

Discussion Guide

Use this guide by yourself, with a friend, or in a group to help you pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus this week!

Open

Our series continues in the book of John this week by taking a look at John 10:1-21. In this passage, Jesus uses the illustration of an ideal shepherd to help us understand the depth of His commitment to us and the inability of anyone else to truly fulfill that role in our lives. To get your group's conversation started, let everyone share what their favorite pet was as a child - and how well did it respond to their voice?

BIG THOUGHT

Jesus describes Himself as the ideal shepherd who can bring us (as his sheep) security and rest, and ultimately proves the truth of His claims through His death and resurrection.

1. Read John 10:1. In the previous chapter, Jesus has a confrontation with the Pharisees because He healed a blind man on the Sabbath (which was a violation of their tradition even though it was not a violation of God's commands). Our text for today is the continuation of this exchange, and in the passage Jesus references the common understanding that Israel was God's flock and their leaders were the shepherds. What did Jesus say was the tell-tale sign of someone who had the wrong motives for being in with the sheep? How was the Pharisees' legalistic interpretation of God's commands a way of sneaking into the flock?
2. Now read v. 2-5. How does the true shepherd enter the sheep pen? What do the sheep respond to? (v. 3) How does a shepherd lead his sheep? (v. 4) How do they respond to a stranger? (v. 5) Do you think the Pharisees knew Jesus was identifying them as the thieves, robbers, and strangers? Explain your thoughts.

3. Now read v. 6-10. What effect did Jesus' words have on His audience? How did Jesus change the illustration to help them understand (v. 7) To what group are the sheep not willing to listen? (v. 8) Who is Jesus talking about? And what does Jesus promise to those who are under His care (v. 10)? What do you think of when you think of "life in abundance"? Share with the group.
4. Read v. 11-13. Who did Jesus claim to be? What is the proof of His claim? (v. 11) Why did Jesus say the hired hand would abandon his sheep? (v. 12-13) Have you ever placed your trust in someone who proved to not be trustworthy? How did you feel afterward?
5. To finish, read v. 14-18. How does Jesus describe His relationship with and commitment to His sheep? (v. 14-15) What are your ideas about the "other fold" Jesus is talking about? (v. 16) And what is Jesus claiming in v. 17-18? What would you have thought if you had been in the crowd and heard Him make that claim?

Take it Further

Are you able to identify who or what you're depending on to "shepherd" you in your life? If you've never considered trusting Jesus with that task, consider it today and talk with Him about it now...

Daily Verse Readings

Day 1: Psalm 100:3

Day 4: Matthew 18:12-14

Day 2: Ezekiel 34:11-6

Day 5: Jeremiah 23:1

Day 3: Matthew 2:6

Day 6: Psalm 23:1-3

Memory Verse: John 10:11



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