

## **SHARING FROM THE HEART.**

**TEXT: John 10:1-10**

### **THEME:**

The art of communication – Jesus' way.

**Grace, peace, and mercy, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

As we continue on with the Fellowship / Discipleship series, we come to today's component of 'Sharing from the Heart'. As we may all be aware and know, Jesus is the Great Shepherd who loves all his sheep: and he knows each and every one of them by name and as individuals. Unlike us, who see a lot of sheep and call them a mob because they are all the same to us.

But having Jesus as our Shepherd and carer; means that you and I are personally known by him, and that we belong to him. We are not just another face in the crowd.

You are not some unknown entity, but someone who has a personal meaning and worth to a Saviour who cares very much about whom you are and what you do. Even though the world may not think that you are worth much in their eyes; to our Lord and Saviour you are worth his death on the cross.

You are worth that much, that he does not want to let go any of his sheep to go astray and wander away from his care and control. But that all who belong to him, may become a part of his heavenly kingdom and family for all eternity. He wants to keep all who are his to be close to his heart, so that none will ever leave or let go of the love he has for them. He also wants each and every one of them, to be sharing with each other from their hearts as well.

As one big flock that belongs to God, we should be all in harmony with each other. God wants all of us to be living as one big happy family, living together, united in word,

thought and deed. Jesus wants us to give our hearts to each other and to love each other with the love of the Lord. Living in harmony makes life all the more worth living!

So getting back to the heart element in all this; **what does sharing from the heart involve?** Let's take a look at what lives in the heart. What are the thoughts, words, and deeds that give each heart the makeup of the person involved? How do you shape up in your heart? Apart from the obvious elementary things that happen with the heart; what gives it, its drive and tick? For instance; how much do you care for other people, whether they are Christians or not; how do you see them in your heart and in your mind? Do they really matter or you don't really care what happens to them, anyway? Or do we stick with the obvious; that we love the ones we are with and involved with.

Let me share this with you; when God made a helper and partner [the woman, Eve] for Adam, the bone that God took out of the rib from him. Some people have said that it was the heart bone or the love bone! That's how God brought the man and the woman together, so that they can love each other forever. And not only a man and a woman but also children and other family members and friends. Are you still loved here in the heart; and are you giving your loved ones the love they should be receiving?

One sad statistic for Murray Bridge that I learned about over the last few years that I've been here is that it has one of the saddest claims to fame in this state; it has one of the highest statistics for Domestic Violence against women in the whole state. It seems like a lot of women in this town are at the receiving end of the fist bone and not the love/heart bone. That is no way of showing love to someone you care deeply about. Jesus shows us how

to do it in the love he has for us, of how to love and care for each other in today's Gospel lesson.

Verse 2 states; 'The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep'. So, if the shepherd is no stranger to these sheep, then, there is no need for the sheep to be alarmed or dismayed in any way by this man's presence; because the one approaching them is someone they can have complete confidence and trust in. But: whether we see it or not, whether we like it or not; we live in a fallen world; where people's faith and confidence in anyone or anything is shattered. **People just don't know what to think or who to trust any more.**

**Who can trust what the local government [Mike Rann] is** saying about worker's compensation; what about people who want to buy their own home and live that dream? How can they achieve that if the mortgage loans and, bank interests are going up all the time and a lot of people are being put outside the housing market! **As long**

**as we don't put trust in ourselves.** Who can we have complete trust and confidence in?

That only person has to be our **Christ: he is our Lord and Saviour.** We do not have to be alarmed and agitated in his presence? We should not have a care in the world if we have him as our Shepherd and Saviour, because his presence is a soothing, calming, relieving effect on us. Why, because what does a shepherd do for his sheep? He guards and protects them, and Jesus does that as our great Shepherd! The sheep should all feel very, very safe in his care.

Many times Jesus is pictured as a Shepherd holding and carrying a single sheep safely in his arms, and what could be more secure than seeing yourself as that sheep being carried in his safe powerful arms. Nothing, whether powers, principalities, dominions or otherwise; nothing in all creation; is able to attack us or get at us once we are safely in the arms of Jesus! He will never let us go or

let anything bad happen to us if it isn't for our own benefit! Jesus himself wants nothing to harm us; and he will do all in his power and authority to make sure that nothing will harm us.

I feel that verse 5 is quite interesting in what it is stating. "But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." The human being is a strange creature in that his or her curiosity will always get the better of them. Their eyes and ears make them stray away from their familiar surroundings. And this action in itself gets them into some very serious trouble.

Take for instance Adam and Eve, who had everything they could possibly want in the Garden of Eden, but was lured away by the clever coaxing and tricks of the Devil. King David had it all; but his eyes lusted after Uriah's wife, the end result was judgment from God. We ourselves may consider that everything is okay and good

but if we give in to our whims and thoughts of the hearts, we could take a serious fall in our lives as well.

Jesus says in verse 9, "I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture." Jesus as the gate can be a barrier and obstacle or an entry and permission into eternal bliss and joy. Jesus is willing that all may enter into his joy and kingdom, and at the moment [if a snapshot was taken of the whole world, and in particular Australia] you will have to say sadly, that many, many people will not enter through Jesus the gate. Jesus says, those that go through will be saved; so let's ask the big question; how many will not be saved from eternal damnation?

And the final verse in our gospel lesson; verse 10 tells us that, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." You and I know who this thief is, don't we? And

we would also have to say that this thief [the Devil] is enjoying the damage he is doing to Jesus' flock at the present moment.

It's so easy to see that many people are willingly, letting the Devil [thief] steal their rightful God given inheritance. That many people are willingly giving up their faith in this current age because they believe that they can live without Jesus in their lives, and that he doesn't have a place in it anyway. Satan is also killing and destroying their lives at will, even though they may be unaware that they are doing so because they think they can control their circumstances. **WRONG!** Many have given themselves over to their own lusts and to the temptations of the Devil.

But all is NOT lost. Because Jesus gives us all hope in the second part of this verse. Jesus is saying this as well! "I have come so that they may have life, and have it in full." And all we have to do; is to share that truth in our

hearts with those who have lapsed and fallen at the moment. They need to hear these words come from our hearts and minds. They need to believe this promise that Jesus is giving them.

If we can but just share from our hearts that Jesus loves them, so much in fact, that he gave his life as a sacrifice on the cross for them.

He loves everyone so much, that he ultimately wants to be the shepherd over all of our lives, so that all can live a completely protected environment with him. Contrastingly: living outside of the love and protection of what Jesus is offering; will lead to certain rejection and eternal death. I for one know whom I have chosen to have complete precedence in my life! Amen.

**The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.**