

4-30-2023 – For Your Meditation Today

The following meditation covers not only the words of God through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David, but also the God given words to John and Paul. This message is pointing to Christian beliefs, but I do recognize there are others. If you have thoughts or other beliefs that you would like shared, or to share, please exercise your First Amendment Rights, as I and other American Legion Chaplains, and others, in these United State of America have, please let me know what they are. I will gladly pass those on as they relate to: “For God and Country”. If we ignore, or disrespect, the thoughts and beliefs of others, we take the chance of missing out on some very valuable words of wisdom and insight.

For our meditation today, I'd like to take a look at the tenth Chapter of John. But, before we get there, I'd like to ask us all, who do we follow and why. Do we follow the voice of what we want to hear, or that voice of what we SHOULD hear? As we hear so many voices from the NEWS, from “Social Media”, our friends, or family. But what are those voices telling us? Are there so many voices telling us what we need to be successful, better dressed, or for “a better America”, that the truth gets muddled in the maze? Are these “words” truly telling us what we want to hear, or what is best for our welfare and wellbeing? Do we hear voices there are as a “Shepherd”, or a “Leader”, that is showing us a way to being better people, not only for ourselves, but also for others. Whenever a question comes up like that, I have found that those answers are best found in the Bible. So, let us look at what the inspired Word of God tells us in the book of John 10:1-10 *“¹ [Jesus said:] ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man (or woman) is a thief and a robber. ² But if he enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by their name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follows him, for they know his voice. ⁵ A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ This figure of speech Jesus used against with them. But they did not understand what He was saying to them.*

⁷ So, Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

Here, John clearly tells us who is our “Shepherd”, but what else will He do for us. The simple answer is found in the 23rd Psalm of David: *“¹ The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His namesake. ⁴ Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You amount my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.”*

Within these six verses, we learn what we can expect. But, now how do get there? John tells us in verse 20:21 *“but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”* Now what does this look like in our lives? In Paul's letter to the Romans in 13:9-10 *“⁹..., and if there is any other commandment, all are summed up in this saying, namely, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ¹⁰ Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.”* Therefore, where this is Love, there is no harm. Whether that Love is because of, or in spite of the actions of others, we see where Jesus is teaching us, not just by His words, but by His actions of paying for all of our sins, not his own – as He had none, but by and through HIS LOVE. THAT is what a true “Shepherd” looks and sounds like – His LOVE for His Flock, above “Self”.

Now may the Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. Amen.