

# Sheep

Symbols, Metaphors, Similes



*“Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.” John 10:7*

*I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. John 10:9*

In the Bible, we are often referred to as sheep. Do you want to be thought of as a sheep. According to what we are told, they are stupid and foolish. They get lost and can't find their way home. They have to be watched constantly. But as I think about it, whether we like

it or not, we are like sheep. Many times we get lost as we seek to follow God's will for our lives. But we are watched constantly whether we want to be or not.

Christ continues in John 10:27 & 28 to tell us *“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.”* That is quite a promise for a dumb animal. He goes on to tell us that His sheep not only hear His voice, they know it and they recognize it. A friend who has traveled in Scotland a lot told me that sheep graze freely over the mountain-side and are only identified by a red or blue spot painted on their backs, but an intimacy develops between the sheep and the shepherd. They know their Shepherd's voice and run from a strange voice. But also note that in this passage of Scripture, Christ also says *“I know them.”* He knows us so well, better than we know ourselves. That is scary, but it is also really assuring. We can't escape from Him. We can try, but we can't do it.

In a sermon by Charles Pickell, a Presbyterian minister, he writes, “In ancient times shepherds actually lived with the sheep. They got to know each sheep individually—they knew its quirks, its strengths and weaknesses—whether it was stubborn or submissive, whether it would follow or was prone to stray. At night the shepherd would lay at the opening of the sheep pen and literally act as a gate. That is why Jesus

says, *“I am the gate for the sheep.”* As the shepherd watches over the sheep, cares for them, guards them, protects them, and rescues them from danger—so Jesus does for us.”\*



That is a wonderful assurance and it is free. We don't have to pay a gate keeper. I don't know what Christ looks like, but I like this picture. I like the feeling that He is holding me in His arms. When I stray, He will find me and hold me. As I was writing this, I originally wrote “If I stray” and then I thought. No, I will stray. It is “When I stray!” We all stray from His loving arms, but He will call and He will find us and love us.

A song written by Orien Johnson tells of God's love. Some of the lyrics are:

*"In God's green pastures feeding, by  
His cool waters lie;  
Soft in the evening walk my Lord and  
I.*

*All the sheep of His pastures fare so  
wondrously fine,  
His sheep am I.  
Waters cool, (In the valley)  
Pastures green, (On the mountain)*

*In the evening walk my Lord and I;  
(In the evening walk my Lord  
and I)*

*Dark the night, (In the valley)  
Rough the way, (On the mountain)  
Step by step my Lord and I.  
(Step by step my Lord and I)"*

I know that I have that wonderful love,  
love that never fails, never sleeps, never  
forgets me. I have the wonderful love  
from my Shepherd who carries me in  
His arms.

Jesus doesn't yell at you  
LIKE A LIFE SERGEANT:  
"Come on, Get it done."

JESUS COMES BESIDE YOU

like a *Life Savior* and whispers,

"Come to Me, It Is Finished."



### **THE LAMB** by William Blake

*"Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee  
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.  
By the stream & o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing wooly bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice!  
Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee*

*Little Lamb I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb I'll tell thee!  
He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb:  
He is meek & he is mild,  
He became a little child:  
I a child & thou a lamb,  
We are called by his name.  
Little Lamb God bless thee.  
Little Lamb God bless thee."*

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to  
not only know Your love, but to want  
to share it with others every day of my  
life. Thank You for the assurance that  
my sins are forgiven, that You walk  
with me in the low places and in the  
high places, in the dark and in the  
light, step by step. Amen

1. What do we do when we hear His voice?
2. Do you mind being a sheep? What sustains you? What empowers you?
3. What are the promises of being one of His sheep?
4. What comforts you as you face your daily tasks and live amid the moral, spiritual, and political ambiguities of our day?

\*"The Shepherd's Voice" by Charles  
Pickell, [A Harvest of the Years](#).

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*"He will feed his flock like a shep-  
herd. He will carry the lambs in his  
arms, holding them close to his  
heart. . . ." Isaiah 40:11*