

I can remember when I was a boy, asking my mom... "But why can't I swim in the river?" and she would say... "Because I said no... and I AM YOUR MOTHER."

Jesus describes himself often in the Gospel by using an image.

I am the light of the world.... I am the Bread of Life....
I am the Resurrection.....I am the vine
Today he names himself.... I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD.
Not an image but a person.
He is acting in the person of God. He does what God does.

The Good Shepherd is a statement of his whole purpose in coming...
To bring all into one in God

"There are other sheep...they will hear my voice... and there will be one flock and one shepherd."

What makes him the Good Shepherd?

1. He lays down his life for the sheep.

He does not risk his life... He does not lose his life....

He freely lays it down.... He dies for his sheep.

One would not expect a shepherd to die for one of his sheep...

And yet God would die that we might live.

2. He is attentive to the voice of his sheep. He hears their cry...

He knows the voice of each one.

We could imagine that God knows us as a group...but individually?

Yes.. God hears my voice.

3. He is not like the hired hands who are not concerned about the sheep.

They think about themselves and scatter when danger comes.

No, he stays and protects his sheep.

4. He knows us by name. If Jesus were to give you a nickname, what would it be? "Loving" "Trusting" "Hopeful" ?

Or would it be "Grumpy" or "Wandering"

There is a secret to being happy. Stay close to the Shepherd !
If you wander around and find your own way, you will get lost.
"Happy" will not be your nickname1
The closer you are to the Good Shepherd, the more you will be nourished and
cared for and safe.

If Jesus wants to be our Shepherd, why would we want anything else?

STORY

There is a story told about a famous actor who gave a performance in a large theater.

There were rounds of applause.

He was called back and asked to recite the 23rd Psalm. So he recited the familiar psalm with perfect diction, and expression; again a round of applause.

At the end, the actor noticed an old man in the front row who he happened to know. He asked the man, "would you come up here and recite the Psalm?"

The elderly man came forward, a bit frightened. He looked out at the audience and then closed his eyes and talked to God.

"The Lord is my Shepherd, there is nothing I shall want... fresh and green are the pastures.. and so on.

When he finished, there was no applause but there was not a dry eye in the room. The actor came to the stage.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I know the words of the 23rd Psalm.....

.....But this man knows the Shepherd.