

On the Trail of His Sheep

Sunday, August 26, 1984

John 10:14-15

“I am the good Shepherd and know my sheep and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so, know I the Father and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.”

I’m speaking to you today on this subject: “ON THE TRAIL OF HIS SHEEP.”

I am saying “that the good Shepherd is on the trail of His sheep. I am saying that the Holy Spirit is on the trail of His sheep.” I am saying “that the man who knows the Gospel and is sent of God to preach the Gospel is on the trail of His sheep for the glory of God Almighty.”

I am going to read a Scripture from John Chapter 10. I wish that you would read the whole 10th Chapter of John today. It would be for your good and for your benefit if you would. It would edify you and instruct you in some very important things. Read it prayerfully, carefully, and slowly.

Let me give you two verses; John 10: 14 and 15:

Christ said, “I am the good Shepherd and know my sheep and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so, know I the Father and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold (this particular group or even this Jewish nation); them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.”

First of all: My friends; I realize that what I believe the Bible teaches and what I preach to you on this television program and have preached to you for the past eight, nine, or ten years, is in direct conflict with most of today’s religion. I know that; what the Bible teaches and what I have been preaching to you and what I am preaching to you today is in direct conflict with most of today’s religion.

Secondly: What I am preaching to you is not preached by most preachers. They either do not know it or if they know it they are not preaching it.

Thirdly: What I am preaching to you today contradicts, directly contradicts, what most religionists believe about God, about man, about sin, about Christ, about the cross, about salvation, and about eternal life.

I am saying this; “God’s preacher, His true servant, must not seek to please men or to build for himself a name, a following, or a kingdom. We are sent of God to preach what the Word of God teaches whatever the cost.

The apostle Paul said, *“If I please men, if that is my objective or motive to please men; I am not the servant of Christ.”*

Paul said this to the elders at Ephesus; *“I kept back nothing profitable unto you.”* He said, *“I have not shunned to declare unto you all the council of God and I have coveted no man’s silver or gold;”* I haven’t asked you for anything.

“In fact; I have worked with my own hands to support myself and those who are with me. I have built tents to keep from being a burden to you and to keep from giving you the wrong impression that God needs you.”

The Lord said through David; *“If I was hungry I wouldn’t ask you. The cattle on a thousand hills are mine. The gold and silver that has been mined and hasn’t been mined is Mine.”*

I will tell you this; the older I get, the wearier I am of today’s religious games, religious pretention, hypocrisy and showmanship, and today’s religious con-men.” It is so easy to get swept up today in the games of religion.

I watch some of these television preachers start out with some so-called, good principles. They are going to do this and do that. As they get a little notoriety, a little success, and build a few more buildings; they get away from the original purposes and principles and get swept up in this showmanship.

Someone said not long ago; “Religion is showmanship. When your competitor gets a bigger bloom you just get a bigger bloom than his. Offer it to the public and it will blow up in everybody’s face when it is over anyway.”

I am weary of that, totally weary. I am standing by the same principles that I stood by when I started on this station many years ago. I am preaching the same message. I am not begging; our God is not a beggar. I am not acting as a religious huckster and merchandiser of souls because our God will meet the need of His true prophets.

I will tell you this; “It is easy to get swept up in these games because *“the hearts of men are deceitful and desperately wicked.”* We are covetous and self-centered creatures because we like the praise of men. We seek the honor of men and not the honor of Jesus Christ.

God’s true preacher is going to stand by the Gospel and he is going to preach it for the glory of God whatever it costs him and whatever it costs those who hear him.

Oh, that we might do what we do for the glory of God. Oh, that we might be concerned for the glory of God, not for tomorrow, not for our buildings, our name, our schools, our programs, and all of these things, but just concern for the glory of God.

I said this to the congregation just last night; “All the great events of life are performed but one time.” I was born one time in the flesh.

I am not talking about the new birth or regeneration; I am talking about coming into this world. I came into this world one time. I was born one time; I was born Aug 19th, 1926. Fifty six years ago I was born into this world.

I’m going to live one time on this earth, no more. There will be no reincarnation, no coming back into this world. I am going to live one time and then I am going to die one time. *“It is appointed unto men once to die”* and that day is approaching and it is a whole lot nearer now than it has ever been. My life is about 6/8 or 3/4 gone.

Then, I am going to stand in the judgment one time. I am going to stand before Almighty God. I am going to hear Him say; *“Depart from me; I never knew you; bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness.”*

There are a lot of religious folks who are going to hear that. There will be those who said *“we preached in Your name, we prophesied in Your name and did many wonderful works in your name.”* They are going to hear Him say; *“I never knew you.”*

Some folks are going to hear Him say, *“come ye blessed; enter into the Kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of this world.”* I want to hear that; I desperately I want to hear that.

My friend; after that, we are going to enter one time into a long, long, eternity, from whence there is no return, and in which there is no change. *“He that is filthy, let him be*

filthy still. He that is ungodly, let him be ungodly still. He that is righteous, let him be righteous still.”

Life is real and death is real. Judgment is real and eternity is real. So; it is time that we get serious and quit playing games. We need to quit entertaining men on the road to hell. We need to quit building our selfish, self-centered monuments to our own names.

Most preachers and people know more about them than they do about God. They know more about them than they do about the Christ that they claim to preach. They know their name but they don't know the names of the apostles.

It is time to get serious about our relationship with God, not to present the preacher, but to present Christ. We should not leave anything to whim and fancy but turn men's eyes to Calvary because our God says over and over again; *“don't boast of tomorrow; you don't know what a day is going to bring forth.”*

“Teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.” James, the apostle, said; *“what is your life? It is but a vapor (it is here for a moment and it is gone).”* What is your life? *“It is appointed unto men once to die.”*

So; I am saying to those of you, “There are some of you who have some wisdom. Some of you have some perception. There are those of you to whom God has given some understanding of the reality of this critical situation of life, death, judgment, and eternity.”

To those of you who know the seriousness of the issues of life and the certainty of death and judgment; I am going to set forth some solemn truths today. I want you to think on them. We are going to go to school today.

We hear preachers holler “believe, believe, and believe.” They never tell people what to believe. They never tell them what to believe about God, what to believe about man, what to believe about the Gospel, what to believe about Christ, what to believe about the mysteries of the grace of God and the Kingdom of God.

They just say, “Believe, believe, and believe. Keep the faith and let's sing another song. Keep the faith and pass the offering plate. Keep the faith and send us a dollar. Keep the faith and keep us on the air.”

They have programs to raise money to have more programs, to have more programs to raise money to have more programs. I hear them all the time saying, “Send us an

offering so we can preach the Gospel,” but I never hear any of them ever preaching the Gospel. I just hear them raising more money to have more programs, you know.

We are going to school today and I want you to listen. Will you get serious? You may stand before God tomorrow. I am going to give you about six things that you need to think about; think on these things:

First of all: Man, (that is us that I am talking about, me and you). I’m not talking down to you; I am talking about us. Man, and I am one of them, is a fallen, sinful, creature.

The Scripture says in Romans 5:12; *“Wherefore, by one man, sin entered this world and death by sin and so death passed upon all men.”*

There is the death of sin, for all have sinned. In Romans 3:10 it says; *“It is written; there is none righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth. There is none that seeketh after God. There is none that doeth good, no not one.”*

The Scripture says, *“God looked down from heaven to see if any did do good and He found there is none righteous, no not one. Every imagination of man’s heart was continually evil.”* Romans 3:23 says; *“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”*

John said in 1st John 1:8; *“If you say that you have no sin; you deceive yourselves. If you say that you have not sinned, you make God a liar and the truth is not in you.”*

Paul said, *“In my flesh dwelleth no good thing. In this flesh no man can please God.”* Isaiah said, *“We all do fade as the leaf. Our righteousnesses are filthy rags. By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified.”*

This understanding of the state of man, the condition of man since the fall, this principle of evil, this nature of sin and this body of death and sin which dwells within us; that state of guilt led the prophets to ask some questions.

I am amazed at people today; they don’t ask any questions, any sensible, intelligent, Bible questions. They will ask “Will America fight Russia?” That is a profound question to most people.

They will ask “Where did Cain get his wife?” With all the questions that you need answered, that is the last one. They will also ask, “Will we know each other in heaven?” My friend; if you never get there it won’t make any difference will it?

You need to ask some questions. These prophets found out the condition of man by nature and they asked this question; *“how can man be just with God?”* Now, that is a question for you to contemplate for a little while.

“How can he be clean that is born of a woman?” That is a pretty good question. Here is another one; *“How can God be just and justify the ungodly?”* Here is another one; *“Who shall stand in His presence?”* The answer comes back, *“he that hath clean hands and a pure heart.”* That is no one, absolutely, no one.

Here another question is asked, *“If a man sins against a man, an advocate, a lawyer, who will plead for him?”* A judge will plead for him. If a man sins against God, who is going to stand for him?

I am saying to you, *“we need to consider our condition.”* The Scripture says, *“Can the Ethiopian change his skin? Can the leper change his spots?”* Jeremiah said, *“Neither can you do good that are accustomed to doing evil.”*

Here is another statement: *“Man by the fall and his nature is a sinful creature of no spiritual ability, no spiritual desire, and no spiritual understanding.”*

Secondly: The Lord God, according to the Bible, in His infinite, eternal, mercy and grace, has purposed to save out of Adam’s fallen race, to redeem a people, to populate His heaven and to populate glory. He has determined every one of them, predetermined them to be *“just like His Son Jesus Christ.”*

He didn’t purpose to save the angels; the angels fell before man did; you know that, most of you do and some of you do. The Scripture says, *“He didn’t take on Himself the seed and nature of angels.”*

He left them reserved, chained, in everlasting darkness awaiting judgment. He, according to His own wisdom and His own will took on Him the seed of Abraham, that is to say, angels which fell were not redeemed and will not be redeemed.

God Almighty has been pleased to save a people out of Adam’s race, *“out of every tribe, kindred, nation, and tongue under heaven.”*

The Scriptures teach that before man fell God ordained that salvation and ordained Christ to be the surety of that salvation. He is the guarantor of that salvation for it says; *“He is*

the surety of an eternal covenant. His blood is the blood of an eternal covenant. He is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.”

What I am saying is that God didn't wait until man fell and then decided how to save him. God didn't wait until man fell and then decided who He would save. God had purposed in an everlasting covenant of grace before the foundation of the world to have a people redeemed by Christ and conformed to His image.

That is what the Word of God teaches. You can call that high-doctrine, deep-doctrine, or anything that you want to; it is just truth, that's all; there is nothing deep about it and it is just so.

The Scriptures teach that because of sin and because of darkness and spiritual death, no man by nature will come to God. No man desires God. Men desire darkness; they love darkness. Men love evil; we do by nature and by birth.

If any man comes to God, God will draw him. If any man calls on God, God will call on him first. If any man loves God it is because God loved him first; that is so! *“Herein is love, not that we loved God; He loved us. We love Him because He first loved us;”* that is the Word of God.

So; from the beginning, Almighty God out of Adam's race, according to the good pleasure of His own will, chose a people and called them His sheep. That's right! In 2nd Thessalonians 2:13, it says; *“We are bound to give thanks for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.”*

In Ephesians 1: 3 and 4 says; *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.”*

Christ said to His disciples; *“you didn't choose me; you wouldn't choose Me.”* *“You have no desire to choose Me. You have no understanding, whereby, you couldn't choose Me. You are fallen men.”* *“I chose you.”* That is what the Word of God teaches.

In Romans 8:28, it says; *“We know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow; He also did predestinate, predetermined, to be conformed to the image of His Son.”*

“In whom He did predestinate, He called and whom He called, He justified, whom He justified He glorified. What shall we say to these things? If God be for us in eternal purpose, if God be for us in eternal wisdom, if God be for us in eternal grace, who can be against us? Who can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?”

Election doesn’t shut people out; it is a door by which men enter. Election is not the sinner’s enemy it is the sinner’s friend. If He had not chosen me; I would not have chosen Him. If He had not loved me, I would have never loved Him. If He had not called me, I would have never called Him; that is so! Man is a fallen creature but God is determined to save fallen creatures.

Thirdly: Our Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven.

Throughout the Old Testament and in every dispensation, God promised His coming, pictured His coming, prophesied of His coming, told of His coming, and typified His coming.

Finally, *“In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son made of a woman, made under the Law to redeem them born under the Law. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.”*

Christ came, sent by the Father to save those whom the Father in His eternal purpose and plan decreed and determined to have the gift of life. In Matthew 1:21, the angel said to Joseph; *“Call His name Jesus because He is going to save His people from their sins.”*

Paul said, *“Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.”* Christ said Himself; *“I have come to seek and to save the lost.”* In John 10:11, Christ said; *“I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”* In John 10:15 He says; *“I lay down My life for the sheep.”*

I will tell you this; *“In His life, He is our representative.”* In Adam’s transgression, *“many were made sinners. By Christ’s obedience we were made righteous.”* In His death He is our substitute; *“by His stripes we are healed.”* In His resurrection He is our hope; He said, *“Because I live you live.”*

In glory He is our forerunner *“who has already entered within the veil”* and staked the claim for us. He has already entered in.

At the right hand of God, He is our Mediator and our High Priest. *“In all things we are complete in Him”* for *“He is made unto us wisdom, (all we need), righteousness, (all we need), redemption (all we need), and sanctification, (all we need).”*

“In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and we are complete in Him.” There is no word in the English language which describes the blessings that the believer has in Christ better than the word (complete). All that the Law requires, all that justice demands, all that God commands, all that heaven expects, is met in Jesus Christ. That is so!

Man is a fallen creature. God from eternity says, *“I am going to have a people out of that fallen race.”* He sent His Son down here to provide a remedy, to provide a ransom, and to provide redemption for those people.

Fourthly: *“His sheep will hear His voice and they will believe on Him and they will come to Him.”* He said that; you read John 10.

There came some religious people to Him that day while He was speaking. They said to Him in John 10:24, the same Chapter that you have open there; *“If you be the Christ; tell us plainly, if you be the Christ.”* He replied; *“I told you.”*

Do you see that in verse 26? He said, *“I told you but you didn’t believe me. I told you who I am; I told you whence I came but you didn’t believe me.”* *You believe not because you are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice.”*

I am on the trail of His sheep. He has purposed their salvation. He has purchased their salvation and He has promised their salvation and they are going to hear. He said, *“My sheep will hear my voice.”*

I’m not talking about an audible voice from heaven; they are going to hear Him speak through His Word. They are going to hear Him speak through His Spirit. They are going to hear Him speak through His messenger. They are going to hear Him speak through His Gospel.

“They will hear my voice, watch it; “I know them, they follow me. I give them eternal life; they will never perish. No man will ever pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them to me is greater than all and no one is going to pluck them out of His hand.”

Go back to John 6:37. What are you saying preacher? I am saying *“His sheep will hear His voice.”* They will cross His path. He will confront them with the truth and they will hear it. They will be given ears to hear. They will be given hearts to understand. They will be given eyes to see, what other men don’t see, hear, or understand.

Our Lord said in John 6:37; look at this, *“All that My Father giveth me shall come to me. They shall come and him that cometh, I shall in no wise cast out.”*

The Shepherd is on the trail of these sheep. The Holy Spirit is on the trail of these sheep. The church is on the trail of these sheep. The preacher of God is on the trail of his sheep.

The apostle Paul in 1st Thessalonians Chapter One, says; *“I know your election of God brethren, beloved of the Lord.”* How do you know this Paul? Paul knows because *“our Gospel came to you not in word only but in power, in the Holy Ghost and much assurance.”*

That is evidence that you are one of God’s elect because you have heard the Gospel. You have heard it and you have received it and believed it; not only that; you walked in it; *“you became followers of us in the Lord.”*

Not only that, you became an example in your lives to all men. You became new creatures. God changed your habits, your ways, your conversation and conduct. You became witnesses. You told other people about Christ. *“You turned from your idols to serve the living God”* and right now you are waiting for His Son from heaven.

You are one of His elect. All of the evidences point to the fact that you are one of His sheep. You have His brand on your ear; you have heard His voice. You have His brand on your foot; you are following Him.

Fifthly: Now watch this; *“In every tribe, kindred, nation, and tongue under heaven,”* there are some sheep of Christ.

I don’t know who they are. I am looking for them. I am preaching this Gospel every Sunday. I’m not preaching about it. I’m not saying that I am going to preach it if you send me a dollar. I’m preaching it and telling you who Christ is, what He did, where He came from, where He came to, what He accomplished, how He died, and where He is now.

That is your foundation and that is your hope, refuge, and peace, in Him. I'm pressing upon you the claims of Jesus Christ, the royal claims and crown rights of Jesus Christ. I'm calling upon men to bow to Him, to bow to Christ.

I'm not calling on men to bow to an ordinance, a law, and a denomination, or to a person on this earth, but to Christ.

I know out yonder that there is an Abraham buried in idolatry, one of God's sheep. There is a Saul of Tarsus buried in religion who is one of God's sheep. There is a Zacchaeus sitting up in a tree somewhere. He has been up that tree a really long time in position, power, and possession. He is one of God's sheep.

Out yonder there is a Mary Magdalene who was possessed of seven devils and an Onesimus who is running from the law. There is a harlot who is dedicated to the flesh, a jailor, a Lydia, a thief and a woman at the well.

There are a lot of you religious people that are going to miss Him because you are not His sheep. These people are. *"These are my sheep; He said, "I pray for them; I don't pray for the world. I pray for them which Thou has given Me; they will hear My voice and they will come to Me."*

I will tell you something else about it; "once they come, you couldn't run them away with a ten-foot-pole; they will persevere." They will continue in the faith. That is what He said; *"My sheep will hear My voice and they will follow Me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish."*

Those whom the Father hath purposed to save, He said; *"I will raise them up at the last day."* Those who see the Son and believe on Him, *"I will raise him at the last day."*

Those whom the Holy Spirit quickens, those whom the Holy Spirit regenerates, those whom the Holy Spirit begets and awakens, they will continue in the faith. The Scripture says, *"The just shall live by faith."* They shall continue in the faith.

Man is a sinner and God is purposed to have a people. He gave His Son to redeem. He gave His Spirit to call them. He is going to confront them with the Gospel.

Do you know how you can tell His sheep? "They will hear His voice." They will hear His Gospel and they will bow down. They will follow the Shepherd. *"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring."*

They won't follow another Shepherd and they won't hear another voice; "*they will follow me.*" They will not follow me or any other preacher; they follow Christ and "*they will never perish; I give them eternal life!*"