly, "Who are really His sheep?" If you refuse to hear His Voice, the Word of God, you cannot be His. "This evil people, which refuse to hear My Words... [are] good for nothing" (Jeremiah 13:10). If you hear but refuse to obey, you also cannot be His. "Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22). But if you **hear and obey** Him, then the Good Shepherd encourages you onward by saying, "31 IF ye **continue** in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed" (John 8:31). Dear ones who claim to be sheep, "IF ye will fear the LORD, and serve Him, and obey His Voice, and not rebel against the Commandment of the LORD, then shall... ye... continue following the LORD your God" (1Samuel 12:14). "He that shall endure unto The End, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto The End" (Hebrews 3:14).

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