

The man was born blind. The Jewish culture assumed it was his sin committed in the womb, or the sins of the parents that caused such a condition. Thus, he was labeled sinner for life, beyond the ability to be forgiven. Along comes Jesus sees this as an opportunity for God's glory to be revealed. Jesus heals the man. The man really does not know who healed him. But the fact that he was now seeing upset the religious leaders. Jesus "broke the rules" as far as they were concerned. He had upset the status quo. How could he be someone of God?

Heated exchanges took place between the Pharisees and the man. "Give glory to God!" they shouted to the man. "We know that this man (Jesus) is a sinner." The man responded, "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. But one thing I do know; that though I was blind, now I see."

The man was ex-communicated from Jewish faith. Jesus heard about it, and sought the man out. When He found him, Jesus told him who He was.

Listen to what happened next. "And the man said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him. Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." When He said that, the Pharisees, who kicked the man out, were standing right there listening. They said, "We are not blind too, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

Jesus really did want the Pharisees to become believers. To help them understand their blindness, Jesus gave them an illustration. It is recorded for us in John 10:1-6. John 10 is a continuation of the incident of chapter 9.

I want us to look at these verses for the morning.

¹ *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.*

² *But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.*

³ *To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.*

⁴ *When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.*

⁵ *A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."*

⁶ *This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them.*

Those hearing this illustration that day understood the story well. Shepherds took great care of their sheep. They were out in the field by day and in the "fold" of the town by night. The fold was kind of a pen where several shepherds kept their flocks in safety through the night. The doorkeeper would know who the real shepherds were. In the morning, the shepherd would come for their sheep. How will the shepherd know which sheep were his. How would the sheep know which shepherd they belong to? It was quite simple. The relationship between sheep and shepherd was so close that the shepherd knew each of his sheep as you would know your pet. The shepherd would look and immediately know which sheep was his. The sheep would know they shepherd for the shepherd called them by name. The sheep knew the voice for their shepherd and would respond to him.

In the immediate context, the fold was the people of Israel. Later in the chapter, Jesus says, "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd."

Notice three things about Jesus as this story relates Him to us today.

He calls you

This is no call to the masses. This is specific call to you individually.

It was an ordinary day. The shepherd had his sheep out when he saw something unusual. A bush was on fire, but it was not being consumed by the fire as normal. As the shepherd inched near for a closer inspection, he heard the voice, "Moses, Moses." Moses said, "Here am I." God called him by name.

A Bin Laden of his day, the young terrorist had papers allowing him to do what he wanted to bring Christians under arrest. On his way to Damascus, this terrorist heard the voice, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me." The terrorist said, "Who are you, Lord?" Jesus called him by name.

It was early in the morning. The sun was up enough to make everything look gray. The woman is weeping because she thought someone stole the body from a freshly dug grave. A voice said, "Who are you looking for?" She responded, "Sir if you had taken him, tell me where you put him so that I can take Him away." Jesus said, "Mary!" She responded, "Rabboni, teacher." Jesus called her by name.

It is a voice that though you may be deaf, you will hear the voice of Him who calls you. He may be calling your name this morning.

He leads you

Verse 3, not only does He call you. He leads you. Interesting term, Jesus uses. It is not a gentle leading, but is an aggressive, purposeful, forceful leading. When He calls, He immediately leads you away from the fold to which you once were part of to be His.

The shepherd knows he must lead his sheep away from any danger or anything that will distract from Him.

A guy down in Florida was in his early 20's when He committed to Christ. This guy did something I had never heard of. He went on what he called a honeymoon with the Lord. He got away from his surroundings to get established in his relationship with Christ. Usual, this is for sure. When he came back, he became very aware of one thing that was distracting him away from Christ. There was music, albums that were not Christian at all. I won't get into any detail on that. He heard God say, "That's why I haven't been able to reach you before now. This is what you were hearing instead of my voice." God had to lead him away for all of that.

He calls you. He leads you.

He cares for you.

Verse 4 "When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice."

How much does He care? In later verses, Jesus talks about laying his life down for the sheep. Shepherds were known to give up their life in defending their flock. That is exactly what Jesus did. But there is a difference. Jesus laid down His life for us. But Jesus, our shepherd resurrected. Our shepherd conquered our worse enemy, death. When that time comes for us, He leads us all the way through what He has already been through.

How much does He care? In another place in scripture, Jesus tells how a shepherd makes a count of his sheep and notices one missing. What does the shepherd do? He counts the sheep off? No. He leaves the 99 and goes to search for the one that strayed away. When he finds the one, he makes sure it is safe from injury and then hurls the sheep on his shoulders rejoicing. He goes back, calls his neighbors, and friends and says, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Our passage ends sadly. John tells us that the Pharisees did not understand what those things were which Jesus had been saying to them. They were blind, and couldn't see.

Do you? Though we were blind, he gives sight to see truth.

When the infamous September 11 airplane slammed into the Pentagon, Officer Isaac Hoopii was nearby but outside the building. Immediately he began helping people straggle out of the building. In some cases, he carried them out.

But Hoopii wanted to do more. Wearing only his short-sleeved blue police uniform—no mask, no protective coat, not even a handkerchief—he ran into the inky blackness of the Pentagon. Someone yelled at him to stop. "We gotta get people," he shouted back.

Suffocating on smoke, Hoopii heard the building cracking. He called out, "Is anybody in here? Is anybody here?"

Wayne Sinclair and five coworkers were crawling through rubble and had lost all sense of direction when they heard Hoopii's voice. They cried out, and Hoopii responded. "Head toward my voice. Head toward my voice." Following his voice, Sinclair and the others soon made their way out of the crumbling building.

Jesus saves us in the same way. He says, "Head toward my voice."

Do you hear Him? He doesn't call so we hear with our physical ears. He calls so that we hear Him with the eyes of our heart.