

BLEAT: THE SOUND OF WORSHIP (JOHN 10)

Good morning! When I was in school, I loved stupid humor movies and maybe I still do...like Napoleon Dynamite, Nacho Libre, and maybe the best of them: Dumb and Dumber.

- I know this is making you feel really reassured that this message is going to be awesome right?

There's this scene in Dumb and Dumber where they are riding in the car and there's a guy sitting between Harry and Lloyd and Harry gets a bright idea: "Hey, you want to hear the most annoying sound in the world?" ERRRRRGH.

- I always thought that sound was the sound like a sheep bleating, right?
- Here, Listen -----AUDIO CLIP-----
Sounds lovely right?

This morning we are going to talk about the goodness of God, and what that means for us, and how that drives us to worship. But it will be framed in an example that might leave you feeling insulted...one where you sound like THAT. But if we realize the truth, we will see that our bleating is a great sound of worship.

- PRAY: God give us ears to hear, eyes to see, and minds to comprehend your truth and goodness. Amen!

Sheep are Dumb. Like for real. Dumb.

- Couple examples:
 - o There is a term that Shepherds use...variations of "Cast Down" or "down cast" or "cast" to describe a certain predicament that sheep get themselves into. Even the healthiest and strongest sheep can become "cast."
 - They lay down on their side to rest. Stretch out, but if his center of gravity shifts, he rolls onto his back just far enough to where his feet don't touch the ground. Then he panics and kicks but that just makes it worse and he rolls even further...now it's impossible for him to regain his feet..."DOWN CAST."
 - Gives a whole new meaning to **PSALM 43:5** – "Why are you downcast oh my soul?"

- There's a guy Philip Keller who wrote a book called A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23 and literally the entire thing is about how utterly helpless sheep are.
 - In it he tells story after story of their limited intelligence, timidity, and stubbornness; How they get spooked easily and then other times nothing can move them. He tells stories of them walking into open fire or off a cliff and spends a good bit of time highlighting how **totally defenseless** they are.
 - And we, here in our suburbs, don't totally get it...well unless your family farms....but Dr. Bob Smith says that sheep are the number one example for why evolution can't be true. Them jokers would have been extinct millennia ago!

But here's the deal: repeatedly and for this reason, the Scriptures describe us as sheep:

- **Psalm 100:3**, "It is He who made us, and we are His; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture."
- **Isaiah 53:6**, "All we like sheep have gone astray."
- **Matthew 9:26** says that Jesus felt compassion on the people because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

All these verses lead us to our text today. Jesus is going to show us the remedy to the problem, not of our sheepishness, as you will see, but rather our shepherdlessness.

1-4

Here we see **THE SHEPHERD'S RELATIONSHIP TO HIS SHEEP**

It is one of familiarity.

- Shepherding was an intimate occupation...one of tenderness and care. Whereas cattle are riven, sheep are led. They had to constantly be watched over around the clock.
- There are two different kinds of sheepfolds in Biblical Middle Eastern Times. We will talk about both, but the one that Jesus is talking about here is a communal corral. A large sheepfold in a town. Several shepherds would keep their sheep in this large fold, multiple herds in the same place. Typically, these kinds of folds would have a professional gatekeeper.
- The picture Jesus is painting is of a shepherd who keeps his sheep in this corral that is guarded and coming to get his sheep. Because there is a

strong familiarity between the gatekeeper and the shepherd, He instantly recognizes the shepherd and lets him in. The shepherd walks in, speaks, and amidst all the different flocks, His sheep hear his voice and gather near and he leads them out. Maybe one or two are being stubborn, so he calls them by name and they respond and follow.

- Here's what we get from this. Even though the sheep are stupid, they KNOW the Master's voice! They are so familiar with it because the shepherd has been caring for them so thoroughly. And sometimes, there's ones who aren't listening well, and he calls them by NAME!
 - Characteristics
 - *God is always speaking. The problem is that sometimes we don't know the shepherd well enough to recognize!*
- But it gets even better...in verses 14-15. He equates His intimate knowledge of us as the same depth as the Father and Son! That's unfathomable!
 - Kent Hughes says, "There could be no knowledge more intimate than his (Jesus) knowledge of the Father, and there is no knowledge more intimate than that which He has for us!"
 - And he loves us still!
 - **Psalm 139:15-16**, "My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them."
 - That means he knows our past, our failures and hurts. He knows our present, our longings and hidden sins. He knows our dirt. He knows our Hurt. And LOVES US.
- But how encouraging is it to know that not only does He know us, but that we know him! He said it in verse 4 and again in verse 16, "They will listen to my voice."
 - We hear, we respond, and He meets our deepest needs.
 - Not everyone does though: look at **verse 6**
 - They didn't understand so Jesus explained further.

7-10

Here, we see **THE SHEPHERD'S PROVISION FOR HIS SHEEP**

- What does the LORD mean by "door" or "gate"

- Well here Jesus is talking about a different kind of fold, not the communal corral of the first few verses.

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- This fold is one with 4 walls and a way in. But there's no door right? The sheep go in and are perfectly safe because the shepherd IS the door! Any threat that wants to get in must go through the shepherd. Any sheep that wants to get out must cross through the shepherd.
- **JESUS IS THE LIVING DOOR.** In order to go into the fold you must go through Jesus!
 - You come in and are safe because of Jesus.
 - You go out and find pasture, and life, and life abundantly because of Jesus!
- As the door, Jesus is the **PROTECTOR** and the **PROVIDER**.
 - His provision is abundant life! And what must you do to receive this? Must you be the smartest, strongest, or most beautiful? NO! You just have to be a sheep that follows the shepherd where He leads, knowing that He cares more than you ever could!
 - *THE BEAUTY IS NOT IN OUR FLEECE, THE BEAUTY IS IN THE GOODNESS OF THE SHEPHERD.*
- He says as much...

11-18

THE SHEPHERD'S HEART FOR HIS SHEEP

- It is shown in His sacrifice.
- Notice in this section, there's a theme/phrase that gets repeated. "I lay down my life for my sheep." It's like a refrain of the song...

Friends, the Good Shepherd is one who sees our dirt and sees our hurt, loves us anyways, to the fullest extent of giving us life by laying His down. This is His heartbeat! Can you hear it? If you hear it, and you know His voice, does it not drive you to worship? How Good is this Shepherd?

Let's look fully into this Good Shepherd and embrace our sheepishness. It is no insult because the bleat of the sheep is that song of worship to the Shepherd! Him we proclaim! He is altogether lovely, Jesus, Our Shepherd.

Would you bow with me for a moment?

Friends, perhaps today you don't have a relationship with this Shepherd, Jesus. Maybe you thought it was because you weren't good enough, or didn't look good enough on the outside. I would beg you to remember that His goodness

isn't dependent on us. He is good and He offers life abundantly...if you follow His voice. I beg you to confess your sins and put your trust in Jesus, the Greatest Good Shepherd. If you want to do that this morning, I would invite you to come and speak with one of the pastors at the front. But, that invitation is for everyone. The band is going to lead us in worship, and his goodness should drive that worship.
Father...