

Easter 4/Good Shepherd  
May 12, 2019  
\*CW-S – “The Lord’s My Shepherd”

John 10:22-30  
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### Safe in the Arms of Jesus

- I. Safe because He is our Good Shepherd.
- II. Safe because He gives us eternal life.
- III. Safe because He and the Father are “one.”

Dear Christian friends,

Today gives us **such** a SPECIAL PICTURE of our God. The old Latin name for today on the **church calendar** is **Misericordias Domini** – the TENDER MERCIES of our God. Today so speaks of God’s LOVE for us – of the personal, intimate relationship we have with our Creator – **speaks** of the kindness – **patience** – **forgiveness** – **care** that God LAVISHES on us.

Tie that in with what we REGULARLY SEE in the news – horrific shootings and **terrorist attacks** that claim so many INNOCENT lives. Natural catastrophes like **tornadoes** – **hurricanes** – **earthquakes**, etc., that cause so much damage and claim more innocent lives. There are many things in life that we HAVE NO CONTROL over yet **those very things** can so affect our lives. Life can be VERY SCARY and uncertain.

So savor again your Jesus saying, **“No one will snatch them out of My hand.”** Good Shepherd Sunday has many wonderful, comforting truths but let’s NOW FOCUS on this truth – **“We Are Safe in the Arms of Jesus.”** We are safe in Jesus’ arms because 1)He is our Good Shepherd, 2)because He gives us eternal life and 3)because He and His Father are **“one.”**

#### **I. Safe because He is our Good Shepherd.**

**John 10** is the great “Good Shepherd” chapter in the NT. Just a few verses before these Jesus had said, **“I am the Good Shepherd; I know My sheep and My sheep know Me – and I lay down My life for the sheep.”** As we now turn to these verses John informs us, **“Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem.”**

That tells us that there is a **two-month gap between** Jesus saying, **“I am the Good Shepherd, etc.”** and what happens in these verses. We know “the Feast of Dedication” as Hanukkah in mid-December. Jesus is walking in a covered porch area of the temple. There the Jews surround Jesus TO FORCE Him to stop and answer them. **“How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.”**

They want to make it JESUS’ FAULT that **they don’t believe** in Him. They act as if Jesus hasn’t given them a STRAIGHT ANSWER – **as if** Jesus hasn’t been UP FRONT with them. But Jesus won’t let them PIN **their unbelief** on Him. **“I did tell you,”** Jesus answered them, **“but you do not believe. The miracles I do in My Father’s name speak for Me, but you do not believe.”** ADD to Jesus’ preaching and teaching the many miracles He’s done – Jesus had made it real clear that **He is** the promised Savior, the Son of God in the flesh.

Their unbelief – their **“not listening”** to Jesus – did make one thing CLEAR. **“You are not My sheep,”** Jesus bluntly tells them. Then Jesus explains, **“My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.”** There is no being a sheep of the Good Shepherd – there is no being OR STAYING a **Christian** – without listening to Jesus – without being in God’s Word. **“Faith comes from hearing the message,”** Pau flat out declares. **“If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples,”** Jesus tells us.

Many don't "listen" to Jesus **because** they don't like what He has to say. If we're going to take God and **His Word** SERIOUSLY then we have to get serious about OUR OWN lives. The simple truth is we haven't ALWAYS TAKEN GOD seriously. God is very clear about what our priorities in life are to be – He comes FIRST – **clear** about HIS ROLE in our lives – He's in charge of our lives – **clear** about the language we are to use – **clear** about our marriages and family life – about our morals, values, etc. God is really clear – yet how often don't we SHRUG OFF what God says with an "Oh, well, God will have to be content with this instead"? Who are we to TELL GOD **this is how** things are going to be?

There is no being one of **Jesus' sheep** without FACING UP to our defiance of God AND the consequences – God should just say to you and me, "THE HELL with you!" Getting serious about ourselves and taking our sin SERIOUSLY listen then to Jesus say, **"Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you."** Listen to Jesus explain that He **"came to seek and to save that which was lost"** – that He **"didn't come to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many."** Listen to Jesus – see the LOVE of your **Good Shepherd** – as He does everything to **reconcile us** with our Creator. After perfectly obeying God's law for us Jesus **"laid down His life"** on Calvary's cross to personally pay for all our sins in full.

We ARE SAFE in the **arms** of our **"Good Shepherd"** – **safe because** our sin and guilt has all been washed away in Jesus' precious blood. We ARE SAFE in **Jesus' arms** – held tightly by His **nail-pierced hands** – held close to His **spear-pierced side**. SAFE in **Jesus' arms** we are the loved – forgiven – redeemed children of God. We may live in a SCARY and UNCERTAIN world but we are safe in Jesus' arms. Held tightly by Jesus HOLD TIGHTLY to Jesus' **many promises**. THERE is our comfort – peace – **security!**

## II. Safe because He gives us eternal life.

**"My sheep hear My voice. I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish."** Earlier Jesus had made the point that **"when the hired hand sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away."** A **"good shepherd"** stays and defends his sheep. But a **"good shepherd"** can only DO SO MUCH. If **one** of the sheep gets killed by a wild animal there's nothing more the **shepherd can do** except bury it. But that's not true about Jesus our **"Good Shepherd."** We ARE SAFE in **Jesus' arms** because He gives us **"eternal life."**

There's nothing natural about death. It's an intrusion in God's creation. It's **"the wages of (our) sin."** We die because we are sinners. If **Judgment Day** doesn't come soon we are GUARANTEED to die. Every breath we take – every minute we live – we are that much closer to our LAST BREATH – our **last minute**. From the moment we are born **our lives** are a steady, straight march to our **open grave**. That's a SIMPLE FACT. Nothing can change it – EXCEPT BEING SAFE in the **arms of Jesus**.

**"I give them eternal life."** Eternal life in heaven is A GIFT from our **"Good Shepherd."** We don't earn it by being **such good, obedient** sheep. Jesus won **"the crown of life"** for us with His own perfect life and innocent death on the cross. Jesus conquered death for us with His own **triumphant resurrection** from the dead on Easter morning. Jesus has **"prepared a place for us"** in His Father's heavenly home. Even in death WE ARE SAFE in Jesus' arms! **Trusting in Jesus** our soul will immediately go to **be with Jesus** in heaven when we die. We will join that blessed multitude **"standing before the throne of God and in front of the Lamb – their robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb."** On the Last Day Jesus will raise our dead bodies back to life **"transformed** (changed) **to be like His glorious body."**

WHAT COMFORT! We don't know WHEN we will die – if still today or **decades** from now. We don't know HOW we will die. Will it be from cancer or a **car accident** or perhaps peacefully in our sleep **at home**? Will it be from a terrorist's bomb – a **tornado** – or after years of Alzheimer's in a **nursing home**? WHO KNOWS! But we ARE SAFE in **Jesus' arms**. SAFE in Jesus' arms we can confidently

say, ***“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”*** SAFE in Jesus arm’s we can confidently look forward to life in the ***“new heavens and new earth”*** where there will be ***“no more death or mourning or crying or pain – God will have wiped every tear from our eyes.”***

### III. Safe because Jesus and His Father are “one.”

Today is SO FANTASTIC – so COMFORTING. But Jesus isn’t done! ***“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of My hand. ...No one can snatch them out of My Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”***

Did you catch the DOUBLE COMFORT here? We ARE SAFE – **Jesus** is holding us tightly in His arms AND the **Father** is also holding us tightly in His arms! For the devil – for **death**, etc. – to get at us they must FIRST GET PASSED Jesus **and** His Father! However weak and **afraid** WE may be – however strong and **determined** our FOES might be – WE ARE SAFE in the arms of both Jesus and His Father. Paul echoed this COMFORT and SECURITY in Romans 8. ***“What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither things present nor things to come, nor powerful forces, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”***

We ARE SAFE because Jesus and His Father ***“are one.”*** ***“One”*** NOT JUST in purpose and love for us – they ***“are one”*** as true God from all eternity with the Holy Spirit. Jesus and His Father are two separate Persons – ***“I and the Father – WE,”*** Jesus clearly says. TWO separate Persons yet ***“one”*** God in the mystery and **miracle** of the Holy Trinity. Don’t try to FIGURE this out – just enjoy the COMFORT and SECURITY. Jesus is **not just** a great guy but the **eternal, almighty Son** of God Most High.

We do live I a SCARY world. Not only are there **terrorists** out there – there are spiritual terrorists **all around** who would love to maim and kill our souls. SO MUCH of life is out of our control. But there’s NO NEED to hide – to be afraid – or all down in the dumps. SAFE IN Jesus’ arms we can confidently say, ***“The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want”*** – I have everything I need. SAFE in Jesus’ arms we can confidently say, ***“I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me.”*** Amen.

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