

# EXPOSITION

Monthly e-Bulletin from Virginia Beach Theological Seminary



**From My Window**

A favorite verse of mine has been a point of debate for many. Romans 12:1 is Paul’s appeal to the brothers and sisters to “present their bodies a living sacrifice to God.” Some see this as a one-time, immediate surrender to God while others prefer an on-going attitude of the believer. In *The Journal of Jim Elliot*, published twenty-two years after his untimely martyrdom by the Aucas in Ecuador, he wrote some stirring words on this issue as a senior at Wheaton College, “One does not surrender a life in an instant—that which is lifelong can only be surrendered in a lifetime.” He considered God’s will to be far greater than his momentary view. Therefore, he mused, as I live in “the fullness of the Spirit” God’s plan unfolds before me, and I progressively attain “its fullness” as “his *Word* affirms his *will*” to me. Elliot’s idea of “lifelong surrender” is probably right. I pray today, my life is fully given to God for his own pleasure. Will you join me in this prayer?



## VBTS Faculty & Staff

The 26<sup>th</sup> fall semester is underway, and we rejoice in God’s good hand upon us. Thank you for your prayer on behalf of our dedicated and godly faculty and staff!

### Back (left to right)

Mr. Peter Damianidis – Live Stream Video Producer  
 Dr. Mark Hassler – Professor of Old Testament  
 Dr. Brent Belford – Sr. Pastor of CBC, Faculty Associate  
 Dr. Eric Lehner – Academic Dean, Professor of Theology

### Front (left to right)

Mrs. Gloria Schrader – Administrative Assistant  
 Mrs. Susann DePriest – Assistant to the Librarian  
 Dr. Daniel Davey – President, Professor of Bible Exposition  
 Dr. Thomas Dailey – Professor of New Testament  
 Dr. Michael Windsor – Professor of Church History, Librarian  
 Capt. Tony Brazas (USN ret.) – Chief Financial Officer  
 Mrs. Anna Lehner – Administrative Assistant  
 Mr. Scott Rosen – Director of Admissions, Registrar

### Not Pictured

Dr. Roger DePriest – Faculty Associate in Biblical Counseling  
 Mr. Joel Dailey – Assistant Business Manager

## “Cast out” or “Bring out”? John 10:4

Roger DePriest | Executive Director, Grace Biblical Counseling; VBTS Faculty Associate

In John 10:3b–4 (ESV), we read this about the role of a shepherd who does his job well: “The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him for they know his voice.”

There is great irony in these two verses. But to appreciate it, we need to place it in its context.

Scholars have long since identified John 10 as “The Good Shepherd Discourse.” While that is true in terms of the discourse proper, we gain a better understanding of chapter 10 if we understand it as a continuation of chapter 9, which began with Jesus’ encounter with the man who was blind from birth. The narrative unfolds as follows.

After Jesus engages in a theological exchange with his disciples about this man’s blindness, he proceeds to heal him by a rather unique means. He spits on the loose dirt at his feet to form a mud compress and places it on the man’s eyes. He then tells him to go wash it off in the Pool of Siloam, located about a half-mile away. When the man emerges from the water, he can see! Yet he is still in the dark about who it was who healed him.

This event occurred on a Sabbath day, which roused the ire of the Pharisees, and the bulk of the chapter records a series of exchanges between the Pharisees and the healed man. Step-by-step, we watch with amazement as two things concurrently happen. First, with every encounter, the Pharisees steel themselves more and more against Jesus, characterizing him as a lawbreaker. Secondly, the healed man progressively reaches a strong resolve that his healer is from God. But this resolve comes at a high cost since the Pharisees had determined to expel (lit. “to desynagogue,” v. 22) anyone from the synagogue who confesses Jesus to be the Messiah. Excommunication from the synagogue had enormous economic and social implications in the first century.

However, the healed man held firm and invoked the Pharisees’ rage (v. 34b), “So they cast him out.” The words “cast out” render the Greek term *ekballō* (“to throw out or remove”). John had already used a form of this in 2:15 when Jesus “drove out” the moneychangers from the Temple. Then again in 6:37 Jesus strongly affirms, “Whoever comes to me I will never cast out.”

Thus, in chapter nine the Pharisees used their spiritual authority to drive out one of their own vulnerable sheep. But in chapter ten, the Good Shepherd receives this same sheep into his fold under his own care. And this brings us back to our text.

In 10:3, we read that when a good shepherd speaks, his sheep “hear his voice.” Keep in mind, this was the only means by which this man-born-blind could identify Jesus. Yet, it is through his voice that Jesus led this individual out of Judaism, just as he leads out his own sheep (v. 4).

John records Jesus’ significant words, “he has brought out all his own”; the verb “brought out” renders the same term *ekballō*. While it is a legitimate rendering, this is the only place where John uses a softer sense. It appears, then, that John is playing with both nuances. First, he wants the reader to see that the Good Shepherd of John 10 is fully present and operative in John 9. He has orchestrated the events to expose the *bad shepherds* as those who cast out (*ekballō*) one of their own—which is also one of his own. Thus, the singular act of the Pharisees casting out one of their own becomes the same act by which the Good Shepherd “brings out” one of his own into his fold. Thus, we may rest assured that Jesus is mindful of every adversity his sheep face, and as the Good Shepherd, he will shepherd us for our good.