

The Language of Love and Mercy



Gary Wilkerson March 1, 2021

Jesus tells a crowd of Pharisees and religious people around him, “I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 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” (John 10:14-16, ESV).

The Greek word here for “listen” isn’t just for hearing and recognizing someone’s voice; it can also mean “language.” Jesus is telling the Pharisees, “You don’t recognize my voice” in one sense, but he’s also saying, “You don’t understand the language of grace and mercy.” They couldn’t understand the language of a father’s heart of love.

For those who have been rescued by God, we will not only recognize Christ’s voice, but we will also understand the language of love and mercy. Once you hear that language, you’re not going to want to listen to another voice. The languages of works, dead religion and sin will no longer be appealing.

This is part of how we go out into the world without fear of the world getting into us. We can go out with a confidence and boldness because we hear the Father’s voice and we know his language.

“Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error” (1 John 4:4-6).

We will know God, and we will be known as his own, and the spiritual powers of darkness in the world cannot overcome the Spirit in us. That’s a wonderful promise.

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