

**"I Am the Good Shepherd"**  
John 10:11-18

### Harvard Students Interview

There was a very interesting YouTube video clip created 3 months ago. A young Christian guy went to the Harvard campus and interviewed as many students as possible to listen to their thoughts on God, Jesus Christ, and religion.

Many of the students were former Catholics or churchgoers under their parents' influence, but they didn't practice any religion anymore. Some students openly identified as atheists, and some Christian students clearly said, "I believe in Jesus Christ, and I practice my faith."

As I watched the video clip, I found three interesting things: first, most of the interviewees acknowledged the presence of a so-called "higher power," even though they didn't understand what that is. Second, if I take their words as they were, many of them said that they were seeking truth or the absolute, even though we do not know what truth-seeking practices they were engaging in. Lastly, because of their busy student lives, they didn't seem to devote much time or energy to truth-seeking practices. To me, it is a clear message that they didn't seem to have anyone in their lives who could tell them about Jesus Christ and show them the Christian life of love and holiness around them.

As we continue our sermon series, "Jesus' I Am, What It Means for Your Life," we must remember that Jesus' I Am statements have been given to us as his disciples to understand the promises he gives us in his identity and also to help us understand our own identity that can be found in his identity. At the same time, Jesus Christ's "I Am Statements" are for the world, for those who seek truth and the Absolute, in whom people can find meaning, purpose, and life.

Jesus' I Am statement today is "[I Am the Good Shepherd](#)."

When you hear this saying of Jesus, what is the first image that comes to your mind? For me, it is the well-known painting from Psalm 23. The American artist [Warner Sallman](#) painted and titled this painting in 1943, "[The Good Shepherd](#)."

Let us read Psalm 23 together, which is on the screen. As you read through the Psalm, think about which verse is the main verse that represents Jesus Christ as the Lord of our lives.

**"1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; 3 he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley,**

I 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 anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.”

Many believe that verse 1 is the theme verse of the Psalm, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” However, verse 6 teaches us how Jesus Christ being our Shepherd has an impact not only on our lives here on earth but also on our life in eternity. “Jesus Christ is my Shepherd. So, his goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life on earth, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long beyond my life on earth.”

Then today’s Scripture in John 10 is an ultimate proclamation of Jesus Christ on how we can experience God’s goodness and mercy not only on earth but also in eternity.

### **Jesus Christ is our Good Shepherd.**

In the Old Testament, specifically, Psalm 23:1 says, “The Lord is my shepherd.” But here in today’s scripture, Jesus Christ himself reveals that he is the good shepherd. “I am the good shepherd.” (John 10:11a)

God’s goodness is the expression of His perfect character. He is the supreme good himself. “God is good” means that His will always and unfailingly chooses what is right, wise, and perfect, fitting to His character that He is good. So, God is fully trustworthy, dependable, and worthy to receive our worship and lives.

God’s goodness is His kindness, mercy, and patience. God is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in love, and His goodness follows or pursues His people all their days, which means our lives are surrounded by and saturated with God’s goodness.

God’s goodness has a special aim: through His kindness, mercy, and patience, God wants us to repent, return to Him, and live an abundant life through His Son, Jesus Christ.

“Or do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience? Do you not realize that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?”  
(Romans 2:4)

That is the reason Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep ... And I lay down my life for the sheep.” (John 10:11 & 15b). So, ultimately, God’s goodness is most evident in Christ’s work on the cross. As he sacrificed himself on the cross, Jesus brought us healing,

restoration, new life, and a new beginning of our relationship with God so that we can long for the life that brings glory to our God. That is the abundant life we can live in the most worthwhile, purposeful, and meaningful way, which becomes the source of our happiness and joy.

Therefore, in the New Testament, as we focus on the identity of Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd, we are reminded that he sacrificed himself on the cross. That is his ultimate goodness for everyone in the world, and that is the message we are to unwaveringly hold on to and share with the people around us.

### **The Good Shepherd Invites all to His Family.**

Jesus Christ's being our good shepherd conveys a clear message that encompasses and invites all people in the world to join his family, the church.

Our Good Shepherd knows his own sheep.

**"I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father."** (John 10:14-15a).

He knows our spiritual, emotional, and physical states and needs. So, he constantly invites us to come to his care and protection. In his intimate relationship, our Good Shepherd calls us his "friends."

It also signifies that we should know our Good Shepherd's other family members and must embrace them into his family.

**"I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd."** (John 10:16).

### **Jesus Calls Us to Be Good Shepherds to One Another.**

**"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."** (John 15:12-13).

Jesus' identity as our Good Shepherd is given to us to reshape our identity as the good shepherds to one another. Our being Good Shepherds is not limited to our Christian community, but it extends to those outside the church.

**"So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us."** (1 Thessalonians 2:8)

Let me quote Sheldon Vanauken, who is a Christian author: **"The best argument for Christianity is Christians; their joy, their certainty, the completeness. But the strongest argument against Christianity is also Christians - when they are sober**

and joyless, when they are self-righteous and smug in complacent consecration, when they are narrow and repressive, then Christianity dies a thousand deaths.”  
(Sheldon Vanauken)

Our God is the Good Shepherd for all of us. Our Good Shepherd invites us to become Good Shepherds not only to one another but also to those outside our church. Let us remember that we, the Good Shepherds, must be good news before we share the good news.

After watching the video clip I shared at the beginning of my sermon, I began looking for a story that shows God is still at work on Harvard's campus. I found many stories, but I would like to share one that was broadcast by the Christian Broadcasting Network. It tells the story of a Christian community at Harvard. The story is titled, “[Being a Christian at Harvard Law School.](#)”

On a Tuesday night at Harvard Law School, a group of students gathers to study the Bible. The students say they are pleasantly surprised by how vibrant the Christian community there is. Between Christian Union meetings, small groups, and morning prayer, there are gatherings almost every day. This is incredibly encouraging for them. They expected Harvard to be a difficult place to live as Christians, yet they have found their faith flourishing.

They have seen people come to Christ, receive the Holy Spirit, and even be healed. It is not just law students; people from science, engineering, and computer science also come together.

One of the group's leaders said, “We know that God is not dead at Harvard. We see Him moving powerfully. If you speak to other campus ministers and students, you sense that something is happening underneath.”

Another leader said, “We had a student ask for prayer because one leg was shorter than the other, causing back pain. We prayed in the name of Jesus and literally saw the leg grow out to even out. We have seen people freed from anxiety, a locked jaw healed, and even demons cast out. We are all pressing in for the same thing: we want to see Christ lifted high, and we want to see revival on this campus.”

Jesus Christ is with us as our Good Shepherd.