Jesus Christ is the greatest shepherd of all: John 10:10-16

Jesus Christ makes it clear that He is the good shepherd. What does that mean for us?

Scripture attests over and over to the simile of we believers as sheep and our great Shepherd. Sheep are stupid and prone to error, same as we are, and they fail to protect themselves, the same as we do. A group of sheep in great peril need a shepherd that is worth his weight in salt to lead appropriately, and in our case, that shepherd is Jesus.

First and foremost, God has always cared for His people. God, as it were, is called a shepherd in the scriptures time and time again.

- Genesis 49:24 calls God the shepherd and stone of Israel.
- Psalm 74:1 refers to a people that God cast off, *the sheep of His pasture*.
- Psalm 80:1 calls God the **Shepherd of Israel**, and Psalm 95:7 says His people are the people of His pasture and the sheep of his pasture. Psalm 100:3 calls his people the sheep of his pasture, too.
- In Isaiah 40:11, scripture tells us God shall feed His flock **like a shepherd** and that he shall gather the lambs *with his arm* and both carry and lead them.
- In Zechariah 10:3, the prophet notes that God had visited **His flock** the house of Judah.

Shepherding was a job that required full commitment from those whose lives included the pastime. That's one of the reasons that Jesus Christ can make a comparison between Himself as Good Shepherd and others who were mere hired hands. The shepherds put their lives on the line for sheep who most of the time don't know or appreciate what's going on, and they do so willingly. Jesus Christ willingly died on the cross for them in the same way that he did for us way back when.

Other men throughout scriptures were shepherds, too.

- Ezekiel 37:24-28 references David (ultimately Jesus Christ who is the ultimate Son of David) as a **shepherd** over God's people in a time to come.
- Notice that David is a clear picture of Jesus Christ. He was a shepherd (1 Samuel 16:11-12, 1 Chronicles 17:7, Psalm 78:70-72) and would eventually become ruler over the Lord's people Israel (2 Samuel 6:21, 2 Samuel 7:8). David refers to God's people as **sheep** (1 Chronicles 21:17) as he grieved for the evil he had done in numbering Israel (1 Chronicles 21:1).
- The prophet Amos was also a shepherd of sorts, a herdsman, before the Lord called him to prophesy unto Israel (Amos 7:14-15).
- Zechariah served as a shepherd at least temporarily (Zechariah 11:4-17)

Our Lord Jesus Christ is greater than David, and Amos, and Zechariah, and all others who have ever stepped their physical feet on this Earth. Jesus Christ is the greatest shepherd of all. We as sheep could not have asked for a greater Shepherd, and he's the only sinless shepherd to have lived. He will never die again, either.

When Jesus Christ makes the comparison between Himself as the Good Shepherd and others who are mere hired hands in John 10, he's doing so because of a callback his audience would have recognized. His Jewish audience would have recognized it from the Old Testament.

Ezekiel 34:1-6: *And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; [a]Woe be to the shepherds of Israel [b]that do feed themselves! [c]should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 3 [d]Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, [e]ye kill them that are fed: but [ee]ye feed not the flock. 4 [fg]The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither [h]have ye healed that which was sick, neither [fi]have ye bound up [h]that which was broken, neither [f]have ye brought again [k]that which was driven away, neither [fl]have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and [m]with cruelty have ye ruled them. 5 And [n]they were scattered, [||no]because there is no shepherd: and [p]they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. 6 [pp]My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and [q]none did search or seek after them.*

Jesus Christ is both a Good Shepherd, and the Greatest Shepherd:

- Jesus uses **sheep** as an example in His parable (**Luke 15:4**).
- In **Luke 12:32**, Jesus Christ refers to his group of listeners as a flock of sheep, and His Father as well.
- The author of Hebrews refers to Jesus as a shepherd, too (**Hebrews 13:20**).
- **1 Peter 2:25** calls Jesus Christ the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.
- Peter refers to Jesus Christ as the **chief shepherd** in **1 Peter 5:4**, after having made it clear that the leadership should seek to be examples to the **flock**.

We have a wonderful leader in our shepherd, and as wayward as we would be without Him, as sheep we badly need the greatest Shepherd of all to guide us such as we embark on the lives the Lord has fashioned for us.