

April 24–30. John 7–10: “I Am the Good Shepherd”

The Living Waters and Light of the World

Jesus states that if we do the will of the Father then we’ll know it is true

John 7:14-18

14 ¶ Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

What must we do to gain and/or strengthen our testimonies of the doctrine of Christ?

(If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine)

Howard W. Hunter

"Action is one of the chief foundations of personal testimony. The surest witness is that which comes firsthand out of personal experience. When the Jews challenged the doctrine Jesus taught in the temple,... he added the key to personal testimony....

"Do we hear the imperative in this declaration of the Savior? 'If any man will do... he will know!'...

"Merely saying, accepting, believing are not enough. They are incomplete until that which they imply is translated into the dynamic action of daily living. This, then, is the finest source of personal testimony. One knows because he has experienced.... He can say, 'I have lived this principle in my own life, and I know through personal experience that it works. I have felt its influence, tested its practical usefulness, and know that it is good. I can testify of my own knowledge that it is a true principle.'" (CR, April 1967)

Jesus declares that He is the Living Water

John 7:37-39

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

How can we partake of the “living water” provided by the Savior?

Joseph B. Wirthlin

"These latter days are a time of great spiritual thirst. Many in the world are searching, often intensely, for a source of refreshment that will quench their yearning for meaning and direction in their lives. They crave a cool, satisfying drink of insight and knowledge that will soothe their parched souls. Their spirits cry out for life-sustaining experiences of peace and calm to nourish and enliven their withering hearts." (CR, April 1995)

Spencer W. Kimball

"What is it to know of the doctrine? It is an unwavering assurance. The Lord has offered a rich reward but has provided that it can be had only by meeting certain requirements....

"In this case the blessing promised is a knowledge of the divinity of the doctrine. And in this case the law or requirement is that one must do his will.' Most of us know what his will is, far more than we have disposition or ability to comply." (CR, Oct. 1944)

What permeates from those who have drunken freely from the "living waters"?

(out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.... But this spake he of the Spirit)

Joseph B. Wirthlin

"The Lord provides the living water that can quench the burning thirst of those whose lives are parched by a drought of truth. He expects us to supply to them the fulness of the gospel by giving them the scriptures and the words of the prophets and to bear personal testimony as to the truth of the restored gospel to alleviate their thirst. When they drink from the cup of gospel knowledge, their thirst is satisfied as they come to understand our Heavenly Father's great plan of happiness." (CR, April 1995)

In addition to the Living Waters Jesus also refers to Himself as the Light of the World

John 8:12

12 ¶ Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

What do you think it means to be blessed with "the light of life" if we follow Jesus?

(I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall... have the light of life)

Dieter F. Uchtdorf

"What does this mean? Simply this: He who humbly follows Jesus Christ will experience and share in His light. And that light will grow until it eventually dispels even the most profound darkness.

"It means that there is a power, a strong influence, that emanates from the Savior. It proceeds 'forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space' (D&C 88:12). Because this power enlightens, uplifts, and illuminates our lives, the scriptures often call it light, but it is also referred to as spirit and truth....

"This profound insight... is as important as it is hopeful. The Light of Christ enlightens and saturates the souls of all who hearken to the voice of the Spirit....

"If you open your mind and heart to receive the Light of Christ and humbly follow the Savior, you will receive more light.... You will gather more light and truth into your souls until darkness has been banished from your life."
(CR, Oct. 2017)

We lose our freedom when we commit sin

John 8:31-36

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 ¶ They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Why are we free when we remove from our lives the things that the Lord has told us not to do?

(Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin
If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed)

Marion D. Hanks

"This freedom which he taught as being most important to mankind, comes to those who in righteousness have faith in God, learn his law, and seek to understand it, and who, obedient to it, and with responsibility, seek to do his will.

"There are many among us, and throughout the world... who have the idea that freedom can be found in unlicensed liberty. But this freedom which

Jesus taught is not the freedom of irresponsibility or unrighteousness, but the freedom which accompanies obedience....

"[We] have the right to choose, but [we] violate [our] agency in choosing that which denies [us] the very freedom which God would have his children enjoy." (CR, Oct 1954)

Jesus is the Good Shepherd

The parable of the good shepherd came as a result of the behavior of some Pharisees after Jesus healed a man who was blind from birth and the man told the people why he was no longer blind

John 9:11,18-28

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

What indicates that the Pharisees were more interested in discrediting Jesus than understanding the truth?

(v 18,19- the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind... called the parents... Is this your son, who ye say was born blind)

(v 22- his parents feared the Jews... any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out)

(v 24- they... said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner)

(v 26,27- said they to him again, What did he to thee?... I have told you already, and ye did not hear

(v 28- they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses')

The healed man reacts to the Pharisees

John 9:29-34

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

The man made it clear that if he healed his blindness then he must of God
Why do you think the Pharisees refused to accept the obvious truth that Jesus performed miracles by the power of God?

Bruce R. McConkie

“The real problem bothering the Pharisees was not whether it was proper for Jesus to heal on the Sabbath day. Nor did it concern them whether or not Jesus was truly the Messiah. The Pharisees felt that their very existence as interpreters of the Mosaic Law was threatened. They demanded that every Jew conform his life to a harsh set of ritual rules and laws, the breaking of which would make him unclean and, therefore, unacceptable to God.”
(DNTC 1:482)

Jesus testifies to the healed man that He is Christ.

John 9:35-38

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

Thomas S. Monson

“Those who have felt the touch of the Master’s hand somehow cannot explain the change which comes into their lives. There is a desire to live

better, to serve faithfully, to walk humbly, and to be more like the Savior. “Having received their spiritual eyesight and glimpsed the promises of eternity, they echo the words of the blind man to whom Jesus restored sight: ‘One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see’ (John 9:25).

“How can we account for these miracles? Why the upsurge of activity in men long dormant?... I say, speaking of this new birth, ‘God touched them, and they awakened.’” (CR, Oct. 2004)

This experience with the Pharisees leads Jesus to give the parable of The Good Shepherd. To help us understand the imagery of the parable...

Robert J. Matthews

“The shepherd in Palestine lived a lonely life and was noted for his faithfulness and protection to his sheep. At night the sheep would be brought into an enclosure called a sheep-fold which had high walls to keep anything or anyone from getting in. At the top of the walls were placed thorns which prevented wolves from leaping into the enclosure. Proper entrance was at the door only.

“Often several flocks were brought into one fold and one shepherd, called a porter, would stand guard at the door during the night while the others would go home to rest. When they would return in the morning, they would be recognized by the doorkeeper, allowed to enter, and each call his own flock and lead them forth to pasture.” (The Parables of Jesus, pg. 75–76)

As we read the parable make note of the metaphors in the parable, who they might represent, and what are the characteristics of those whom they represent.

John 10:1-9

1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

What are some of the actions and characteristics of a good shepherd?

(he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
To him the porter openeth
he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out
he goeth before them)

What are some of the actions and characteristics of the sheep?

the sheep hear his voice
the sheep follow him: for they know his voice
thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

John 10:10-15

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

There are three enemies of the sheep and shepherd, the thief/robber, the wolf, the hireling.

What are the actions and characteristics of the thief/robber?

(He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.
The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy)

What are the actions and characteristics of the wolf?

(catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep)

What are the actions and characteristics of the hireling?

(leaveth the sheep, and fleeth... because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep)

So collectively the enemies of the sheep and shepherd do the following to the sheep...

They don't enter in by the door (the gospel of Christ)

They steal, kill, and destroy the sheep
They scatter the sheep.
They care only for themselves and not for the sheep.

James E. Talmage

“Never has been written or spoken a stronger arraignment of false pastors, unauthorized teachers, self-seeking hirelings who teach for pelf and divine for dollars, deceivers who pose as shepherds yet avoid the door and climb over ‘some other way,’ prophets in the devil's employ, who to achieve their master's purpose, hesitate not to robe themselves in the garments of assumed sanctity, and appear in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravaging wolves.” (Jesus the Christ, pg. 417-418)

The Pharisees do not believe because they are not His sheep

John 10:24-30

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

30 I and my Father are one.

Why do some recognize Christ as the Good Shepherd and others do not?

(v26- ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep

v27- My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me

v29- My Father, which gave them me)

But what causes someone to recognize Christ as their shepherd in the first place?

Maybe because we strived to listen to, and follow the Light of Christ

Alma 5:38

Behold, I say unto you, that the good shepherd doth call you; yea, and in his own name he doth call you, which is the name of Christ; and if ye will not hearken unto the voice of the good shepherd, to the name by which ye are called, behold, ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd.

Maybe it's because talents, capacities, and abilities acquired in the pre-existence

Bruce R. McConkie

“Why do some persons believe in Christ and his saving truths while others do not? Why is it easier for some to believe all of the gospel truths than for others? There is only one rational explanation why selected sheep hearken more readily to the Master's voice; it is the fact that men developed different talents in pre-existence. Spirits sent to inhabit some mortal bodies developed talents for spirituality, for recognizing the truth, for believing spiritual realities while yet in pre-existence; others did not.” (DNTC 1:492)

Jesus the God of the Old Testament

Jesus declares He is I Am

John 8:56-59

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Why did His statement, “before Abraham was, I am” made the Jews feel that Jesus should be stoned to death?

Exodus 3:14

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you

John 8:3-11

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

This is a good illustration of how the Law of Moses has passed and the Law of Christ is in place.

The scribes and Pharisees state that Moses gave them the Law, but who really gave it to them?

Jesus

There we see Christ showing love and giving this women an opportunity to repent and be forgiven.