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Follow The Good Shepherd

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“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” John 10:11

It is not about how fast we go but how closely we follow. Set in the majestic hills and flatlands of France, the Tour De France is a 2,000-mile cycling contest and is arguably the most challenging race in all of sports. One of the difficulties a rider faces on the course is headwind, air resistance that causes the rider to lose speed. To overcome this obstacle, cyclists utilize a technique called *drafting* by working together as a team. Drafting is when a cyclist rides directly behind another cyclist, this act of following closely reduces the struggle caused by headwind and allows the riders to move forward more swiftly. Have you ever felt the headwinds of life dragging you back?

In John 10, Jesus describes Himself as a shepherd that goes before His sheep. This powerful illustration reveals that before we face any trial, Jesus has already passed through it for us. In going before us, difficulty does not catch Jesus by surprise, He knows exactly what we are about to face, and He seeks to smooth the way for us. By “drafting” behind Jesus, we can follow Him closely as He moderates the trials the winds of life can bring.

In *The Desire of Ages*, a marvelous picture is provided of Jesus as our Shepherd: *“As the shepherd goes before his sheep, himself first encountering the perils of the way, so does Jesus with His people. When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them. The way to heaven is consecrated by the Saviour's footprints. The path may be steep and rugged, but Jesus has traveled that way; His feet have pressed down the cruel thorns, to make the pathway easier for us.”*

Our loving Savior knows there will be challenges ahead of us, but He promises to smooth the way on the road to eternity. Our comfort and healing are not found in peddling faster but following the Shepherd closer as He goes before us.

Reflection

1. When we attempt to face the headwinds of life by ourselves, we realize that the faster we go the more resistance we face. What areas of your life is Jesus asking you to follow Him in?
2. Can you think of someone that needs encouragement today? What can you do to remind them that Jesus is the good shepherd?

NEWS AND RESOURCES

- The Religion Editor for the Southern Accent, Madison Wilcox, is encouraging students to contribute to the religion section of the newspaper. For more information feel free to read Madison’s latest article, [Where do you meet God? Share your story](#). Please send submissions or queries to madisonw@southern.edu. Articles must be 500 words. Questions for the editor must be 100 words or less. Contributors are paid \$24.75 per article.
- If you are feeling anxious or have recently experienced loss or grief, call 423.236.2782 to talk to a counselor on campus! (This is a free service for Southern students.)
- **Talk** with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.