

## **“Self-Giving Love”**

John 10:11-18

If I were to ask the members of your family if you love them, what evidence could they give me of that love? Would they point to the time you spend with them? Would they talk about how you care for them when they're not feeling well? What does genuine love really look like, how does it act? In John 15:13 we read these words; “*Greater love has no one than this, to lay down his life for his friends.*”

Hello friend, I'm J. Mark Horst, your host and this program is *Hope for Today*. It is produced by Heralds of Hope, an international Gospel media ministry. Each week the Bible teaching broadcasts of *Heralds of Hope* circle the globe in English and 21 other major languages. Thousands are tuning in each week to receive spiritual nourishment and blessing. We receive many exciting testimonies of people who have come to faith in Jesus by listening to the programs.

If you're tuning in for the first time today, we are currently being led through the Gospel of John by the teaching of the late, Dr. J. Otis Yoder. He was the founder, first president, and Bible teacher for *Hope for Today*. He went home to be with the Lord in the year 2003.

But he taught the Bible in such a way that his teaching never goes out of date. And so, we're rebroadcasting his teaching from the Gospel of John. We are confident that, if you tune in each week, you will be blessed by the clear, simple presentation of biblical truth. And that truth, if you accept it, will change your life now and for eternity.

In just a few moments, Dr. Yoder will come to share his teaching about Jesus. It's titled, “Self-Giving Love.” But before he does that, let's pray.

Gracious God our Heavenly Father, we come to you in the precious name of Jesus. It is alone through Him that we have access into your holy presence. His blood, shed on the cross at Calvary, is the only sacrifice that is acceptable to you to wash away our sin.

And now, Father, as Dr. Yoder comes to teach us from the Word, open our hearts to receive your truth. Help us to learn about the self-giving love of Jesus. This I ask in His name, Amen.

Many years ago, King David had an experience in the time when the Philistines came in and harassed the people of Israel. He said to three of his brave men, “Oh, how I long for a drink of water from the well at Bethlehem's gate.” And do you know, those three men broke through the Philistine ranks and brought water to David from the well at Bethlehem's gate? And do you

know what David did? He said he couldn't drink it. He wouldn't drink it because this represented blood. They had taken their lives in their hands to get the water from the well at Bethlehem's gate.

Some people will die for a friend. These three brave men risked their lives for their king, David. But who will die for an enemy? Who would even dare to die for one he does not love?

We are told self-preservation, to keep alive, is the first law of human existence. There is a higher law though, SELF-GIVING LOVE. That's what I want you to think about as we come to the words of Jesus. Three times in John 10:11-18 Jesus tells how He will give His life for the sheep.

11 *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*

12 *But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.*

13 *The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*

14 *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.*

15 *As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.*

16 *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

17 *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.*

18 *No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*

In this Bible text we find EXPLANATIONS why Jesus died for us or why He would give His life for the sheep in self-giving love.

**Explanation number one: There is One Shepherd.**

He is the good Shepherd. He is the trusted Shepherd. He is the faithful Shepherd. The One who is faithful even until death. He said, "I give my life for the sheep." The others are hirelings, hired to do the job, but they don't care for the sheep. They only care for themselves. So their central thought is "my life". I want to be sure that I am protected. So when the wolf comes they run away and leave the sheep to their fate. Jesus said so. He said that's the way the hireling operates.

But Jesus said He gives His life for the sheep. There's only one shepherd who would do that and that is the good Shepherd. What a wonderful fact this is, one shepherd. Not many shepherds, my friend, one shepherd. And Jesus said, "I am the good Shepherd."

**There is a second explanation: There is One Fold.**

You notice how He said there is not separation between the shepherd and the sheep? Strangers, they won't follow. We learned that before. But there's no separation between the shepherd, the true Shepherd, and the sheep. There is one fold.

There is also a relationship between the Shepherd and the Father. He spoke of the reason why the Father knows Him and He knows the Father. He said, "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep." There is unity of thought between the Father and the Shepherd. And Jesus is that Shepherd, you understand.

Then there is the Shepherd and the fold. All true sheep are in the true Shepherd's fold. Jesus said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

Oh, how I rejoice in that, my friend. It doesn't make any difference where you are listening to me. Whether you are in the Far East, or whether you are in South Africa, West Africa, or the Middle East. It doesn't make any difference where you are listening to me. Jesus said there is going to be one fold and one Shepherd. From many countries they come into one fold.

Praise the Lord! Isn't that wonderful! Jesus said He was going to give His life for the sheep so that there will be one flock, one shepherd, one fold.

Then there is one central truth: the Father's love. He said, "For this reason the Father loves me because I am going to give my life for the sheep." This was the Father's intention, of course,

from the beginning. This was the Father's plan from the very start, that the Shepherd would give His life for the sheep.

Then Jesus made a very striking prediction. You'll find that in verse 18: "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

My dear friend, no matter how you examine the record, it becomes absolutely clear that this prediction that Jesus made came to pass. He gave His life. Oh, it's true the Roman soldiers crucified Him. But in reality He gave His life because the Bible says from the cross He cried with a loud voice, "It is finished." Then He gave up His Spirit and said to God the Father, "Into thy hands I commend my Spirit."

Yes, my friend, Jesus gave His life so that He might take it again. He arose from the dead just like He said He would. He is alive today. Right now He is alive. He is now seated at the right hand of God in heaven so the Bible informs us. There is one truth that He did lay His life down and that He did take it again. What a wonderful fact! The death and the resurrection of Jesus was truly self-giving love.

He said, "I'm going to lay down my life for the sheep." No one else has ever done what Jesus did. He is the one Shepherd. He is the good Shepherd. And He is the one who is going to bring all His sheep into one fold. It makes no difference where we're from, if we are true sheep of the true Shepherd we're all in one fold. This is being done on the basis on one truth, that He gave His life for the sheep.

Have you accepted Him, my friend? Are you one of His true sheep?

Thank you, Dr. Yoder for showing us from this portion of Holy Scripture the true meaning of love from the life of Jesus. Have you experienced His love? If not, I pray you will accept His offer of divine love – today!

Now, were you blessed by this teaching by Dr. Yoder? If so, you can request an audio CD or a printed copy of this complete teaching, just request it by its title, "Self-Giving Love."

The quickest way for you to contact me is to send an e-mail to [mail@heraldsofhope.org](mailto:mail@heraldsofhope.org). That email address again is, [m-a-i-l@heraldsofhope.org](mailto:m-a-i-l@heraldsofhope.org). Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching, "Self-Giving Love." I'd be happy to send one to you.

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Now friend, I urge you to tune in next week as we continue our study in John’s Gospel with message titled “Weighing Evidences.” And until then, keep looking for that blessed HOPE.