

# FRIDAY, AUGUST 20TH

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENT: John 9-11 • "The Good Shepherd"

**SCRIPTURE** John 10:14-15

## OBSERVATION

Throughout history those called to lead God's people were often referred to as shepherds. This term immediately evokes a clear image of the leader's responsibilities and of the relationship between leader and follower. Of course, throughout history there have been plenty of inadequate shepherds. To get a picture of what God thinks of bad shepherds read Ezekiel 34 and Malachi 1-2. He does not take the leading astray of his people lightly, by any stretch of the imagination.

If you've ever been burned by a bad leader, study Jesus' words in John 10:14-15. His statement is powerful. Not only does he call himself the good shepherd, he tells us why. He knows his sheep. How well? As well as the Father knows the Son--intimately.

Also, his sheep know him. Sheep will follow one another anywhere – even over a cliff – but they will heed their shepherd's voice.

Finally, Jesus states very clearly the extent of his love for his sheep – he will lay down his life for them. And of course, we know that is exactly what he did.

## APPLICATION

The implications of this passage simply blow me away every single time I read it. No passage of Scripture brings me to my knees as often. I've read it countless times, memorized it, and continue to contemplate it often. Take a moment and re-read these two verses.

Think about it – how well must Jesus and God know each other? Blows your mind, doesn't it? I still cannot grasp the magnitude of that fact. But I do understand English, and this statement is quite clear: Jesus and his sheep know each other in that same way. And that is when I'm knocked for a spiritual loop again – I know Jesus knows me in that same way. But how well do I know him?

How well do you know Jesus? Sheep know their shepherd's voice. Do you recognize the good shepherd's voice?

Our responsibility, and that which can help us avoid much heartache and troubles, is to know his voice. Fortunately, there are many ways in which we can get to know Jesus and practice listening. You see, attending a weekend service, trying out a life group, participating in a discipleship class, reading the Bible daily, and setting aside a mere minimum of fifteen minutes of quiet time a day are not rules to be followed blindly or duties to be checked off some churchy to-do list. They are healthy, powerful habits that will, over time, enable us to know the Good Shepherd and to recognize his voice.

## PRAYER

God, forgive me for the times I've been prone to wander, either ignoring or not recognizing my Shepherd's voice. Thank you that even though I've come across bad shepherds, that is not my business, for I am being tended by the Good Shepherd, who will never leave me or forsake me. As I continue to read your word and learn more about Jesus, please help me instill more habits that will help me to readily recognize his voice. Amen.

*S.O.A.P. Entry Author: Kelly Ellis*