

April 15, 2012

# *Living Out The Gospel In Real Life*

## *I Have Other Sheep*

John 10:16 – 21

Though born in Scotland in 1867, Peter Cameron Scott grew up in Philadelphia. For years a certain Bible verse had tormented Peter: *“You are not your own, you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and your spirit which are God’s”* 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. It had bothered him so much that prior to his surrender to the Lord he tried to erase it from his Bible. Scott was tempted to turn to a career in music, and actually responded to an advertisement to sing in a chorus. But on his way to the tryout, the Holy Spirit spoke to him, *“Would you seek a life of self-glory and applause... or would you dedicate your life to My service?”* Peter determined to serve God, and enrolled in a missionary training college under A.B. Simpson to prepare for missionary service in Africa, but so great was his passion to bring the gospel to Africa that he never finished the course but sailed to the west coast of Africa under the auspices of the International Missionary Alliance (now the Christian & Missionary Alliance). He wasn't there too long before he fell ill with malaria and returned home.

A few months later, he returned to Africa and this time his brother John joined him. But like so many in those days, within a few months John died from a tropical disease and Peter buried his brother by himself and at the grave rededicated himself to preach the gospel. But shortly thereafter Peter also came down again with malaria and had to return to Britain. Discouraged and broken, he did not see how he could return to Africa. But one day he was visiting Westminster Abbey, where David Livingstone was buried, and kneeling there, wondering about his future he read these words written on Livingstone's tomb: *Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring.* Those words suddenly filled his soul with hope and strength that what God had said would happen, would happen – and so he went home to America, gathered some like-minded friends and founded the Africa Inland Mission. And when he went back to Africa, it was not only with a new team, but with a renewed passion, and today AIM, (which was changed to AIC – Africa Inland Church in 1971), is one of the largest African mission agencies in the world, sending its own missionaries to still unreached tribes in Africa.

What was it about John 10:16 that so filled Peter Cameron Scott with renewed hope and strength when he was at the point of calling it quits? What is it about these four declarative statements: **I have other sheep, which are not of this fold – I must bring them also – they will hear My voice – they will become one flock with one shepherd** – that turned discouragement to hope and depression to passion? What I see, and I think what Peter Cameron Scott saw, was the unmistakable imprint of **divine sovereignty in salvation**. In fact this verse, which has fueled more than one missionary or evangelistic endeavor throughout the history of the church, points our hearts and minds to two unshakable conclusions: **Those who are Christ's will hear His voice and will come to Him and will be His forever – and the purpose of God in the earth cannot suffer defeat and will be accomplished.** Another way to say this is that John 10:16 gives those who believe an unshakeable confidence that they will hear the Lord say, 'Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord' and that whatever part God has called them to play in His world-wide purpose will not fail.

The unshakeable foundation of the sovereignty of God has been the impetus for missions from William Carey to the present day. In giving some advice to a young missionary, William Carey wrote: *Remember three things. First, that it is your duty to preach the Gospel to every creature; second, remember that God has declared that His word shall accomplish that for which it was sent; third, that He can easily remove the present seemingly formidable obstacles as we can move the smallest particles of dust.* William Carey. In other words, God Himself is the decisive factor in the accomplishing of His purpose.

When John Paton and his faithful servant Abraham were surrounded by raging natives, each urging the other to strike the first blow, John recalled: *My heart rose up to the Lord Jesus; I saw Him watching all the scene. My peace came back to me like a wave from God. I realized that I was immortal till my Master's work with me was done. The assurance came to me, as if a voice out of Heaven had spoken, that not a musket would be fired to wound us, not a club prevail to strike us, not a spear leave the hand in which it was held vibrating to be thrown, not an arrow leave the bow, or a killing stone the fingers, without the permission of Jesus Christ, whose is all power in Heaven and on Earth.*

And then more recently, the statement of a Strategy Coordinator for an unreached people group in Asia, who said, *'These people are Muslim, giving them a strong natural resistance to the gospel. They live in countries that forbid open Christian missionary activities. The vast majority of them have never met a Christian, never seen a Bible, and never heard the gospel. Their governments are doing everything they can to make sure they never have a chance to hear it, and their religious heritage gives them every reason to reject it even if they should. In many areas, the penalty for leaving Islam is death. From a human perspective, there is every reason to expect my work with these people to fail. The only thing that encourages me to persevere in the face of human impossibility is my certainty that God is sovereign in all things, including salvation. This conviction illuminates the task, empowers my work, and preserves its integrity.'*

So let's look at how this works in John 10:16 by taking each of these four phrases – **I have other sheep, which are not of this fold – I must bring them also – they will hear My voice – they will become one flock with one shepherd** – one at a time and unpacking each one.

### **I have other sheep, which are not of this fold**

Jesus says, I **have** other sheep. Jesus has sheep – and what is more He says He has them before they come, otherwise He wouldn't say He had to then bring them. If you go back for a moment to verses three and four of this chapter you see the same thing. *To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.* John 10:3-4 Here's the picture: you have lots of sheep in the sheepfold – they don't all belong to one shepherd. There are other shepherds who would come and call their particular sheep out of the pen. And Jesus is saying, 'I am coming to the fold of Israel and I am going to call My sheep out of the fold to follow Me. And those who are Mine will hear Me and follow Me because they recognize My voice'. He says the same in verse fourteen: *"I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me.* John 10:14

So Jesus is saying, in verses 3-4 and in verse fourteen, that before He calls, there are those already in the fold of Israel who are His and those who are not. He comes to the sheepfold and calls – those who are His, not all of those in the fold – hear and recognize His voice and follow Him. That is just Israel. Now in verse 16 He widens the scope a bit – **I have other sheep which are not of this fold**. That is, outside of the fold of Israel, Jesus has more sheep. Again, not all outside of Israel are His – He just says 'I have other sheep out there'. And just like the fold of Israel, He already has sheep before they call. In many ways, this is the concept that Peter Cameron Scott wrestled with when he read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: *'You are not your own – you were bought with a price...'* What Jesus is saying is that His sheep were already not their own – even before they knew it. This is crucial that we see this – that Jesus **has** His sheep – they **are** His own – even before He calls them and brings them.

And so naturally we ask, **how can Jesus have sheep before He brings them?** And we should answer this before we look at the next phrase which is 'I must bring them also'. And to answer that question we just have to look ahead a bit – look down in verse 29: *My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.* John 10:29 The answer to the question – **how can Jesus have sheep before He brings them?** – is that He has them because the Father gave them to Him. But we saw that same thing in John 6: *All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.* John 6:37 Over and over and over again, the Bible makes it clear that those who come to Christ are those He already owns because the Father has already given them to Him. Let me overwhelm you with the evidence.

*No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him;* John 6:44

*For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.* John 6:65

*I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours* John 17:9

*Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.* John 17:24

*Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so if you seek Me, let these go their way," to fulfill the word which He spoke, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one.* John 18:9

And these statements are just in the gospel of John!

This is Jesus talking about the glorious truth of divine election or God's choosing us before we ever chose Him – as Paul talks about this in Ephesians 1: *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him*. Ephesians 1:4 Before time began, God the Father chose a people for His own – He elected them – that is the meaning of the word in Ephesians – these are His elect sheep. He then gives them to the Son so that they can be saved by faith in Him. The Father has sheep, not only from the fold of Israel, but other sheep – from other folds – Hindu folds, Buddhist folds, atheist folds, Muslim folds, Mormon folds – all kinds of folds – sheep from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And yes this is outside our text today, but that is what the writer of this gospel says in another one of his books – Revelation: *And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.* Revelation 5:9 So Jesus says, I have other sheep I **must** bring'.

### **I must bring them also**

You have to understand that the word **must** here is crucial. Your salvation and mine depend upon it. I **must** bring My sheep. It is a critical imperative. The Father chose the sheep before the foundation of the world. And then He gave them to His Son – so Jesus says 'I **must** bring them'. Is it possible that God the Father would choose and give and then the Son not bring? There is not a shred of doubt that those whom the Father has chosen and given into the hand of the Son will not be brought one day to a saving faith. The Son's **must** is the believers security. If the Son of God **must** bring His sheep, then all whom the Father has chosen for eternal life **will** come to faith. **So how does He bring them?**

How did you come – how did He bring you? How did He bring me? **He calls them**. Look at verse 3 again: *To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out*. To call someone is to speak to them – and our Shepherd speaks to us to call us out of whatever fold we are in. That is His word comes to us at a particular point in our lives and we hear His voice and come out of the fold and follow Him. Jesus prayed to the Father in John 17: *"I do not ask on behalf of these (His disciples) alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their (the disciples) word"*. John 17:20 The way Jesus calls us is through His word, delivered by the witness of other sheep. My preaching, your preaching, your evangelism – **that** is His voice calling other sheep to faith in Christ. If we are sheep, we have no option but to preach the gospel. Jesus told His disciples in John 20:21: *'Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'* John 20:21 Send you to do what? To speak the word of God that calls His sheep to follow Him. Remember William Carey? **'First, that it is your duty to preach the Gospel to every creature...'** And then...?

### **They will hear My voice**

*"I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice..."* When Jesus says *'...they will hear My voice'*, He is not just saying they will hear the words, that they will just hear the sounds He makes. Rather it is a hearing that means they will understand, they will perceive the sense of what is said. Other translations say they will **listen** to His voice. Lest we fail to grasp the certainty of Jesus saying 'I **must** bring them' – lest we dismiss the the imperative and importance of that '**must**' – Jesus says 'They **will** hear My voice – they **will** hear and understand – they **will** listen to Me'. 150 years ago in Burma, Adorniram Judson was lying in a foul Burmese prison with 32 lbs. of chains on his ankles, his feet bound to a bamboo pole, sores on his body and lying in filth. A fellow prisoner said, "Dr. Judson, what about the prospect of the conversion of the heathen now?", with a sneer on his face. Judson didn't hesitate – he said **"The prospects are just as bright as the promises of God."**

When William Carey set sail for India in 1793, he wrote: **"When I left England, my hope of India's conversion was very strong; but amongst so many obstacles, it would die, unless upheld by God. Well, I have God, and His Word is true. Though the superstitions of the heathen were a thousand times stronger than they are, and the example of the Europeans a thousand times worse; though I were deserted by all and persecuted by all, yet my faith, fixed on the sure Word, would rise above all obstructions and overcome every trial. God's cause will triumph."** William Carey **They will hear My voice**. *'...and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.'* John 10:4 And down in verse 27: *'My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.'* John 10:27 Not one of Christ's sheep ultimately or finally reject His call.

We must understand the thrust of these verses, in fact of this whole chapter. Being one of Christ's sheep enables us to respond when He calls us out by name. It is not the other way around – namely, we are His sheep **because** we believe. No – we believe **because** we are His sheep. This destroys the self-exalting pride that ascribes the final determination of my life to me – not God. It is a word intended to strike a decisive blow to everything in us that would rob God of His sovereign glory. Charles Spurgeon, often called the Prince of Preachers, came to this realization early in his Christian life. He said, *“When I was coming to Christ, I thought I was doing it all myself, and though I sought the Lord earnestly, I had no idea the Lord was seeking me.” So at first he thought, I’m the one doing this. I’m pursuing God. I’m the one making the determining choice.*

But then, awhile later, he says, *“The thought struck me, How did you come to be a Christian? I sought the Lord. But how did you come to seek the Lord? The truth flashed across my mind in a moment—I should not have sought Him unless there had been some previous influence in my mind to make me seek Him. I prayed, thought I, but then I asked myself, How came I to pray? I was induced to pray by reading the Scriptures. How came I to read the Scriptures? I did read them, but what led me to do so? Then, in a moment, I saw that God was at the bottom of it all, and that He was the Author of my faith, and so the whole doctrine of grace opened up to me, and from that doctrine I have not departed to this day, and I desire to make this my constant confession, ‘I ascribe my change wholly to God.’”* And then Jesus makes this final declarative statement:

### **They will become one flock with one shepherd**

*‘...and they will become one flock with one shepherd.’* There **will be** one flock – another certainty. Jesus was calling His sheep from the fold of Judaism – and then He goes on to call His other sheep from other folds. How certain is this? How sure can we be that all who were ordained to eternal life will have it and keep it? Look down in verses 27 -29: *“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”* John 10:27-30 This flock is eternal – they are His sheep and His flock for eternity. Look at this golden chain of security: The Father chose you – He gives you to His Son who laid down His life for you (**we covered those verses 17-18 last week**) – in time He calls you from whatever fold you are in and you hear His voice – you recognize the Shepherd of your soul and you go out and follow Him – and for those who hear and follow He gives eternal life – they will never perish and they can never be taken from His hand – so there will be one flock and one Shepherd forever! This is how secure you are – this is how rock-solid your salvation is – this is the certainty of heaven for those who believe.

### **How to know if you are a sheep**

So how do you know if you are a sheep? Look at verses 19 – 21: *A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words. Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?” Others were saying, “These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?”* John 10:19-20 What was happening here? I believe what was happening was just what Jesus was describing. The shepherd comes to the fold and calls his sheep and they hear the voice of their shepherd and respond. But those who are not his sheep don't respond. John makes the point of telling us that at this point a division occurred again among the Jews because of Jesus' words. That is what the gospel does – it causes a division – a division between all the sheep that are His and those who are not His. And the determining factor is – Who are the ones who hear the voice of Jesus? When Jesus speaks, if you hear the voice of the Shepherd and respond and follow – you're a sheep. But what if you don't come? What if you don't follow? Verse 26 gives us the answer: *But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.* John 10:26

John shows us the difference between the two groups. Those who were not His sheep were saying - *He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?* What those who are not His sheep hear when the gospel comes is gibberish. It sounds insane. When Paul shared the gospel with Festus in Acts 26, his response was *‘Paul, you are out of your mind. Your great learning has driven you mad’*. But there were others who recognized something entirely else: *These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?* One group looks at the evidence and concludes Jesus is demon-possessed – the other group looks at the evidence and says – ‘This is not the work of a demon – a demon can't open blind eyes – the only other explanation is that this is the work of God’. I believe John puts this in here to show us that His sheep hear His voice and those who are not His sheep do not hear His voice.

When William Carey formed the first missionary society in 1805, his faith in the enterprise was undergirded by these two things – that those who are Christ's will hear His voice and will come to Him and will be His forever – and the purpose of God in the earth cannot suffer defeat and will be accomplished. This is how he put it: ***He who raised the sottish and brutalised Britons to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, can raise these slaves of superstition, purify their hearts by faith, and make them worshipers of the one God in spirit and in truth. The promises are fully sufficient to remove our doubts, and to make us anticipate that not very distant period when He will famish all the gods of India, and cause these very idolaters to cast their idols to the moles and to the bats, and renounce for ever the work of their own hands.***

You know you are a sheep, not by looking in the Lamb's book of life, Jesus hasn't given us that privilege – there are no markings that you can see on the sheep – the only way to tell is that they hear His voice and they follow Him. Have you heard His voice this morning? Do you hear the voice of your Shepherd calling you out? Have you followed Him out of whatever fold He called you? Is there a God-ward yearning in your soul at the bottom of it all? I don't mean some vague thoughts about God, or some mystical New Age nonsense. Plenty of people say they are looking for God but what they are looking for is a god made in their own image. They don't want the God of the Bible – they don't want the Shepherd of the gospels. Do you hear Him speaking to you from the pages of Scripture this morning? ***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.***

*Our gracious God and loving Shepherd,*

*Grant that those under the hearing of Your word this morning would recognize the voice of their Shepherd and come and follow You. Open ears that have been deaf to Your voice and soften souls that have been hardened by the deceitfulness of sin and work repentance and salvation in our souls. Thank You Lord for the unshakeable confidence we have in Your sovereignty over all things including our coming to faith. Let this word fill us with unconquerable hope that those who are Yours will hear Your voice and will come to You and be Yours forever. And let it too fill us with a holy boldness that Your purpose in the earth cannot suffer defeat and will be accomplished. Grant us to trust in Your eternal promises that rest on Your unchanging power and grace and make us fearless witnesses to the grace that saved us to all people we pray in the powerful, saving name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*