

Week of April 22-28

## **HE KNOWS YOUR NAME**

**Scripture Reading:** Read John chapter 10

A month ago, in the devotional on Luke chapter 14, I mentioned that *It's a Wonderful Life* was one of my favorite films. Let me introduce today's devotional by going back to that film and to a scene that shows up near the end of the movie when Jimmy Stewart's character, George Bailey, is on the bridge at the outskirts of town. Thanks to Clarence, his guardian angel, George had the chance to see what life would have been like for all the people in Bedford Falls if he had never been born. As a result, George cries out to Clarence that he wants to live again. While he's weeping, Burt, the cop appears. George is not aware that he has returned to his regular life until Burt calls out to him by name. George responds, "Bert? Do you know me?"

Many believers ask the same question when it comes to their relationship with the Lord: "Jesus? Do you know me?" Sometimes, the question arises because the believer is feeling down, guilty or somewhat distant from the Lord.

In today's chapter reading, Jesus makes it clear, very clear, that he knows us. The chapter opens with a story about sheep, a shepherd and a gate. Did you notice what he said in the story? "*He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.*" It was common practice for shepherds at that time to have pet names for their sheep. When the shepherd called a sheep by this pet name, the sheep would come to the shepherd and follow him.

So, how does this connect to us? Later on in the chapter, Jesus uses the story to illustrate spiritual truth and the relationship he has with us, his people. In verse 14, he tells us that he is the good shepherd and that he knows his sheep. But then Jesus goes further in explaining how well he knows us and it's a point that you don't want to miss. Take a look again at verse 15: "*just as the Father knows me and I know the Father.*" Did you catch Jesus' point? The same kind of recognition that he has with his Father is the same kind of recognition that Jesus has with us. Noted 16<sup>th</sup> century reformer, John Calvin, put it this way in his commentary on this passage: "*It is as if He said, that it is no more possible for Him to be oblivious of us than for the Father to reject or neglect Him.*" The sheep will recognize the shepherd's voice as the Son recognizes his Father's voice and the shepherd will not forget his sheep as the Father will never forget the Son.

"Jesus? Do you know me?" It may come as a cry of desperation just as George Bailey's did. But, child of God, listen and lay hold of this truth today: If you are one of his sheep by faith, then he, indeed, knows you...by name!"

### **Action Step & Prayer Focus:**

When George Bailey asked the question, "Burt? Do you know me?" , Burt responded, "Know you? Huh. You kiddin'? I've been looking all over town trying to find you." How much more has the Good Shepherd been looking for lost sheep. If you don't know Jesus, receive his gift of salvation today. If you do know him, rejoice in the wonder of the fact that he knows you by name.

**Take-away:** *You're not just a number to Jesus. He knows you by name!*