

Sermon: May 3, 2020
Scripture: John 10:1-10 *The Abundant Life*

Hello Everyone! Hope you are well and safe at home.

It's important that we worship God no matter where we are, whether online or offline.

God is still love. God is still with us.

As I stand here to deliver the message, I feel empty because I do not see anyone here at church. I try to imagine church family because I know where everyone sits. At the same time, I try to listen to God so I may deliver the message that God wants me to deliver.

Listening is a very important part of our lives. We are so busy ourselves that we do not have time to listen to God or to each other.

And sometimes if we do not listen to each other, we can get into trouble. When your significant other asks you **“Hey do I look fat, does this dress make me look heavier?”** **And without paying much attention and without listening carefully, you might say: “Yes! You do!”** Now you are in trouble.

Likewise, when we do not listen to God, we might be missing many things God is offering to us. When God calls us, we want to listen, to know his voice and hear his voice. We will follow him as his beloved children. God calls us as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit — one God, in three persons.

Today's scripture John chapter 10 tells us that God is calling us **by our name**.

“Wow, He knows my name!” “He calls me by my name!”

Hello Jane! Hey, Jennifer! What's up Stacey? Hey Bill, how are you doing today?

God knows everything about me, like a parent knows his or her own child!

So, Jesus, as a good shepherd, **is gathering people** by calling his people. Why? So that he may give them abundant life. And his sheep recognize his voice and follow him.

In today's message, Jesus uses the images of a sheep, a door, a stranger, and a shepherd. He wants us find meaning and truth through these images.

Sheep are very unique. They always follow the shepherd. Without a shepherd, **they can easily get lost and cannot find their way to the right path to find still water and green pastures.**

However, they are exceptionally good at one thing: They recognize the voice of the one who cares for them. They hear the shepherd and follow the shepherd, **and the shepherd only.** They will not listen to anyone else's voice but the shepherd. Their rule is **"Do not follow any stranger!"**

They depend **entirely, completely,** on the shepherd. If the sheep get lost, most of the time, it is because they had a **bad, irresponsible shepherd.**

One of the shepherd's important jobs is to gather the sheep together **for the night.**

Today's scripture says:

²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them in.

Once the sheep are in the pen, the shepherd locks the gate to make sure they stay close together safely over the night. The sheep are protected from all that threatens them – such as vandals, robbers, and wolves.

Then next day, the gatekeeper once again opens the gate for the shepherd. The shepherd then calls his own sheep by name and leads them in. The sheep then start to go to find pasture, **but not on their own.** They start their way by listening to the voice of their good shepherd. Then, they follow the shepherd.

John 10, verse 3: ***⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.***

Here in today's scripture, Jesus is referred to as both a gatekeeper and a shepherd at the same time!

Is it even possible to be both a gate and a shepherd? Well, Jesus is using images. And it makes sense when we understand that both the gatekeeper and the shepherd are for the good of the sheep. The shepherd guards them from harm and ensure that they flourish.

Jesus is the way and, a gate to salvation. Jesus is the shepherd leading us to green pasture.

“But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him, the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.”

I love fresh flowers. Dry or imitation flowers look beautiful but they make me feel like something is missing. What is missing? **Life! Life is missing!** The beauty of those fresh flowers is that it has life. When something has life, it is real and vibrant. Drawings or paintings might look great but without life, somehow they are not complete.

Jesus brings not just life, **but abundant life.**

Abundant life is more than material prosperity: a big house, luxury cars, expensive jackets, or lots of money in the bank. These tangible things do not bring us a full life. Without the LIFE that Jesus gives, **we cannot enjoy a truly abundant life.**

No wonder Jesus did not make his disciples rich with money and material things. Instead, Jesus gave them life, abundant life.

Abundant life also does not necessarily mean a long life either. Abundant life means to **live a FULL life.**

Jesus gave himself up on the cross to give us abundant lives.

A shepherd cares for his sheep. He does not lose his sheep.

Jesus died for our sins, so that we are forgiven and can continue to live.

(Hebrews 13:20–21).

²⁰ Now may the God of peace, who was raised from the dead, Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep,²¹ make you complete in everything good.....

The best part of our abundant life is to know God by heart, worship Jesus Christ and listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is alive. And he is leading us again and again to abundant life.

That is where he has been taking us. **And we enjoy our abundant life with our neighbor. “I am the door; I am the Shepherd. Come to me.”**

We go in and out. We find rest. We find pasture.

“I am the Door” is the message of salvation by grace alone.

We cannot save ourselves. **It is through faith alone in Jesus Christ that we are saved.**

But we all want more than to just be “saved.”

We want an **abundant life, joyful life! A Home Run Life!** We were made to enjoy our lives with victory. The feeling of hitting a home run!!

Verse 10, “I came that **they may have life and have it abundantly. (어번던리)**”
It is about having peace, joy and God’s love.

We give thanks to Jesus for being a gate and a shepherd for us. He is the way to eternal life and safety. He satisfies our soul. Thank you, Jesus. We praise your name.

We, the followers of Christ, will faithfully follow Jesus to enjoy fellowship with one another, to the breaking of bread and constant prayer.

Revelation 7:17, “For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Jesus is our shepherd in the sense that he cares for God’s flock. Jesus is the gate which we pass through for safety.

Jesus is not only a shepherd, **but Jesus is also the lamb. Why?** Because he sacrificed himself for us. **Jesus, the Lamb of God.** The risen Christ triumphant over death, **is the Passion of Christ.** The lamb of God is God’s unconditional love for us all.

To the sheep, the shepherd means everything to them.

Jesus is everything to us! “You see, I’m calling you by your name.” He says, because knows everything about us.

Jesus has helped us in the past and we trust Him with our future. **Trusting is not easy of course.** It takes practice and courage. As we learn more about Jesus, and what He has done for us, our trust in Him will grow. Then, we follow Jesus, our Shepherd, no matter what situation we are in.

Are you struggling right now? Do you remember how Jesus has helped you in the past? **Let us focus on God today. “The great things to happen today. We trust God’s mighty power.**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, from time to time, you might feel like you are all alone. I want you to know that God is calling you by your name. God knows everything about you. God knows how you feel, what you are going through and what your days are like. God cares for you and God wants to protect you and lead to green pasture.

Have a wonderful week and feel the presence of God in everything you do. Count your blessings one by one, day by day. Enjoy your amazing, abundant life in Christ. Peace be with you all. Sending you lots of love as I think about you today. You are precious in Gods eyes. All of you are in my prayers. God is love. We shall continue to love one another.