

## Stand Alone - Overwhelmed

10/13/19 – Pastor Randy

---

John 10:1-16

"I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice." Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn't understand what he meant, so he explained it to them: "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures. The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. **"I am the good shepherd.** The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep. A hired hand will run when he sees a wolf coming. He will abandon the sheep because **they don't belong to him** and **he isn't their shepherd.** And so the wolf attacks them and scatters the flock. The hired hand runs away because he's working only for the money and doesn't really care about the sheep.

**"I am the good shepherd;** I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep.

John 10 continues a conversation that began in John 9 between Jesus and some of the Pharisees. In John 9 we discover a stark contrast between the way Jesus and the religious leaders treated a man born blind. Jesus treated him with compassion and acceptance while the Pharisees treatment of this same man was harsh and unloving.

It is in light of chapter 9 that this figurative speech about sheep, shepherds, thieves, and hired hands makes sense? Jesus' claim to be the "Good Shepherd" would have drawn the minds of the Pharisees back to the words which God spoke through the prophet Ezekiel to the religious leaders who failed in their responsibility to properly shepherd God's people. In Ezekiel 34 we read,

"Give them this message from the Sovereign Lord: What sorrow awaits you shepherds who feed yourselves instead of your flocks. **Shouldn't shepherds feed their sheep?** You

## Stand Alone - Overwhelmed

10/13/19 – Pastor Randy

---

*drink the milk, wear the wool, and butcher the best animals, but you let your flocks starve. You have not taken care of the weak. You have not tended the sick or bound up the injured. You have not gone looking for those who have wandered away and are lost. Instead, you have ruled them with harshness and cruelty.*

*...For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search and find my sheep. I will be like a shepherd looking for his scattered flock. I will find my sheep and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on that dark and cloudy day.*

*...And I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David. He will feed them and be a shepherd to them. And I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David. He will feed them and be a shepherd to them. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David will be a prince among my people. I, the Lord, have spoken!*

God, speaking through the prophet Ezekiel, declared that he was going to remove the leaders of Israel from their positions because they had failed to act as true shepherds of God's people. These false shepherds had starved the poor instead of feeding them. They failed to take care of the weak, tend to the sick and injured, or go out to rescue the lost sheep. After exposing the leaders for their failure to act as God's shepherds we read this powerful declaration in vs. 11:

*For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search and find my sheep.* God declared that He was going to return to shepherd His people by Himself. because the Kings of Israel had failed in their mission. This "I myself will" statement was followed by 16 more "I will" statements from verses 11-24. But what is most amazing about Ezekiel 34 is that Yahweh, the OT expression for the one true God, says that he is going to shepherd the people Himself and He is going to shepherd His people through "David". David here does not refer to King David. He was dead and in the grave. "My servant David" is an expression denoting the future Messiah. The future ruler who would usher in God's eternal Kingdom.

Over and over again God declares I will shepherd my people myself! And then he adds that He will shepherd his people through His "prince" or His Son!!

## Stand Alone - Overwhelmed

10/13/19 – Pastor Randy

---

Ezekiel 34 is the backstory for what Jesus is saying in John 10, as well as for many other statements in the gospels where Jesus is depicted as shepherd of God's people. Jesus came to faithfully do what Ezekiel told us Yahweh said He would do. Jesus fed the sheep physically and spiritually (Mark 6:30-34; John 6) and rebuked the rich who turned away from the poor (Luke 16:19-31). Jesus healed the sick sheep (Matt. 12:9-14). Most importantly, Jesus went after the lost sheep and gathered them to Himself (Luke 15:4-5; Matt. 18:12; Mark 14:27,28)

When Jesus referred to himself as the good shepherd he was declaring that he was the Messiah (The greater "David") God promised to send to shepherd His people. He was also calling the Pharisees out for being just like the unfaithful shepherds of Ezekiel's day and throughout Israel's prior history that led to their exile.

In Jesus day, the religious leaders were the "false shepherds", shepherds who had failed in their calling. Jesus described them as thieves and robbers who were unknowingly acting as agents of the Devil; stealing, killing and destroying the sheep. Jesus went on to say that they acted more like hired hands than true shepherds. They treated the call to be shepherds like a job, only taking care of the sheep when there was something in it for them, rather than being motivated by true love.

**The Good Shepherd = Jesus**, the one who sacrificially loves the sheep. He provides for their needs and protects them from outside threats.

**Jesus is committed to His people.** For the remainder of this message I want to encourage you by reminding and convincing you that Jesus is committed to provide for you and to protect you.

1. The good shepherd provides for His people. Jesus said, *"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life."* "The NASB and ESV translate Jesus words, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

This abundant life that Jesus has come to secure for us will one day include complete freedom from sin, suffering, sickness and sorrow. But this

## Stand Alone - Overwhelmed

10/13/19 – Pastor Randy

---

abundant life does not consist primarily in the absence of those experiences. It is not so much about what we don't experience, but what we do experience; the full, unhindered, unmediated, presence of God. In the presence of God is fullness of joy, at His right hand are pleasures evermore.

Paul describes the Christians future hope as the hope of glory! The hope of glory is the hope of living eternally in the presence of God as people in whom the image of God has been perfectly restored. This is the essence of the abundant life Jesus came to give. Most of the references to this "glory" are future oriented:

*"...we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's **glory**." - Romans 5:2*

*"But if we are to share his **glory**, we must also share his suffering." - Romans 8:17*

*Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the **glory** he will reveal to us later.*

*- Romans 8:18*

BUT even now

*"...we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future **glory**". - Romans 8:23*

AND then we have this astounding statement of Paul's in Colossians 3:18

*So **all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord.***

*And **the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.***

2. Jesus is not only committed to providing for the needs of His people, He is also committed to protecting His people. There is no question that the Devil is real and there are real demonic forces, what the bible calls spiritual forces of evil and darkness. However, God's people "are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5). In John 10:11-15 Jesus described Himself as the good shepherd who differs from the hired hand in the way they care for the sheep. The hired hand is not committed to protecting the sheep, and will abandon them for the sake of self-preservation. When the wolf comes the hired hand runs, and the wolf is able to snatch and kill the sheep. The true shepherd will risk his life in order to rescue the sheep. In vs. 28,29 Jesus declared that no one can snatch his people out of His hand.

## Stand Alone - Overwhelmed

10/13/19 – Pastor Randy

---

Here is my question to you? Do you believe this? Do you trust that Jesus is committed to protect you and keep you under His care? Are you afraid of what the Devil might do to you? Are you afraid of what people might do to you? If so, you need to hear these words again:

“My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father’s hand.” If Jesus was willing to lay down his life to rescue us and make us one of His sheep in the first place, why should we have any doubt that He will make sure protects those he has rescued. If God be for us who can be against us?

I love the way the NLT translates Paul’s words in Romans 8:38-39

*“And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Are you overwhelmed or overwhelmed? Jesus is a good shepherd who comes alongside you to help you exchange the overwhelmed feelings that stem from the devil’s lies with an overwhelming sense of God’s presence and glory.

In the scripture we find many expressions of being overwhelmed:

Overwhelmed with guilt (Psalm 65:3 NLT), overwhelmed with problems (Psalm 55:2 NLT), overwhelmed with fears (Ps. 61:2; 142:3), overwhelmed with grief and sorrow (Jer. 45:3).

But we don’t have to be overwhelmed by guilt, and grief, and problems, and fears. I am not saying they wont be a part of our experience, but what I am saying is that we have a good shepherd, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, who is with us to provide and protect us and to overwhelm us with God’s glory in the midst of troubles that would normally overwhelm us instead.

## **Stand Alone - Overwhelmed**

*10/13/19 – Pastor Randy*

---

The crowds were overwhelmed with awe in the presence of Jesus (Mark 9:15). Isaiah testified to being overwhelmed with joy in the Lord just by anticipation over God's gift of salvation. (Isaiah 61:10)

Jesus, the good shepherd, wants to overshadow your "overwhelmed" so you can be:

Overwhelmed by His grace

Overwhelmed by His love

Overwhelmed by His power and might

Overwhelmed by His righteousness

Overwhelmed by His wisdom

Overwhelmed by His providence