

Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 12:48 PM

Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study

Last nite, we covered John 11 where Jesus, speaking in the temple at Jerusalem, identified Himself as both the "Door" of the "sheepfold" and "the Good Shepherd"--prefacing them again with the words "I Am." By saying this, He was again identifying Himself as Deity! God Incarnate--or God in the flesh! And the Jewish religious leaders, in particular, were quick to pick up on the implications of what He was saying, including the "sheep/shepherd" imagery found throughout both the Old and New Testament! But, with their "blindness" and hardness of heart, they were only all the more determined to seize Him and put Him to death!

Ironically, they still couldn't quite pull it off--because Jesus' time had not yet come! All of which shows once more that He (being God) was really in control of the timetable and events to come--which included the cross, now just a few months away! Among other things in this lesson, Jesus made it clear that, as the "Good Shepherd," He would be "laying down His life for the sheep!" No one would be taking it from Him but He was laying it down "voluntarily!" And He claimed the power and authority both to "lay it down" and "to take it up again!" One can imagine Him looking directly into the faces of the Pharisees and stating further that what He was going to be doing was actually based on an "order" from His Father! He had come down from heaven to accomplish this very mission!

We've seen again, in this lesson, the central theme of John's gospel, which is all about the "identity" of Jesus Christ! Who He is and why He came into our world! Issues and questions which are just as relevant and life-changing today as they were then! John adroitly captures in his gospel the words that Jesus spoke, the works that He performed (including the "signs" and miracles), and the witnesses that were there to experience it or see it happen--including His disciples! And John records, in 20:30-21, that these were just some of the things that Jesus did "in order that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life in His name!"

I love the account of Jesus as the Good Shepherd! When we understand a little about sheep and their desperate need for a "good" shepherd"--as we talked about last nite--we can see ourselves and our own need for a Savior and Lord! Psalm 23 takes on new meaning! We can appreciate more the Old Testament story of David--the shepherd boy who slays Goliath and becomes Israel's king (e.g., in I Samuel 17). And the prophet Jeremiah's predicting the "woes" for "shepherds who would scatter the sheep." And how about the "compassion" of Jesus in seeing the crowds of people as "sheep without a shepherd (Mark 6::34 and Matthew 9:36)! And His parable (in Luke 15) about the "ninety and nine"--and particularly the rejoicing that occurred when the one lost sheep is found and returned to the fold! And others!

Well, in our text last nite, Jesus makes it clear that He is the "Door" and that if anyone enters he will be "saved" (10:9). And He goes on to say: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; and no man will snatch them out of My hand!" Wow! This is perhaps the key verse in Scripture supporting the doctrine for the "security of the saints"--and it also happens to be our memory verse! A verse well worth underlining in your Bibles and always remembering!

And so, John wrote this gospel, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of course, so that we too might believe and have life through His name. We now also know that we can be "secure" in that position--and have the one and only "Good Shepherd" to guide us on our path, provide for our needs, protect us from the "wolves," and even comfort us along the way! Among other things! Wow!

Well, there's more! In addition to the Gospel of John, we know that John wrote other books, including the "epistle" of I John--again through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit--where he tells us how we might have the "assurance of salvation!" In I John 5:11-13 He writes: "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life! Wow!

Next week it gets even better as we see Jesus, safely back in Bethany--one of His favorite places, with Mary and Martha--giving His last and most powerful "sign"--in raising His friend Lazarus from the dead! And it includes our next memory verse, another "I am" statements of Jesus, and one well worth taking with you through life: "Jesus said to her (Martha), I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die!" I want to say it again! Wow!

Have a great week, men!

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