

My Sheep

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 26 April 2015

Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, this evening, with the Lord's help, turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, the Gospel according to John chapter 10. John chapter 10, and if we read again at verse 27.

John chapter 10, at verse 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. In the context and culture in which we live, in a rural community like this one, the shepherd theme of scripture is one which is not only very familiar to us, but it's one in which we can very easily relate to.

Especially at this time of year, when those in this community who have sheep, they've been spending a lot of time taking particular care of their sheep, which are in the process of lambing.

And it's been great for our own children to take them to see the sheep, and to see all the lambs running around in the field. But having grown up with cattle, I wasn't too aware of how much time and energy and work is actually needed to look after sheep.

[1 : 4 3] And as many of you who are shepherds here this evening, you know it takes a lot of work, especially at this time of year when the sheep are lambing. But as I'm sure you're aware and very familiar with the fact that the shepherd theme is one which runs through the whole of scripture.

Runs right throughout scripture. Because right at the beginning we're told that Adam's second son Abel, who was killed by his brother Cain, we're told that he was a keeper of sheep.

And from there we're confronted by many different shepherds in the Bible, where all the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, they were all shepherds.

But it's David the shepherd boy who made the well-known claim about the Lord when he said, the Lord is my shepherd. And from that moment in the Bible in Psalm 23, that's what's so interesting.

It's that from that moment in the Bible in Psalm 23, it seems that the whole idea of the Lord being our shepherd, it's carried on from that point right throughout the rest of scripture.

[2 : 5 4] Because many of the prophets after David, they begin to refer to the Lord as a shepherd, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Isaiah says that the Lord will feed his sheep like a shepherd.

Jeremiah reminds the people of Israel that it is the Lord who will scatter his sheep in judgment when they are sent into exile. And yet despite the judgment of exile, Ezekiel affirms to them that that same shepherd, he will gather his sheep again and lead them back to their homeland in the promised land.

But it's the minor prophet Zechariah who prophesies that even though there were many false shepherds leading the people of Israel, he said that there will come one shepherd who will be smitten for his people.

And of course the identity of the shepherd who would be smitten for his people is revealed to us in the New Testament as Jesus Christ. And as we look at the Bible, there is this beautiful shepherd theme which is woven into scripture.

It's woven all the way into the tapestry of scripture. Where as we read, Jesus refers to himself as the good shepherd. The apostle Peter calls Jesus the chief shepherd.

[4 : 18] The apostle Paul states that Jesus is the great shepherd of his sheep. And this beautiful shepherd theme is completed right at the close of the New Testament when John tells us that in his revelation he saw the lamb in the midst of the throne of heaven.

And that this lamb who was slain, he is the shepherd of his sheep. And who will guide his people to springs of living water and wipe away every tear from their eyes.

And when we think about it, it's no wonder that David delighted in proclaiming the Lord is my shepherd. Because the Lord truly is a wonderful shepherd.

He is, as John reveals his identity to us in this chapter, he is the good shepherd. He is the good shepherd. And when we look at this gospel, the identity of Jesus is one of the questions which surrounds John's gospel.

Because as we're confronted by Jesus in the gospel of John, John wants us to be inquiring and searching out as to who this Jesus is and what he is like.

[5 : 36] In fact, John wants us to be asking the question, who is this Jesus called the Christ? Who is he? Who is this word which was in the beginning with God?

Who is this word who became flesh and dwelt among us? Who is he and why did he come? Who is this Jesus? And so the whole purpose of John's gospel is to reveal the identity of Jesus.

Because for John, the identity of Jesus is key. It's so important. Because without knowing and understanding who Jesus is, the cross becomes meaningless.

Without knowing who he is, without knowing the identity of Jesus as God's only begotten son, then the gospel doesn't make sense.

And the point which John is seeking to drive home in his gospel is that the person who died upon the cross to save sinners was none other than the eternal son of God.

[6 : 41] And that's what makes the cross of Jesus Christ and the work of salvation completely unique. Because without the identity of Jesus as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, the gospel is irrelevant.

It's irrelevant. And John is eager to tell us who this Jesus is. And he wants us to know for certain as to his identity. But as the identity of Jesus is gradually revealed throughout the chapters of John's gospel, not everyone is content with the claims which Jesus is making about himself.

Because Jesus claims divinity. He claims to be God. And time and time again, the identity of Jesus causes a division among those who came to listen to Jesus.

For many of the scribes and the Pharisees, they wanted for Jesus to say that he was the Christ so that they would have further evidence to reject and kill him.

But there were others who came to Jesus because of this genuine interest. And this genuine desire for Jesus to assure to them and to reassure them of his identity.

[7 : 59] And that's what's happening here in this section of John's gospel. Where Jesus has revealed himself as the good shepherd. But there were some who were not convinced.

And there were others who wanted more evidence to get rid of Jesus. And that's why John tells us in verse 24 that the Jews surrounded Jesus and asked him, How long will you make us to doubt?

If you are the Christ, tell us plainly. Tell us plainly. Tell us plainly. But what I would like us to see is that it was this question about the identity of Jesus, which initiated the words of our text.

Where Jesus goes on to say, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish.

Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. And this evening I'd like us to remind ourselves, not only of the identity of this Jesus, who has revealed himself as the good shepherd, but in light of his identity, I'd like us to ask the question, How good is our good shepherd?

[9 : 20] How good is our good shepherd? Because in these verses Jesus says to us, My sheep are purchased, my sheep are protected, and my sheep are privileged.

That's how good our good shepherd is. His sheep are purchased, they are protected, and they are privileged. So if we look firstly at Jesus' statement, My sheep are purchased.

My sheep are purchased. Because when Jesus answered the question from the Jews regarding his identity, they asked the question, How long will you make us to doubt?

If you are the Christ, tell us plainly. And so Jesus does exactly that, by telling them that if he is the Christ, they are not his sheep.

And they are not his sheep, because they do not believe. And Jesus says to them plainly, The works that I do in my Father's name, they have bear witness of me.

[10 : 31] But you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep. And it's at this point that Jesus proceeds to create this distinction, between those who are his sheep, and those who are not his sheep.

And Jesus does this by describing the characteristics which alone belong to his sheep. And don't you find it interesting that the animal with which the Lord describes people, he describes us as an animal which is not only familiar to a Jew, but it's familiar to us.

But when Jesus calls his people sheep, he does so in order to remind us that, like sheep, we can be lost. Like sheep, we are helpless.

And like sheep, we are completely dependent upon a shepherd. And we would agree that, for the most part, sheep are the most harmless and helpless of all animals.

And even when they are at their best, they are weak and sometimes foolish, and they are liable to go astray and be disobedient, and looking at them, we realise that we are so like them.

[11 : 46] But despite all that, despite all these things, Jesus calls his own people, my sheep. They are my sheep. Where he claims ownership of them.

He claims his sheep as his possession. They are his treasured possession, which he has purchased for himself. And I'm sure that every shepherd would agree that sheep are not the easiest animals to deal with.

They take up a lot of time and work and energy in order to look after them. And you'll often see shepherds, they're constantly working with their sheep. Always with them.

Always working alongside them. And I know at least a couple of people in this congregation who are completely devoted to their flocks. Where they give their utmost in order to look after their sheep.

Because to the shepherd, the sheep are precious. They are precious. Others might not think much about them. But to the shepherd, they are precious.

[12 : 51] And they have claimed their sheep as their own. All because they have bought them. They have bought them. And when we hear Jesus saying this about his people, when he says, they are my sheep.

They are my sheep. Because my sheep are purchased. When Jesus says this, he's of course using the language of the marketplace. It's the language of redemption.

It's the language of buying back. In which the price for our release has to be met. The price in order to claim us as his own treasured possession has to be paid in full.

And the marketplace or the auction mart, it's a very familiar scene for many shepherds in our own island.

Where many shepherds gather at the sales in Stainish in order to find themselves a bargain. And they all come to see what's on offer and to see who's selling what and who's buying what.

[13 : 57] Because at the auction mart, it's an opportunity to improve your livestock by considering these better breeds and the more expensive sheep.

But for Jesus, when he purchases his sheep, he never checks the breed of his sheep in order that he can improve his flock.

Because the sheep will never improve his flock. He improves his flock. And Jesus doesn't discriminate between sheep because he takes the most scruffy looking and the most worthless and the blackest and the dirtiest and the most unfaithful and disobedient sheep and he claims them as his own.

And when the bidding starts, you could say at the auction mart of Calvary's Hill, this shepherd goes and he bids for his sheep and he goes to bid for them. And amongst all the hirelings of the world that are bidding for us, this good shepherd, he gives the highest bid and he provides the best redemption.

Because Jesus says, my sheep, they are redeemed. No, not with corruptible things such as silver and gold. My sheep are redeemed with my precious blood.

[15 : 18] And that's the marvel of our gospel. That this Jesus not only reveals himself as the good shepherd, but he shows us how good he is as the good shepherd.

Because he says, in verse 11, he says, I am the good shepherd and the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep.

The good shepherd gives his life. The good shepherd gives his all. The good shepherd gives his utmost in order to redeem his lost sheep and make them his treasured possession.

Oh, my friends, such is the love of the shepherd for his sheep that he lays down his own life. He lays down his own life.

And is that not what Jesus affirms to us? Greater love has no man than this, that a man lays down his life.

[16 : 25] And this good shepherd, he lays down his life for his sheep. Where he laid down his life at the auction mart of Calvary in order to buy us back and redeem us to himself, in order to make us his treasured possession.

And as his possession, Jesus says of us, you are my sheep. You are my sheep. Where we belong to him and he claims us as his possession.

salvation. But at the same time, the wonder of our shepherd is that as his sheep, we can claim him as our shepherd.

Where he possesses me. But the wonder of salvation is that we can say, I possess him. I am his and he is mine.

I am his and he is mine. And that's what it means to be a sheep of the good shepherd. It's to be in this living relationship with Jesus Christ by faith.

[17 : 42] And you know, that's why David could say, the Lord is my shepherd. He is my shepherd. He could only say those words because the Lord had claimed him as one of his sheep.

my friend, and if you are in Christ tonight, you are a sheep which belongs to the good shepherd. All because you have been redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.

And you can say of this good shepherd, I am his and he is mine. I am his and he is mine. But if you are not in Christ tonight, if you are not one of his sheep, but a lost sheep, looking for a shepherd, Jesus is not only saying, I am the good shepherd, the best shepherd you'll ever find, but he's also telling you plainly why you are lost.

He's telling you why you are a lost sheep. He says you do not believe. You do not believe. That's why you are a lost sheep.

How good is our good shepherd? Jesus says my sheep are purchased. But secondly, Jesus says my sheep are protected.

[19 : 18] My sheep are protected. He says in verse 27, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. And in these words Jesus sets before us, he goes on to distinguish these distinguishing features of those who are his sheep and those who are not.

Because the first thing that Jesus says about his sheep is that they hear his voice. They hear his voice. And so what separates those who belong to the good shepherd and those who do not is the voice of the good shepherd.

It's the voice of Jesus which makes the separation between those who reject Jesus and those who desire to follow Jesus. And this statement about hearing the voice of Jesus, it isn't something new.

Because it's what Jesus has been repeatedly emphasizing all throughout this chapter. because right at the very beginning of this chapter when Jesus told the parable of the good shepherd, he said that the porter comes and opens the door to his sheep.

And he does so only because the sheep which belong to the good shepherd hear his voice and they know his voice. And Jesus says that when the good shepherd calls his sheep, he calls them by name and they follow him because they know his voice.

[20 : 47] They don't know the voice of a stranger but they do know the voice of the good shepherd. And so when Jesus says my sheep hear my voice, he's drawing attention to the fact that hearing the voice of Jesus is important.

Because when Jesus says my sheep hear my voice, it's not simply that they hear a sound. But when they hear the voice of Jesus, they hear and they are hearing with understanding.

And that was the greatest problem that many of the Jews had because they were hearing everything that Jesus had to say, but they weren't understanding. That's why they kept asking Jesus questions.

But Jesus makes the distinction by saying my sheep hear my voice. And this distinction is key to knowing whether you are a sheep which belongs to the good shepherd or not.

Because there are many people who hear the voice of the good shepherd throughout their life. They hear his voice. They hear his voice.

[21 : 58] And they hear his voice in the preaching of God's word. They hear his voice through the personal witness of other Christians. some in our workplace, some in our homes.

They hear his voice through providence. Whether it's when tragedy strikes or illness comes or death breaks into our experience. And through each and every one of these occasions in our lives, Jesus is speaking.

And we are hearing the voice of the good shepherd. But according to the good shepherd, hearing is not enough. Because we're not, we not only need to hear with our ears, we also need to understand with our heart.

And what makes the distinction between the Christian and the non-Christian, the converted and the unconverted, the saved sheep and the lost sheep, what makes the difference between them is their response to the voice of the good shepherd.

What makes the difference is hearing with understanding. And my friend, you know that you are a Christian when you can hear the gospel and you're understanding it.

[23 : 16] You know that you're converted when you don't want to listen to the voice of the world anymore. And you love to hear more and more of the good shepherd.

Where you can't get enough of his word. And you can't get enough of the preaching of the word. And it's not that the preacher has gotten any better, but it's that the Lord has opened your heart and he has opened your understanding.

Where you are now hearing with understanding. And my friend, you know that you are a sheep which belongs to the good shepherd when you are one who hears the word of God and desires in your heart to obey it.

You know that Jesus has claimed you as his own and said, you are my sheep. When you can say with the hymn writer, I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest.

Lay down, thou weary one, lay down, thy head upon my breast. I came to Jesus as I was, weary and burdened and sad.

[24 : 24] I found in him a resting place and he has made me glad. And what has made you glad is that you now love the voice of the good shepherd.

You love his voice because it's a voice which tenderly speaks to you and provides protection and safety and shelter. And the reason for this is that the shepherd, he knows his own sheep.

He knows what his sheep need. For it's not only the sheep who know the voice of the shepherd, but the shepherd knows his own sheep. And he knows them individually.

He knows their name. He knows everything about them. And you know, that's what always amazes me about shepherds. They're able to tell their sheep apart.

Where just by looking at their faces, they can distinguish one sheep from another. And they not only know their own sheep from another flock of sheep, but they know each and every one of their own sheep.

[25 : 35] They know each sheep individually. And that's the wonder of this good shepherd. That he knows everything about us. Where he knows our mind, he knows our heart, he knows our inmost thoughts, he knows our strengths, he knows our weaknesses, he knows our failures, he knows our sins, he knows our problems, he knows our lack of love for him, he knows our coldness towards him, he knows our disobedience against him, he knows everything there is to know about us, he knows it.

And yet he still wants us, he still wants us to come to him and for him to be our shepherd. Despite all that we are, he still loves his sheep and wants to take care of them.

And this is the wonder of our good shepherd, that because he knows us, he knows what we need, he knows what is good for us, he knows what will harm us, he knows what will help us, he knows how to care for us.

And that's why he calls us to follow him. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. They follow me.

And although this is a very simple statement, but when Jesus says that his sheep follow him, it's of course the very beautiful description of what the Christian life is.

[27 : 09] because a Christian is someone who follows Jesus. A Christian is someone who follows Jesus. And in our culture we often give that description to someone who is a Christian or someone who's just become a Christian.

We say that so-and-so has started following. And of course we're saying that they've started following Jesus. And so when Jesus refers to his sheep as those who follow, he's emphasizing the desire of the sheep to listen to the shepherd's instruction and the longing to trust and obey him.

Our desire as his sheep ought to be to imitate and obey the voice of the good shepherd. Because what is true about a sheep which follows a shepherd is that they are being led.

They are being led. And for us as his sheep, we are being led. Led by the sovereign guide of an almighty God who knows all things not only about us but about every situation in our lives.

And our good shepherd calls us to follow his leading. And to follow his directing. And to trust that he is the sovereign shepherd who is working in the lives of his sheep.

[28 : 38] Not only to lead us through this life but to finally lead us to our desired haven. Because as his sheep, our lives are under his sovereign direction and destination.

And like David the shepherd boy in the fields of Israel, there would have been many times that he would have led his sheep over the mountain tops and through the valleys and alongside all the rivers.

And although David spent many years leading his own sheep, I'm sure that David never forgot that his shepherd was one who was always leading him.

And my friend, you may have been following the Lord for many years. You've been following him maybe for many years now. And after all these years you can still say that you love hearing the voice of the good shepherd speaking to you.

You love him reminding you that you are his and he is yours. And you love him assuring you that he is still with you after all these years. And he's still encouraging you to continue to trust his leading.

[29 : 51] And maybe you can say tonight that your testimony is like that of David where you can testify the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not be in want.

I lack nothing. Because my shepherd has been faithful to me. And he has taught me in all his leading and his guiding that he is the one who is protecting me.

There were times in my life when he made me to lie down in the green pasture. And there were times when he led me alongside the still waters. But there were also times in my life when trials came and I was being led through the valleys and I came face to face with a shadow of death in my home and in my family.

But as my good shepherd, he has always reminded me that he was still there. And in that darkness and in the uncertainty of my providence, I came to discover that all the time he was teaching me to trust him.

He was teaching me to trust him and he was reminding me that his rod and his staff, they are there to comfort me.

[31 : 13] And from that first moment I started following him until now he has been showing me every day. He has been showing me how good, a good shepherd he really is.

Oh my friend, how good is our good shepherd? How good is our good shepherd? shepherd. Because Jesus says my sheep are purchased.

My sheep are protected. And lastly Jesus says my sheep are privileged. My sheep are privileged.

He says my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

And as those who are sheep of the good shepherd, we are a privileged flock. For we are not only redeemed by precious blood and led by one whose utmost desire is for our good, but we are also given the promise of eternal life.

[32 : 31] And Jesus reminds us that this promise of eternal life is one which we have received. And he reminds us that it is a gift.

It has been gifted to us. We didn't deserve it. We didn't earn it. We couldn't buy it for ourselves. But it was graciously, freely and willingly gifted to us.

And what a gift it is. The gift of eternal, eternal life. And this phrase, eternal life, it's a phrase which is repeated throughout John's gospel.

But what is interesting is that it's always mentioned in relation to the identity of Jesus. Jesus. Because what John wants us to understand is that Jesus is the only one who can grant us that gift of eternal life.

And the only way for us to receive the gift of eternal life is to believe in Jesus. And that's what John emphasizes to us again and again.

[33 : 39] He tells us in that well-known verse in John 3, 16, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

And Jesus promises to the woman of Samaria his promise to us whosoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst again. For the water that I will give him, says Jesus, will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

And throughout John's gospel, all the way through these chapters, Jesus says, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life.

Whoever looks on the son and believes in him should have eternal life. Whoever believes has eternal life. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.

Whoever loves his life loses it. And whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. And then you have Peter, Peter's great confession as to the identity of Jesus.

[34 : 53] Where he said, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And all the way through John's gospel, John is holding out before us this wonderful gift which has been given to us.

and as those who are purchased and protected by the good shepherd, this is our privilege. This is our privilege. That we possess the gift of eternal life.

And, you know, when I think about the repetition of the gift of eternal life throughout John's gospel, I'm reminded of the words that Christian cried when he left the city of destruction.

Do you remember in John Bunyan's classic, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, that when Christian fled from the evil city of destruction, where everyone was calling out for him to stay and not to go and to stay where he was and to enjoy the pleasures of the city of destruction, when he was going to begin his journey towards the celestial city, Christian put his fingers in his ears and all he could shout was life, life, eternal life.

Life, life, eternal life. He knew that the gift he had been given was a precious gift of eternal life that would one day bring him into the celestial city.

[36 : 32] But in this verse, Jesus not only draws attention to the fact that our greatest privilege is the promise of eternal life, he also asserts that our greatest assurance is that those who follow the good shepherd will never perish.

They will never perish. It's not that they will not perish, like the words of John 3, 16, but Jesus says here they will never, never perish.

And it's an emphatic statement which Jesus uses in order to stress the impossibility of perishing when you belong to the good shepherd.

And in these words, Jesus is stressing the impossibility of being lost when you believe in the good shepherd. It's the impossibility of losing your salvation when you believe in Jesus Christ.

And he's assuring us that our salvation is certain, our salvation is sure, our salvation is immovable, it's unchangeable, all because it's founded upon the finished work of the good shepherd.

[37 : 48] He's the one who laid down his life for the sheep. But this statement of assurance, it's further illustrated to us when Jesus goes on to say, none of his sheep are able to be plucked out of his hand.

No one, not any, are able to be plucked out of his hand. I give to them eternal life, they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

He plucked them as brands from the burning in the first place. And we are so precious, his sheep are so precious, they are his treasured possession that he will not let them fall from his grip.

And this picture which is being used of the hollow of his hands, the hollow of Jesus' hands, it's this picture of security, complete security and safety, where we are safe in the hands of the good shepherd.

And in his hand Jesus is reminding us that as the sheep of his pasture we will be upheld, we will not fall, we will be kept, we will be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

[39 : 18] That's his promise, we will be kept. we will be kept. Because the first step after being saved, my friend, is being kept.

He will keep our going out as sheep and our coming in from this time forth and even forevermore. And as his sheep and his treasured possession, we will be kept in his love, we will be kept in his care, and nothing or no one ever can or ever will pluck us out of his hand.

No one is able to tear his sheep away from him because they are blood bought and they are protected in his care and they are privileged to possess eternal life and they are being kept for time and for all eternity.

my friend, we will not fall through his fingers. We will not slide through his grip. We will not. We cannot. It is impossible for us to be separated from our good shepherd.

It's impossible. And my friend, don't you just love that question in Romans 8? Don't you just love the question and aren't you so thankful for it?

[40 : 40] Will Paul ask that all important question? Who shall separate us from the love of God? And Paul says shall tribulation, shall distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword.

No, no, no, no, no. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, says Paul, persuaded us, a sheep who belongs to the good shepherd, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, neither things present, nor things to come, neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature, is able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

No one is able to separate us from our good shepherd. shepherd. Oh, my friend, this is the wonder of how good our good shepherd really is.

This is the wonder of it. This is the wonder of how good he really is. No one is able to pluck us out of his hand.

shepherd. And from the very beginning of our journey, when we started following the good shepherd, and when he gave to us the gift and the privilege of eternal life, he made these promises to us then.

[42 : 19] But not only that, he made the promise to us and the privilege for us that we will be kept until the end of our journey.

And was that not the experience of our psalmist? Was that not what David claimed about his own shepherd? Where he opened Psalm 23, we all know it, and he says that he had received the gift and the privilege of eternal life when he says, the Lord is my shepherd.

But as David closed that precious shepherd psalm, he affirmed that he has also been granted the promise and the privilege of never being plucked out of the shepherd's hand.

For he said that as he was being led by the shepherd, as he was being led by the shepherd throughout his life, this good shepherd, he was also following behind him with goodness and mercy.

He was leading him at the front, yet he was following behind him with goodness and mercy. The shepherd was surrounding David. David had been following the Lord long enough, and because he had been following the Lord long enough, he came to discover that the shepherd's goodness and mercy was going to continue to follow him all the days of his life, all the days of his life, until at last the sheep of the good shepherd are brought to rest, because the shepherd brings them, the shepherd brings them to the haven which they desired and longed to see.

[44 : 11] he brings them. Oh, my friend, how good is our good shepherd? How good is our good shepherd?

shepherd? Well, this good shepherd says about his sheep, my sheep are purchased, my sheep are protected, my sheep are privileged.

They are purchased, they are protected, they are privileged, and they are mine. They are all mine.

no one is able to pluck them out of my hand. But for you, my unconverted friend, if this good shepherd is this good, if he is this good, then why are you following him?

If he is this good, why don't you believe in him? If he is this good, why are you not confessing with David at the beginning of your journey?

[45 : 31] The Lord is my shepherd. If he is this good, why aren't you following him? May the Lord bless these thoughts to us.

Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to thee, that thou art truly a good shepherd.

And help us, Lord, we plead, to hear the voice, to hear that precious voice speaking to us, and reminding us that, Lord, one who will lead us, one who will guide us, one who will keep us.

O Lord, bless us, we plead. Remember us, we pray, especially for those who are lost sheep, that they would seek the good shepherd, and those who are thine own sheep, that thou wouldst continue to remind them that goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me, and in God's house forevermore my dwelling place shall be.

Bless us, Lord, we plead. Bless us in a week that lies ahead, a week where we are often reminded that is unknown to us, but known to thee. Cleanse us and do us good, for Jesus' sake.

[46 : 49] Amen. We shall conclude by singing in that well-known psalm, Psalm 23. Psalm 23 in the Scottish Psalter, page 229 in the blue book.

Psalm 23 we'll sing the whole psalm. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. He makes me down to lie, in pastures green he leadeth me, the quiet waters by.

So sing the whole psalm to God's praise. psalm the Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me down to lie, in pastures green he leave at thee, the quiet water fire.

My soul be up restore again. I need to walk touch me within the path of righteousness in for his glory save.

[48 : 48] save. Yea, though I walk in death's heart fill, yet will I fear not ill, for thou walk with me and thy all and stop me comfort stills.

my heart stills. My table thou hast furnished shed in presence of my foes, my hand thou dost with oil and my cup over close and my cup over close goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me shall surely follow me shall surely follow me and then cross us forever more my breath and mercy all my life shall surely follow me the grace of the

Lord Jesus Christ the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.