

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give to them eternal life, and they shall never ever perish, and not anyone shall pluck them out of My hand.” (John 10:27-28)

Here we find a text rich and full of everything our soul could need and desire. We read words about those who are called ‘**my sheep**’ words of richness and strength that are spoken by the Shepherd Himself.

He knows and places His mark upon His own, He sets his seal upon His own. He knows even the feeble ones, the one with a lame foot, the one with a torn ear, Oh you say they are not much to look at these sheep. But He knows every one of them, for they are His - he purchased them with His own precious blood, and He has fought the lion on their behalf and overcome. We are precious to Him and very very dear no matter how ragged we may look. *"Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore, with lovingkindness I have drawn you. Jer 31:3.* This passage tells us how Jerusalem's houses were broken down and destroyed and vacant. And God says I will build them again. In the same way the Lords promise rebuilds broken down and empty lives without hope, he does perfectly, what no man can do. What a glorious message the Gospel is.

"I know them. But not only does He Know His own, he grants to us to Know Him, He has given us understanding that we might know Him, know what is true, to know that we are in Him - this is eternal life that they may know Him. We know His eye is upon us. His eye that neither slumbers nor sleeps, We know He will never leave us nor forsake us. We know He will present us faultless before the father. I feel a little like King David – such knowledge is too wonderful for me It is high, I cannot *attain* it. Yet It is Grace that gives, Grace that opens my understanding and blind eyes. I was lost and He came seeking me and found me and redeemed me. Oh how undeserving I was but He Loved me with an everlasting love.

— He has given unto us eternal life. —They shall never perish, —neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." **This passage of scripture is like the cluster of grapes which came from Eshcol,** so large that the branch was carried on a stave between the Sholders of two men. What a message of Hope and Comfort and encouragement, stronger and richer promises who can find anywhere else.

The words, "**My sheep**," speak of the close connection that exists between Christ and believers. They are His by gift from the Father, **His by purchase**, *the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood – we are His purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.* His by **calling and choice**, He chose us before the foundation of the world. And people are His by their own **consent and heart-submission**. We read "And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes on Me shall never thirst." (John 6:35)

We are Christ's property; purchased by Him is Gods part without which there would be no salvation- but then there is our response, our submission, our coming and Believing and repenting. and just as a man feels a special interest in that which he has bought at a great price and made his own, so does the Lord Jesus feel a peculiar interest in His people.

The Lord says **I know them**, He has special knowledge of His own; But **the world around us knows us not**, or **cares not**, the world around us even despises the Lords chosen ones. The world not only despises the flock it despises the Shepherd Himself. They may forget us and not care- **But Gods flock are never forgotten or uncared for by Christ** who feeds his sheep in green pastures and grants sweet streams of water of comfort by the paths of grace and righteousness.

Let's look at The character of Gods own, their names, and their marks: what does the text say about them? "**My sheep**," we read, "hear my voice and follow me." **The Lord Jesus Christ likens the Christian to sheep**; and He declares "they are mine, and they hear me and follow me."

True Christians are compared to sheep, and we learn great depths of meaning in the comparison.

Sheep are the most harmless, quiet, inoffensive creatures that God has made. **Christians are to be the same**- they should be very humble and lowly-minded, as disciples of Him who said, "*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.*" They should be known as persons of a very gentle and loving spirit, who desire to do good to all around them, who would not injure any one by word or deed.

Gods ones are encouraged to be be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Oh, that we would become blameless and harmless, children of God without

fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.

Sheep are most useful- they give great benefit to mankind. In the same way we are to be a benefit to all those around us. How will I help people I'm not rich

Oh, you may think you have no silver or gold to help people. But every sheep has a tongue - which we can use for our neighbour's profit. We can, and the true sheep will warn and **entreat and counsel and persuade**; we will **reason and argue**, as a **witness**, against sin which is destroying them; we will show ourselves affectionate lovers of men's souls. **A genuine Gospel-faith has nothing selfish about it**—it never makes a man think only of his own salvation; it stirs him up, to be concerned about the souls of others. **We can always suspect that those who care nothing** whether others are saved or not may be blinded at the terrible fate of the lost without Christ. **Anyone that realizes the awfulness of perishing without Christ cannot be silent.** We may ask, such an uncaring one do they really know Christ; do they really know what terrible end they have been delivered from. Surely if they knew and had experienced redemption themselves they would never be silent .

Never think if we have not goods and money, that we can't help people, we can have a feeling heart. A heart that when it sees suffering speaks **words of comfort**, speaks a word in season. The heart filled with compassion, will weep with them that weep, as well as rejoice with them that rejoice; We let men see that he is a real child of his Father in heaven. Again, the words of Isaiah Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. We do this by Preaching the Gospel of Salvation, a message that lifts people that they sink people carrying the heavy burden of sin. It's a message and voice of forgiveness. Bringing great comfort.

We may not have earthly riches, but we can pray. The true ones pray it's a mark that we are alive just as much as it's a mark that one who breaths is alive. **The real Christian is always praying asking for the Lost to be saved**, asking for the spirit of God to fall upon where he lives that eyes would be opened and hearts softened. This is of great benefit to the community in which they live.

Usefulness. The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much.

How useful the true one is in a church praying for the lost to be redeemed. **If we are indeed sheep of Christ let us never forget this mark of our Character.**

Sheep love the company of other sheep. They don't like being on their own. They love being together and cling to each other's fellowship tightly. And so, it is with Christians they delight to meet together and fellowship if possible. They may have friends and relatives who are very kind to them but they long for spiritual fellowship. They long to talk about the truth. **This loving to be together is a special mark of Christ's flock,** — we shouldn't think it strange, we long to be together, if we consider we are walking in the same narrow way, and fighting against the same deadly enemies, — the true believer is never so happy, as when they are in company of like-minded Christians. The unconverted know nothing of such happiness.

Another comparison is the **complete dependence** of the sheep upon its Shepherd. Without the Shepherd they are likely to wander off into danger. Just as **sheep hear the voice** of their own shepherd, **and follow him**, so do believers follow Christ. By faith they **listen to His call**. By faith they **submit themselves to His guidance**. By faith **they lean on Him**, and **commit their souls totally to His direction**.

All these comparisons to sheep are most useful - illustrations of the relation between Christ and the true Christian. A true Christian bears these marks.

Some cannot tell the difference between a flock of Sheep or a herd of Pigs. From a distance they may look similar. But drive then **down a long muddy road**, you will **soon see the difference**. The pigs may have looked nice and clean in the meadow **but the moment they get an opportunity** without restraint they will wallow in the thick mud and dirt. **The Sheep hate the mud and dirt** and will avoid it if at all possible. So, it is with a Christians and the people of the world when things are going smoothly and well it's hard to tell the difference between the two. But when temptation arises, and self-denial is required - then the condition of the heart is clearly revealed. The **worldly** will take the **easy path** – the worldly **don't care about "mud"** the **sin** the **compromise** the **questionable ways** they just look for the easy way, the broad way, not considering that it leads to destruction. **But the Christian will avoid the muddy path the Christian**

Loves the good Shepherd and hates sin and chooses the narrow way which leads to life. The difference between their characters is clearly revealed.

The Lord doesn't just call us sheep. **He says my sheep.** We are stamped and sealed and marked as the possession of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He knows them all by name. We are His **by election**- and we are His **by Purchase**. And we are His **by Adoption**. He has put His Spirit within us and enabled us to cry *Aba Farther*. Oh, how many reasons we have to rejoice and be glad. He knows all our sighs and groans. *Oh Lord my desire is before thee my groaning is not his from thee.* Psalm 38:9. Our Lord knows every tear we shed - **we read** *"I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you.* 2Kings 20:5. "You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?" (Psalms 56:8). **The good Shepherd Knows all my sufferings** -the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.

My sheep HEAR My voice. This is not a natural hearing with the ears. **Many hear and are still lost** and on the broad road to destruction. Hearing means you **act upon** what you hear. It is **hearing with the heart. Listening with attention** to what you hear, **it is believing what you hear.** – and **acting boldly and courageously on that you believe** and have heard. But we might ask **Where is Gods voice heard?** In providence and all the things that happen in life, but the most common and reliable, is that we hear His voice plainly and distinctly in **the reading of Holy Scripture.** We hear His voice in the preaching of the Gospel. **One day it is sharp and piercing:** "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish"; "Ye must be born again"; "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead." **Another day it is gentle,** and appealing, pleading: "Come unto me, O weary and heavy-laden one, and I will give thee rest"; "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, **and they follow Me.** **To follow Christ,** that is the one definite mark of a Christian. No man shall ever say of them, they are hearers only and do not doers of what they hear. **To follow Christ is to place implicit trust in Him** as our Redeemer, Saviour, Prophet, Priest, King, Leader, Commander and Shepherd, and to walk in His ways, clearly and straightly. **It is to take up our cross and follow Him,** to look to the Lamb as our Guide and

follow Him wheresoever He goes. We are to fix our eyes and hearts on Christ; on Him we are to rest our faith.

In these verses we have seen the Character of a true Christian. This is a text that poses a great question we must now ask ourselves. **Am I one of His sheep. Are these marks recognisable in my own life.**

“Am I a sheep of Christ’s flock, or am I not? Do I hear His voice or do I not? Do I follow Him or do I not?”

There are only 2 classes or characters of people on this earth. There is no in-between. There is only Saved and Lost. Only those who are safe in Christ’s hand where no one can pluck them out, Only those in His heart forever, Only those in His very self forever.

A pastor took over a church with many faithful old people who had been there most of their lives. He was faithful to proclaim the Gospel, Faithful to show and preach the character of true believers. And one of these faithful old ladies came to Him and said, that although she had been in church most of her life she now for the first time understood the Gospel – understood what it was to be born again. and now had assurance that she was saved. She now knew she was the Lords. **You see it’s not simply saying a sinners prayer.** It’s a total transformation I was lost and now I’m found. Old things have passed away and behold all things are new. I am a new creation in Christ Jesus. My sin is washed away. I was in darkness and now I’m in the Light. How many there are who don’t possess the marks which are the proof of real conversion. They lack vital characteristics of someone in Christ. What must they do? Remember this very day Christ is willing to receive you if you will come to Him. Believe the Gospel, Repent of your sins. Ask the Holy Spirit to make you a new creation in Christ Jesus.

"And HE shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 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:" ~
Matthew 25:33-34