

September 8. The Good Shepherd

J.R. Miller:

"The sheep listen to His voice. He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out." John 10:3

There is a great difference between the care which the owner gives " and that which a servant or hireling gives. There is a difference between the way a true mother looks after her child " and the way a hired care-giver does it. This is seen especially when the child is sick or in danger. The care-giver serves for pay; the mother serves for love. Christ the Good Shepherd is the owner of His sheep.

There is something very sweet in the thought that Christians are Christ's own sheep. It suggests how dear they are to Him. "Having loved his own who were in the world " he loved them unto the end." The thought also brings with it the assurance of love and care. His will is that "his own people," shall be with Him in Heaven forever. The thought suggests also much about our duty to Christ. If we are of "his own," He has the entire right to the disposal of our lives and our services.

There is something very wonderful in the thought that Christ calls His sheep by their individual names. There are some pastors who do not know their people by name when they have but a few hundred to know. Christ has millions scattered over all the world; it is hard for us to realize that every one of these " He knows personally by name. The Bible tells us that He calls the stars by their names " but then the stars are so big that it does not seem so strange.

But here is a poor widow, one of "his own," living in a desolate garret in the heart of a great city, amid thronging thousands. Does He know her name? Here is a little orphan child, one of "his own," left with no human friend to protect. Does He know this little one? Certainly He does! This ought to be a very precious truth to everyone who loves Christ and belongs to Him. He knows if any of "his own" are suffering or in need, or if they are in danger; and He will never neglect even the least of "his own."