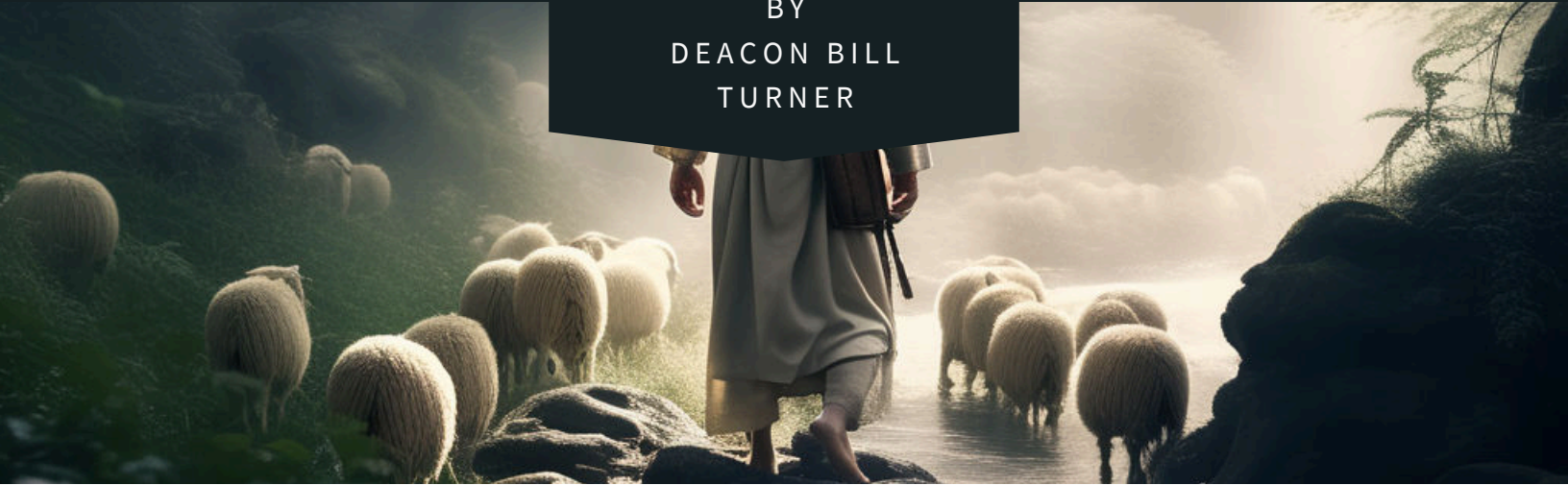


# Hear Jesus, Know Jesus, Follow Jesus

BY  
DEACON BILL  
TURNER



This weekend we celebrate what is known as Good Shepherd Sunday. Jesus lets us know he is our shepherd; we just need to recognize his voice and listen to him.

**He wants us to know him, really know him, not just know things about Him, and He wants us to follow Him as he leads us to our Eternal home.**

In the first reading, Peter filled with the Holy Spirit, addresses the leaders and Elders of those who crucified Jesus. They wanted to stop Jesus and His ministry. They wanted his followers to scatter like the wind and deliver a death blow to Jesus' movements and his teachings. And yet, Peter reminds them that God's power raised Jesus from the dead and that He is still alive. It is in Jesus' name that the Apostles heal people. He was the stone that the leaders rejected and became the cornerstone of which His church would be built upon.

Only by Jesus can humanity be saved from eternal death.

In the psalm today we are reminded again that the stone rejected by the builders has

become the cornerstone. We hear that we should be thankful for who God is and his mercy. It is better to trust in God than people - even people in power. We need to give God thanks for answering our needs.

In the second reading, John reminds us of our true identity. We are the children of God. Our identity is not determined by the labels that the world tries to put on us. It is simple, we are God's children, loved unconditionally with agape love-the love of a dad.

**Let us receive who we are (God's Children) and not be labeled by what the world thinks or says we are.**

In the Gospel, Jesus gives us a contrast between the Good Shepherd (Jesus) and a hired man (our broken human nature) who is paid to watch someone else's sheep. The paid man is not a shepherd, it is not his identity. The sheep are not his own. There is no relationship between them. If he sees a wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away.

**The hired man will not risk his life for the sheep. He works for pay to do a job. He has no concern for the sheep.**

Human love can be based on the idea of “what’s in it for me?”. It can become a mercenary love based only on self-interest. We can love as a sort of investment waiting for a return on that investment. Loving based on what good it brings rather than the pure love of God. Love can become merchandise, a commodity, a gaming table where we bet with our coins of life. Mercenary love is motivated by a selfish need more than by an intimate relationship. The mercenary will always run away when the payment no longer satisfies. When the wolves cross the plains of a relationship the mercenary always flees.

**In our relationships if our love can be bought or sold, we will leave as soon as we feel that we are no longer getting a good deal, when the risk is greater than the reward.**

In stark contrast there is the Good Shepherd (Jesus). Jesus says, I know mine and mine know me. I will lay down my life for my sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice. There will be one flock and one Shepherd.

**Jesus says, “I know mine and mine know me”  
Let yourself be known by him.  
He knows our hearts in depth, he knows the good and the bad.  
Do we hide anything from him?  
Do we know Jesus? Do we know him personally?**

The good Shepherd is Jesus. The Good Shepherd is someone who lives for someone else. His life is to care for others.

**The Shepherd always thinks in terms of what is best for the flock. Love gives itself, not for a price, but for the beauty in giving.**

How can we hear Jesus voice?  
We can hear his voice by the scriptures. Allow yourself to be quiet and let your heart be exposed to him and wait for his guidance. Do we love others as a shepherd or a mercenary?

How do we feel about our relationship with God?

We are to model ourselves by Jesus, he knows us better than we do ourselves. To hear the shepherds voice, we must be open and available to God’s invitation and relationship.

**Our distractions can be overwhelming so we must STOP and listen to hear the word of God like little children-curious and with open hearts.**

By listening we discover that he knows us. In the biblical sense knowing means loving. Jesus seeks our friendship, love, and trust. We are always loved by him and never alone. We can follow where Jesus leads.

With Jesus’ guidance and through the Holy Spirit may HE help us to continue to grow and follow Him.

Hear Jesus, Know Jesus, Follow Jesus.

**Let us pray:  
Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything.**

**Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything.**

**Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything. Amen, Alleluia!**