

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP: FALSE AND TRUE TEACHERS JOHN 10:01–06

Introduction

This passage begins the great revelation of Jesus as the Shepherd of Life. Jesus is pictured as the only true Shepherd of the sheep.

- I. The sheep pen: a place of safety and security (v. 1)
- II. The false shepherd (v. 1)
- III. The true shepherd (vv. 2-3).
- IV. The sheep (vv. 4-5).
- V. The parable: was not understood (v. 6).

I. *John 10:01 Sheep Pen, Place of Salvation and Security*

The sheepfold or sheep pen. Jesus begins the parable with the solemn “I tell you the truth.” What He had to say was of critical importance.

There is a sheep pen, a pen where all the sheep are kept. The sheep pen pictures the place of acceptance by God, or the place of safety and security in God’s presence (See *Kingdom of God*, Mt. 19:23-24). It is the position of salvation, of spiritual sight that comes by believing Jesus to be Son of God (Jn. 9:36-38). It is the *position* of being accepted by God because a man approaches God “in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ.” The sheep pen symbolizes the place where the sheep (believers) are kept. The sheep are kept...

- in the church
- in heaven
- in salvation
- in spiritual sight
- in the place of acceptance
- in the Kingdom of God
- in eternal life
- in the position of faith
- in spiritual deliverance from darkness

Now note: the whole parable has to do with a false shepherd and the true shepherd. Both go after the sheep. The true shepherd is Christ and the false shepherds are those who opposed Christ, the world’s religionists — the false teachers — who so blindly stood against His claim to be “the Light of the world” (Jn. 8:12; 9:5; see 9:40).

II. *John 10:01 The False Shepherds*

The false shepherd or false teacher. Note three points.

1. The sheep pen can be entered. There is a gate into the sheep pen — an entrance, a way to get in — and the gate is the only *acceptable* way to enter.
 2. Some shepherds climb into the sheep pen by “some other way” (allachothēn). The word by is important. It indicates origin. The false shepherd *comes by* and *originates from*...
-

- some other direction
- some other source
- some other way
- some other road
- some other position

Note also the terms *thief* (kleptes) and *robber* (leistes). The very same words were used to describe Judas (a thief) and Barabbas (a robber). It is an awful thing for a person to be put into the same class as Judas and Barabbas, two who were as opposite from Christ as any men could be.

The false shepherd is...

- a thief: a seducer and a deceiver, a crafty and dishonest man, a man who will use any means to get into the sheep pen to steal the sheep.
- a robber: a man who will use violence and cruelty and will destroy and devour if necessary to get into the sheep pen.

God has much to say to false shepherds. (1 Tim. 6:3-5; Tit. 1:10-16; 2 Pet. 2:1-22; Jude 1:3-6)

Isa 56:9-12 *Come, all you beasts of the field, come and devour, all you beasts of the forest! Israel's watchmen are blind, they all lack knowledge; they are all mute dogs, they cannot bark; they lie around and dream, they love to sleep. They are dogs with mighty appetites; they never have enough. They are shepherds who lack understanding; they all turn to their own way, each seeks his own gain. "Come," each one cries, "let me get wine! Let us drink our fill of beer! And tomorrow will be like today, or even far better."*

Jer 23:1-2 *"Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!" declares the Lord. Therefore this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: "Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done," declares the Lord. (See Jer 25:34-38)*

Jer 50:6 *"My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray and caused them to roam on the mountains. They wandered over mountain and hill and forgot their own resting place*

Ezek 34:1-6 *The word of the Lord came to me: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were*

scattered they became food for all the wild animals. My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them. (See Ezk 34:7-31)

III. *John 10:02–03 The True Shepherd*

The true shepherd. Note four points.

1. The shepherd who enters the appointed gate is the true shepherd (Jesus Christ). He knows where the gate is and the way into the sheep pen. Therefore, He uses the gate. There is no reason for Him not to use it, no reason for Him to climb in any other way.
=> His purpose is not to steal some sheep from the Owner (God) and start a flock of His own. Such a thought is the farthest thing from His mind. His thoughts are focused upon the sheep and the Owner's will.
=> His purpose is to be the Shepherd of the Owner (God), to serve Him and to do His will. Therefore, the Shepherd enters the sheep pen by the gate. The gate was made for Him and the sheep to enter; therefore, He uses it.
2. The Shepherd is known by the "Watchman" (God or the Holy Spirit). This point is critical. The Holy Spirit (as God) is the One who opens the gate into the sheep pen. The One who comes to the gate is known by the Watchman; He is known to be the Shepherd. The Shepherd therefore...
 - is not afraid to face the Watchman
 - has been appointed to use the gate
 - has the authority and the right to enter

John 10:15 *"Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father — and I lay down my life for the sheep."*

3. The Shepherd knows the sheep; He knows each one by name. This is said to have been a fact among shepherds and their sheep in Jesus' day. Shepherds actually knew each sheep individually, even in large herds. The fact is certainly true with Christ and His sheep. The words His own (*sidia*) mean He calls His own, not as a whole, not as a herd, but as individuals. The Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, knows each of His sheep by name.

John 10:14 *"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me."*

1 Cor 8:3 *But the man who loves God is known by God.*

2 Tim 2:19 *Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."*

Isa 43:1 *But now, this is what the Lord says — he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine."*

4. The Shepherd leads and shepherds the sheep. He loves them as His own; therefore He must lead them to the green pastures and still waters. He must see that they are nourished and protected and given the very best care possible. (See *Sheep Without a Shepherd*, Mk. 6:34.)

a. He feeds the sheep even if He has to gather them in His arms and carry them to the feasting pasture.

Isa 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

b. He guides the sheep to the pasture and away from the rough places and precipices.

Psa 23:1-4 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

c. He seeks and saves the sheep who get lost.

Mat 18:12 "What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off?"

Ezek 34:16 I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

d. He protects the sheep. He even sacrifices His life for the sheep.

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

Heb 13:20 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep.

e. He restores the sheep who go astray and returns them to the sheep pen.

1 Pet 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

f. He rewards the sheep for obedience and faithfulness.

1 Pet 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

g. He shall keep the sheep separate from the goats.

Mat 25:32-33 "All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people, one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left."

MARK 06:34 SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD

*When Jesus landed and saw the large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. **Mark 06:34***

As the boat approached the shore, Jesus stood in the boat watching the multitude clamouring for space on the seashore. He needed rest, and the disciples needed rest even more. But He was not annoyed or irritated with the people. Contrariwise, He was moved with deep, intense compassion because the people were as sheep without a shepherd. He could not turn from them. He could not send them away despite the need for rest. He could do only one thing. He had to meet their need; He had to teach them, so He began “teaching them many things.”

Note: when Jesus saw the multitude, He said, “They were like sheep without a shepherd.” He meant at least three things by this statement.

1. Sheep without a shepherd are bewildered and wander about, not knowing where they are or where they are going. They get lost ever so easily and cannot find their way back to the flock. So it is with people. People without the shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, are bewildered. They do not know where they have come from, where they are going, nor why they are where they are. They wander about, getting lost in place after place, never finding the way to true life.

***Mat 9:36** When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.*

***1 Pet 2:25** For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

***Jer 50:6** “My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray and caused them to roam on the mountains. They wandered over mountain and hill and forgot their own resting place.”*

2. Sheep without a shepherd go hungry. They do not have adequate nourishment. They cannot find sufficient food to live. So it is with people. People without the Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, go hungry. They do not have the Shepherd of God to feed and inspire their souls nor to satisfy their inner longings for peace, love, and joy (Gal. 5:22-23). They have only themselves to depend upon as they seek to meet their craving for life. They have only themselves in seeking the answer to...

- purpose
- loneliness
- depression
- direction
- sickness
- emptiness
- assurance
- disturbance
- death

John 6:35 *Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."*

3. Sheep without a shepherd cannot find shelter or safety. The sheep are exposed to all the dangers of the wilderness. So it is with people. People without the Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, are exposed to all that is within the world, and they are doomed. They are doomed because the animals, the temptations and trials of the world, attack at every opportunity and destroy all who wander about.

1 Pet 5:8 *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

Psa 91:1 *He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.* (see Psa 61:1-4; 91:1-6) □

IV. John 10:04–05 The Sheep, the Believers

The sheep are disciples or believers of the Lord. Note three points.

1. The sheep know the Shepherd's voice. They know both His sound and His words.
=> The sound of His voice is not uncertain and unclear, not weak and frail, not quivering and indecisive. It is clear, strong, sure and decisive.
=> The words of His voice are words of care and tenderness, of warning and safety, of truth and security.

Thought 1. Believers trust the voice, the Word of Christ, because they know His voice.

John 3:34 *"For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit."*

John 6:63 *"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life."*

John 6:68 *Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."*

John 8:51 *"I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."*

John 18:37 *"You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."*

1 Th 2:13 *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

1 Tim 3:16 *Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.*

1 Pet 2:2-3 *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

1 John 1:1-3 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

2. The sheep follow the Shepherd. Note, He goes before them to lead the way. He does not drive them like cattle. He leads in order to pick out the safe and secure way to the pasture. He leads to show the sheep that the road is clear and safe. The sheep know this, so they follow the Shepherd, knowing they are perfectly safe and secure following the path He has laid out before them. (See Jn.14:6.)

- a. They follow Him because He saves them and gives them life.

John 10:15 *“Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father — and I lay down my life for the sheep.”*

John 10:27-28 *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”*

Zec 9:16 *The Lord their God will save them on that day as the flock of his people. They will sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown.*

- b. They follow Him because they are the sheep of His pasture.

Psa 100:3 *Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.*

- c. They follow Him because they wish to give Him praise forever.

Psa 75:9 *As for me, I will declare this forever; I will sing praise to the God of Jacob.*

- d. They follow Him because they are sheep in the midst of wolves.

Acts 20:29 *I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.*

- e. They follow Him because He assures them and delivers them from fear.

Luke 12:32 *“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”*

- f. They follow Him because they have learned that without Him they are scattered and lost.

Mark 14:27 *“You will all fall away,” Jesus told them, “for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’” (see Mt. 26:31).*

g. They follow Him because He takes care of all their wants.

Psa 23:1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

3. The sheep flee from strange voices. Note two things.

a. They *will never* (ou me) follow a stranger. This is a double negative. They will never, in any case, follow a stranger.

b. They flee from the strange voice. They do not know a stranger's voice. Its sound and words are different.

Thought 1. The strange voice can be the voice of...

- false religion
- humanism
- false science
- materialism
- false psychology
- worldliness
- false philosophy
- fame

V. *John 10:06 Jesus Christ, Rejected by the Natural Man*

The parable was not understood. The spiritual truth was beyond the religionists, the false teachers. They could not grasp the truth with their natural minds. They could not see themselves as false shepherds, and they could not see Jesus as the true Shepherd. Natural man rebels against being called false and against Christ's being the only Shepherd of the sheep.

Acts 28:27 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

2 Tim 3:7 Always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. ■

THE GATE OF THE SHEEP: THE ONLY WAY TO GOD

JOHN 10:07–10

Introduction

Jesus claims to be the Gate of the sheep. Jesus is probably referring to the gate of a community sheep pen or a community pasture which housed all the flocks of an area. There is, however, another descriptive picture of Jesus as the gate. When the sheep were kept out in the hill country overnight, they were kept in ravines surrounded by several rocky walls. Naturally, the opening into these ravines had no gate at all. The shepherd himself literally became the gate, for during the night he would simply lie across the opening. The sheep could get out only by going over him, and the enemies of the sheep could get in to the sheep only by going through him. Access in or out was only through the shepherd.

- I. Jesus is the only gate for the sheep, the only way to God (vv. 7-8).
- II. Jesus is the only gate that leads to salvation (v. 9).
- III. Jesus is the only gate that leads to abundant life (v. 10).

I. *John 10:07–08 Jesus Christ, the Only Gate*

Jesus is the *only* Gate of the sheep. Note the words “I tell you the truth”; they stress the critical importance of what Jesus was about to say. By “gate” Jesus meant He is the way or entrance into the sheep pen. Jesus Christ is the way...

- into God’s presence
- into God’s acceptance
- into salvation
- into the true church
- into heaven
- into the Kingdom of God
- into eternal life

Therefore, if a man wishes to enter where God is, he must enter the Gate of Christ. A man enters God’s sheep pen only through the Gate of Christ, for Christ is the only Gate into God’s presence.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Eph 2:18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

1 Tim 2:5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Heb 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Heb 8:6 *But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.*

Heb 9:24 *For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.*

Heb 10:2 *If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshippers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins.*

1 John 2:1 *My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.*

Note: Jesus used the clear claim to deity: "I Am." This gives additional stress to His claim to be the *only Gate* to God. Now note two points.

1. All others who claim to be the gate are thieves and robbers. There are some who claim to be the gate and to have the way to God. They claim to know the right way and to have the newest ideas and the latest truth and knowledge. They claim to have the right teaching, religion, works, maturity, philosophy, psychology, ideas and novel concepts. They claim to be the gate that opens into God's presence. But Jesus says that they are thieves and robbers. They are out to steal the sheep, both their wool (possessions) and their lives (loyalty).

They want both their wool and their lives, for if they have both they have the sheep's *permanent loyalty*.

Phil 1:15 *It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill.*

Jer 6:13 *From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit.*

Jer 23:4 *"I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing," declares the Lord.*

Ezek 33:6 *'But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that man will be taken away because of his sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for his blood.'*

Micah 3:11 *Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they lean upon the Lord and say, "Is not the Lord among us? No disaster will come upon us."*

2. The proof that Jesus is the only Gate and that all others are false gates is the sheep themselves. The sheep do not listen to the voices of *false* gates, not if they are the real sheep of the Shepherd. The real sheep of God know the Shepherd's voice and have the ability to discern it. If they hear the voice of a false shepherd, they know that he and his sheep gate are false. His voice and message are not the voice and message of the true gate, the Son of God Himself.

John 10:14 *“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.”*

John 10:27-28 *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”*

1 Cor 2:12, 14 *We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

II. **John 10:09 Salvation is Only through Jesus Christ**

Jesus is the only gate that leads to salvation. Jesus said that He is the Gate that leads to three great things.

1. Jesus is the only gate that opens to salvation.

Acts 4:12 *Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.*

Acts 15:11 *No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.*

John 3:16-17 *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

Rom 5:9 *Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!*

1 Th 5:9 *For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Tim 2:3-6 *This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time.*

Heb 5:9 *And, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.*

Heb 9:28 *So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

2. Jesus is the only gate that opens to peace and security. He is the only gate that allows the sheep to *come in and to go out*. This was a common Jewish phrase. If a man could “come in and go out” without difficulty or danger, ... it meant he was *safe and secure*. Jesus brings to the believer safety and security, peace and tranquillity.

John 14:26 *“But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”*

John 17:11 *“I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name — the name you gave me — so that they may be one as we are one.”*

John 16:33 *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

Phil 1:6 *Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

2 Th 3:3 *But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.*

2 Tim 1:12 *That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.*

2 Tim 4:18 *The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

1 Pet 1:5 *Who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Jude 1:24 *To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy.*

Rev 3:10 *Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.*

Psa 121:4 *Indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.*

Gen 28:15 *“I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”*

Deu 33:27 *The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemy before you, saying, ‘Destroy him!’*

Isa 41:10 *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

Isa 46:4 *Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.*

Isa 63:9 *In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.*

3. Jesus is the only gate that opens to healthy and lasting nourishment. He is the only gate that leads to the true pasture, the pasture that has the living stream flowing through it and the pasture that has the living food in it.

a. His pasture alone can satisfy the soul.

Psa 107:9 For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

Isa 58:11 The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

b. His pasture alone can restore the soul.

Psa 23:2-3 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

c. His pasture alone can give life and give it forever.

John 6:51 "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

d. His pasture alone can feed with knowledge and understanding.

Jer 3:15 Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.

III. *John 10:10 Jesus Christ, The Only Means to Abundant Life*

Jesus is the only gate that leads to abundant life. This is a sharp contrast between the thief and Christ.

1. The person who says there is another gate is a thief and a robber. The person steals and kills and destroys the sheep. The thief misleads and deceives the sheep, leading them through a gate that leads to destruction.

There are some who definitely want the wool and life of the sheep (false and liberal religions and false philosophies). They want the sheep to follow them and their position, so they do all they can to secure the sheep's...

- loyalty • time • recognition
- allegiance • effort • praise
- energy • honour • possessions

By leading the sheep away from the *restrictiveness* of Christ, the false teacher becomes a thief — a thief in that he steals the soul of the sheep from God, leading it into a sheep pen that will be destroyed. It causes the sheep never to know the true Shepherd.

2. Jesus came not to steal life, but to give abundant life (See *Life with Jesus Christ*, Jn. 10:10). ■

JOHN 10:10 LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” **John 10:10***

Life is one of the great words of the Scriptures. The word *life* (zoe) and the verb *to live* or *to have life* (zen) have a depth of meaning. (See *In Christ was Life*, Jn. 1:4; *Eternal Life*, Jn. 17:2-3)

1. Life is the energy, the force, the power of being.
2. Life is the opposite of perishing. It is deliverance from condemnation and death. It is the stopping or cessation of deterioration, decay and corruption (Jn. 3:16; 5:24, 29; 10:28).
3. Life is *eternal* (aionios). It is forever. It is the very life of God Himself (Jn. 17:3). However, eternal life does not refer just to duration. Living forever would be a curse for some persons. The idea of eternal life is also quality, a certain kind of life, a life that consistently knows love, joy, peace, power, and responsibility .
4. Life is satisfaction (Jn. 6:35).
5. Life is security and enjoyment (Jn. 10:10).
6. Life is found only in God. God is the source and author of life, and it is God who has appointed Jesus Christ to bring life to man. Jesus Christ gives the very life of God Himself (Jn. 5:26; 6:27, 40; 10:28; 17:23).
7. Life has now been revealed. It has been unveiled and is clearly seen in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ shows man what life is (Jn. 1:4-5; 5:26; 1 Jn. 1:2).
8. Life only comes to a man by believing in Jesus Christ. A man outside Jesus Christ only exists. He merely has the existence of an animal. Real life is found only in God. This is to be expected and it is logically true, for God is the creator of life. As the creator of life, He alone knows what life really is and what it is supposed to be (Jn. 3:36; 5:24; 6:47). This is the reason He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world: to show men what life is. When a person looks at Jesus Christ, he sees exactly what life is, exactly what it involves (Gal. 5:22-23):
=> love => patience => faithfulness
=> joy => kindness => gentleness
=> peace => goodness => self-control □

JOHN 01:04 “IN CHRIST WAS LIFE”

“In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.” John 01:04

The simple statement “in Christ was life” means at least three things.

1. Life is the quality and essence, the energy and power, the force and principle of being. Christ is life; He is...

- the very quality of life
- the very energy of life
- the very force of life
- the very essence of life
- the very power of life
- the very principle of life

Without Christ, there would be no life whatsoever. Life is in Him, within His very being. All things exist and have their being (life) in Him.

2. Life is purpose, meaning, and significance of being. Christ is life; He is...

- the very purpose of life.
- the very meaning of life.
- the very significance of life.

3. Life is perfection. Life is all that a man must be and possess in order to live perfectly. This is what is meant by life. Life is completeness of being, absolute satisfaction, the fullness of all good, and the possession of all good things. Life is perfect love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

Whatever life is and all that life is, is all in Jesus Christ. Even the legitimate cravings of man that are sometimes entangled with evil — such as power, fame and wealth — are all included in the life given by Jesus Christ. Those who partake of His life shall reign forever as kings and priests (Lk. 16:10-12). This is the very thing that is distinctive about life — it is eternal. It lasts forever and it is rewarding. It will eventually exalt the believer to the highest life and place and position. (Rev. 21:1f.)

Jesus Christ is the source of life: He is the way to life, and He is the truth of life. He is the very substance of life, its very being and energy (Jn. 5:26; 1 Jn. 1:2). □

JOHN 17:02–03 ETERNAL LIFE (AINIOS)

“For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

John 17:02-03

Life, real life. It is the very life of God Himself. It is the very energy, force, being, essence, principle and power of life. It has more to do with quality and with what life really is than with duration. To live forever in the present world is not necessarily a good thing. The world and man’s body need changing. That changed life is found only in eternal life. The only being who can be said to be eternal is God. Therefore, life — supreme life — is found only in God. To possess eternal life is to know God. Once a person knows God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, that person has eternal life — he shall live forever. But more essential, the person has the supreme quality of life, the very life of God Himself.

John 3:14-15 *“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”*

John 5:24 *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

John 6:40 *“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

John 3:36 *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”*

John 11:25-28 *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.” And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.”*

John 12:25 *“The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”*

Rom 5:21 *So that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Gal 6:8 *The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

2 Tim 1:10 *But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

1 John 3:14 *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.*

1 Jn 5:11-12 *And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. □*