

# FAITH COMES BY HEARING THE WORD OF GOD 4.25.2021

Let's look at the Bible readings for Good Shepherd Sunday, April 25, to prepare for on-line, drive-in, and in-person worship (10 am) with Abounding Joy.

## 1ST READING: Acts 4:1-12 There's power in the name of the crucified and risen One

<sup>1</sup>As Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, <sup>2</sup>greatly annoyed because they were **teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead**. <sup>3</sup>And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. <sup>4</sup>But many of those who had **HEARD THE WORD BELIEVED**, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

<sup>5</sup>On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, <sup>6</sup>with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. <sup>7</sup>And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "**By what power** or

**by what name** did you do this?"

<sup>8</sup>Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, <sup>9</sup>if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, **by what means** this man has been healed, <sup>10</sup>let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that **by the name of Jesus Christ** of Nazareth, whom you crucified, **whom God raised from the dead** — **by him** this man is standing before you well.

<sup>11</sup>This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. <sup>12</sup>**And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**"

## SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO ACTS, CHAPTER 4

1. Why were the religious leaders "greatly annoyed" by the teaching of Peter and John? (vss. 1-2)
2. Look up Rom. 10:17. How does that relate to vs. 4 above? Regarding vs. 11 see Ps. 118:22-23.
3. The words highlighted in **red** all deal with the question of what is the cause behind the healing of the crippled man and our salvation. What is Peter's answer?
4. In the ancient world and in the Bible, great significance is given to names. The word "name" is synonymous with "person, authority, power, and will." How does that help you understand vss. 10 and 12? Notice also the use of "name" in I John 3:23 below.
5. Look up John 14:6. How does that relate to vs. 12 above?

## Psalm 23 We are His sheep; the Lord is our shepherd

<sup>1</sup>The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

<sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

<sup>3</sup>He revives my soul and guides me along right pathways for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup>You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

<sup>6</sup>Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.



## SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO PSALM 23

1. What does it mean to say that the Lord is our shepherd? What does it say about who we are?
2. What promises are mentioned in this text. That is, what has the Lord already done for us and what will He do for us in the future? What's your favorite part of Psalm 23?

## 2ND READING: 1 John 3:16-24 Trusting the One who died for us and loving one another

<sup>16</sup>By this we know **love**, that he **laid down his life** for us, and we ought to **lay down our lives** for the brothers. <sup>17</sup>But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's **love abide** in him? <sup>18</sup>Little children, let us not **love** in word or talk but in deed and in truth. <sup>19</sup>By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; <sup>20</sup>for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. <sup>21</sup>**Beloved**, if

our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; <sup>22</sup>and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. <sup>23</sup>And this is his commandment, that we believe in **THE NAME OF HIS SON JESUS CHRIST** and **love** one another, just as he has commanded us. <sup>24</sup>Whoever keeps his commandments **abides** in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he **abides** in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

### SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO I JOHN, CHAPTER 3:

1. How do we know that Jesus loves us (vs 1)? How are we to respond to this love?
2. The word “*abide*” (to remain with) is very important in John’s Gospel and in John’s letters. How is the word *abide* used in this passage? How is it used in the Gospel of John 15:1-17?
3. How do vss. 19-21 relate to our understanding of having a conscience?
4. How do you interpret vs. 22? How do you interpret “whatever”? Do you believe you will get whatever you pray for if you are faithful enough?
5. Pastor Tom often says that the meaning of life is all wrapped up in trusting in God’s grace for us in Jesus and in caring for one another. How does that relate to vs. 23 above?
6. Vs. 24 says we know God abides in us because we’ve been given the Spirit (the Holy Presence of God). But, how do we know that we’ve received the Spirit?

### THE GOSPEL: John 10:11-18 A shepherd who dies for His sheep (us)!

<sup>11</sup>Jesus said, “I am **the good shepherd**. **The good shepherd lays down his life** for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>He who is a hired hand and not a **shepherd**, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup>He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>I am **the good shepherd**. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and **I lay down my life** for the

sheep. <sup>16</sup>And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one **shepherd**. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because **I lay down my life** that I may take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from me, but **I lay it down** of my own accord. I have authority to **lay it down**, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

### SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO JOHN, CHAPTER 10:

1. According to these verses what’s the most important calling/action of the Good Shepherd?
2. How does the Good Shepherd differ from the hired hand?
3. What type of relationships are implied by the use of the word “know” in vss. 14+15?
4. Who might be the “other sheep” mentioned in v. 16?
5. When will the second half of vs. 16 become reality?
6. Read all 42 verses of John, chap. 10, to get the full context of this Good Shepherd passage.