

# SERMON STUDY GUIDE



02.25.24 // Week 8 // “The Good Shepherd”



He is the most written-about figure in history.  
He is the most asked-about person on Google.  
Who is He? Jesus.

John’s Gospel account of Jesus certainly tells us about some of what Jesus did, but more than that, John wants us to see who Jesus is!

Here we will truly come and see who Jesus is and how He changes our lives!

## ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS

- What is one thing that you’re celebrating today? What is one thing you need prayer for?
- What is one quality or characteristic of God that you appreciate the most? Why?

# GOING DEEPER INTO THE MESSAGE

Let's read John 10:1-9

*"Truly I tell you, anyone who doesn't enter the sheep pen by the gate but climbs in some other way is a thief and a robber. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought all his own outside, he goes ahead of them. The sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 They will never follow a stranger; instead they will run away from him, because they don't know the voice of strangers." 6 Jesus gave them this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them. 7 Jesus said again, "Truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who came before me[a] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep didn't listen to them. 9 I am the gate. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture."*

## Point 1 – Know the voice of the Good Shepherd.

Although uncommon to most of us today, the job of a shepherd was very common to the people during this time. It wasn't a glamorous job but it was an essential role to play in the agrarian society of Israel. The shepherd's life was a difficult one. He was always on duty and most of his time was spent in isolation with the sheep.

Over time, the shepherd and the sheep would build a close relationship with one another. The shepherd would even give each sheep a unique name that matched their personality and temperament. The sheep would develop a dependence on the shepherd for everything and would only respond to his voice over the voices of other shepherds. Even when the sheep were in a communal pen with sheep from another flock (sheepfold), a shepherd could call to his own sheep and they would come to him. When the shepherd spoke, the sheep would respond because they knew his voice.

In the Old Testament, God would often refer to Himself as a Shepherd over His flock (the people of Israel). Just like a shepherd was acutely aware of the needs of his sheep, so too, God was aware and capable of meeting all needs for His people (Psalm 23). God guided His people in the wilderness like a shepherd guided his flock (Psalm 78:52). The Psalmist even called God the "Shepherd of Israel" who would lead Joseph (Israel) like a flock of sheep (Psalm 80:1-2). With all of this in mind, it makes so much sense why Jesus used this metaphor in John 10 to describe Himself and the relationship He has with His sheep. He is close to His sheep. He calls His sheep by name and leads them out (vs. 3-4).

This is the type of relationship He wants to have with each one of us. He knows us extremely well. He understands our tendencies, our fears, and our specific needs. He desires for us to know His voice and discern when He calls us to Him.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How does the title of Jesus being the “Good Shepherd” impact your prayer life and/or your relationship with Him?
- What does the voice of God sound like in your life? Have there been times in your life when you have sensed His presence/heard His voice more frequently?
- In what area of your life do you hear our Good Shepherd calling you today? How will you respond?

## Continue reading John 10:10-30

*“10 A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance. 11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 The hired hand, since he is not the shepherd and doesn’t own the sheep, leaves them and runs away when he sees a wolf coming. The wolf then snatches and scatters them. 13 This happens because he is a hired hand and doesn’t care about the sheep. 14 “I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 But I have other sheep that are not from this sheep pen; I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. Then there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.” 19 Again the Jews were divided because of these words. 20 Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and he’s crazy. Why do you listen to him?” 21 Others were saying, “These aren’t the words of someone who is demon-possessed. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?” 22 Then the Festival of Dedication took place in Jerusalem, and it was winter. 23 Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon’s Colonnade. 24 The Jews surrounded him and asked, “How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly. 25 “I did tell you and you don’t believe,” Jesus answered them. “The works that I do in my Father’s name testify about me. 26 But you don’t believe because you are not of my sheep. 27 My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. 30 I and the Father are one.”*

## Point 2 - Rest in the care of the Good Shepherd.

Sheep are wonderfully created by God. They have many admirable qualities (cute, wooly, quick) but being strong and ferocious isn't one of them. Sheep need protection. They were not known as fighters. They relied on the care of the shepherd to ensure that they would live to see tomorrow. The sheep could easily be attacked by the predators in the region (bears, lions, etc.) and needed to be watched at all hours of the day.

Jesus continued to use this metaphor to express his protection and provision for His people. At times, the shepherd would put himself in harm's way to save the life of his sheep. A hired hand wouldn't do such a thing (John 10:12-13). At the first sign of danger, he might flee to save his own life. But Jesus wanted them to understand that He was different. He was the Good Shepherd who would sacrifice His life for his sheep. He wouldn't turn and run from danger. He would stay on watch and keep the security of the sheep as a top priority. He would even lay His own life down for His sheep if needed (John 10:11).

We can be bold coming to the Good Shepherd. We can take our worries and cares and needs to Him, knowing that He will provide for His sheep. We can rest secure knowing that our Shepherd is willing and able to defeat any and every enemy. John 10:29 calms us with the knowledge that no one will be able to snatch us out of the Father's hand.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How are you experiencing the care of the Good Shepherd in your life? What ways have you seen God provide for you in the last year?
- One of the tricks of the enemy is to convince us that God isn't a "Good" Shepherd. How do you combat that idea?
- Where do you need to see God's provision in your life today? Be bold in asking the Good Shepherd!