

Life in its Abundance

⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who *ever* came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

John 10:7-10

I. Looking at John 10:10:

- A. The importance of doing this;
- B. The importance of having realistic expectations;

II. Some Interpretive principles:

- A. Immediate contextual clues;
- B. The Analogy of Scripture;
- C. A matter of definition;

Our English word “abundance” comes from the two Latin words *ab* and *undare* which mean “to rise in waves” or “to overflow.” The first translation gives a picture of the unceasing rise of the waves upon a sea shore. There the waves rise again and again. One wave surges forward and exhausts its force on the sand, but another follows and another and another. Thus it will continue as long as long as life lasts. The other picture is of a flood. This makes us think of a river fed by heavy rains, rising irresistibly until it overflows its banks. The abundant life is, therefore, one in which we are content in the knowledge that God’s grace is more than sufficient for our needs, that nothing can suppress it, and that God’s favor toward us is unending.

The Greek word for “abundance,” *perissos*, has a mathematical meaning and generally denotes a surplus. In this sense it is used of the twelve baskets of food that remained after Christ’s feeding of the five thousand, as related in Matthew’s Gospel (14:20). It is translated “remains.” The comparative is used to say that John the Baptist excelled the Old Testament prophets in dignity and importance (Matt. 11:9) and that love is more important than all sacrifices (Mark 12:33).

- James Montgomery Boice

III. Relational Clues to John 10;

Points to Ponder

Christians are here compared to sheep. Not a very flattering comparison you may say; but then we do not wish to be flattered, nor would our Lord deem it good to flatter us, While far from flattering, it is, however, eminently consoling, for of all creatures there are not any more compassed about with infirmity than sheep. In this frailty of their nature they are a fit emblem of ourselves; at least, of so many of us as have believed in Jesus and become his disciples. Let others boast how strong they are; yet if there be strong ones anywhere, certainly we are weak. We have proved our weakness, and day by day we lament it. We do confess our weakness; yet may we not repine at it, for, as Paul said, so we find, when we are weak then are we strong. Sheep have many wants, yet they are very helpless, and quite unable to provide for themselves. But for the shepherd's cure they would soon perish. This, too, is our case. Our spiritual needs are numerous and pressing, Yet we cannot supply any of them. We are travelers through a wilderness that yields us neither food nor water. Unless our bread drop down from heaven, and our water flow out of the living rock, we must die. Our weakness and our want we keenly feel: still we have no cause to murmur, since the Lord knows our poor estate, and succours us with the tenderest care. Sheep, too, are silly creatures, and in this respect likewise we are very sheepish. We meekly own it to him who is ready to guide us. We say, as David said, "O God, thou knowest my foolishness;" and he says to us as he said to David, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go." If Christ were not our wisdom, we should soon fall a prey to the destroyer.

- Charles Spurgeon