

Title: Academy Award - John 10:1-21

Read:

¹⁻⁵ "Let me set this before you as plainly as I can. If a person climbs over or through the fence of a sheep pen instead of going through the gate, you know he's up to no good—a sheep rustler! The shepherd walks right up to the gate. The gatekeeper opens the gate to him and the sheep recognize his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he gets them all out, he leads them and they follow because they are familiar with his voice. They won't follow a stranger's voice but will scatter because they aren't used to the sound of it." ⁶⁻¹⁰ Jesus told this simple story, but they had no idea what he was talking about. So he tried again. "I'll be explicit, then. I am the Gate for the sheep. All those others are up to no good—sheep stealers, every one of them. But the sheep didn't listen to them. I am the Gate. Anyone who goes through me will be cared for—will freely go in and out, and find pasture. A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of. ¹¹⁻¹³ I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd puts the sheep before himself, sacrifices himself if necessary. A hired man is not a real shepherd. The sheep mean nothing to him. He sees a wolf come and runs for it, leaving the sheep to be ravaged and scattered by the wolf. He's only in it for the money. The sheep don't matter to him. ¹⁴⁻¹⁸ I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own sheep and my own sheep know me. In the same way, the Father knows me and I know the Father. I put the sheep before myself, sacrificing myself if necessary. You need to know that I have other sheep in addition to those in this pen. I need to gather and bring them, too. They'll also recognize my voice. Then it will be one flock, one Shepherd. This is why the Father loves me: because I freely lay down my life. And so I am free to take it up again. No one takes it from me. I lay it down of my own free will. I have the right to lay it down; I also have the right to take it up again. I received this authority personally from my Father." ¹⁹⁻²¹ This kind of talk caused another split in the Jewish ranks. A lot of them were saying, "He's crazy, a maniac—out of his head completely. Why bother listening to him?" But others weren't so sure: "These aren't the words of a crazy man. Can a 'maniac' open blind eyes?"

Think:

Jesus is talking to a bunch of guys who know how shepherds work, so he tells them a story about himself as though he was a shepherd. If he was talking to a bunch of car mechanics, he would have used cars to explain to them about himself. If he was talking to a bunch of football players he would have used football, how would he talk to you? I don't know but maybe he would have used celebrities or film stars. Maybe Jesus would have said something like. I am the Oscar award winning film star that takes the time to visit areas of poverty and help out. All those other film stars before me were five minute wonders, just out to make a fast buck. They snuck onto your screen with no talent, took your hard earned money, and were only interested in themselves. They didn't care about you, they didn't even know their fans names. I am the film star that knows my fans names, I look out for them. I would stop filming and run to help anyone of my fans if they needed me. I know sounds pretty impressive doesn't it. Doesn't sound like any film star I know, but then Jesus isn't just anyone is he? He really is the one person who laid down his life for you before you were even born.

Pray:

Father thank you for the almost unbelievable act of love that Jesus did two thousand years ago for me. Father I know nothing I can do will get me into Heaven because Jesus has already done that. But please Lord let me spend my life showing how grateful I am, in the way I act. Amen.

Action:

Have you prayed for your youth leader recently? Hey, why not blow their mind. Phone them up and ask them if there is anything you can pray for, for them. Bye.