

(John 10:9–14, NIV84)

"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—"

Are you feeling a little vulnerable right now, vulnerable to disease, vulnerable to an attack from an angry mob, vulnerable to any one of the devil's wolves? If so, then be reminded of your Good Shepherd.

Jesus is the One who "lays down his life for the sheep." In love and mercy, Jesus went to Calvary's cross to lay His life down for you and me. Jesus loves life; He is the author of life. And yet, despite His love of life, Jesus was willing to give His life as a guilt offering for our sins. He did it "for the joy set before Him" (Hebrew 12:2), the joy of winning our salvation and earning a place for us in His eternal mansions, the joy of winning for us "the life that is truly life" (1 Timothy 6:19).

Vulnerabilities? Fears? Worries? Not when we look to Jesus our Good Shepherd. He has us under His care and holds us in His almighty hands. Rest in that assurance.

Heirs of life with you in Christ,  
Pastor Golm

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June 7

The Abundant Life

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10

These words are taken from the well-known "Good Shepherd" chapter of St. John's gospel. Speaking in a parable, our Lord had just pointed out that he who is not the shepherd, but a thief, breaks into the flock to kill, to steal, and to destroy.

In contrast to the pillage and death which are wreaked by the intruder who comes "to steal, and to kill, and to destroy", the Savior speaks those familiar words: "I am come that they might have LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly", literally: "that they might have life, and have a surplus of it."

A surplus of life! What a thought! And yet that is exactly what the Christian has. Added to the life which is his by nature and which is being lived by all men around him, the believer has the life "which is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3). He has the life which is his by faith in the death of Jesus Christ, his Savior.

And what a life that is! It is a life of full assurance of pardon for all his sins; a life of peace with God, that "peace which passeth understanding"; a life of love and hope and "joy in the Holy Spirit"; a life of strength and power and victory "through Christ, which strengthens" him; a life of willing, happy service to his fellowman, a service not out of constraint but out of love.

It was this kind of life of which the Savior frequently spoke throughout his ministry (John 6:33). In his long discourses on the Bread of Life he refers to himself as being that Bread. And he says that those who eat of that Bread (who believe) will have life—true life, spiritual life, the kind of inner life which he will give to each believer "as a surplus". Do You and I have such life within us—new life created by the Gospel through the Holy Spirit? Pray God that we do!

Lord, give us such a life as this; And then, whate'er may come,  
We'll taste e'en here the hallowed bliss Of an eternal home.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)