

Men's Sunday Night Live
Lesson 10 - John 10:1-42
Finding Identity and Purpose
The Good Shepherd

The events in this chapter are tied together by the symbolism of the shepherd and his sheep. The Middle Eastern sheepfold was very simple: a stone wall, perhaps ten feet high, surrounded it, and an opening served as the door. The shepherd would sleep at the opening of the fold and actually become “the door.” Nothing could enter or leave the fold without passing over the shepherd.

Christ points out that the true shepherd comes through the door, calls his sheep by name, which recognize him, and leads the sheep, which follow. False shepherds and strangers, who are thieves and robbers, try to get into the fold some subtle way, but the sheep will not recognize or follow them. Jesus Christ is the door, and as such He leads the sheep “in and out.” Christ is the Good Shepherd who dies for the sheep. He calls through His Word, and those who believe step through the Door, out of their religious fold, into the true flock of Christ, the church. By faith, they stepped through the Door, out of the Jewish religious fold, and into the liberty and eternal life Christ alone can give.

Sheep flock together, and so do true believers. Sheep are harmless, and Christians should be blameless and harmless. Sheep are given to wandering, and so are we. Sheep need a shepherd for protection, guidance, and food; and we need Christ for spiritual protection, daily guidance, and spiritual food. Sheep are useful and productive; so are true Christians. Finally, sheep were used for sacrifices; and Christians are willing to yield themselves for Christ as “*living sacrifices*.”

The common people continued to seek Jesus, and He continued to minister to them. It is worth noting that John the Baptist's witness was still bearing fruit long after he was dead! His witness to Jesus Christ led many to trust the Savior. John was not a miracle worker, but he was a faithful witness who pointed to Jesus Christ. “*He must increase, but I must decrease*” (John 3:30).

Read John 10:1-42 and answer the following questions

1. What is the shepherd's responsibility? (See 10:3-4)
2. What does Jesus mean when he says: "I Am the door of the sheep"?
3. Do the sheep have any responsibility? What will a "good" sheep do? How can the sheep know who to follow?
4. How can we know the difference between God's voice and the voice of "the wisdom of the world"?
5. Jesus makes two "I AM" statements here in chapter 10. What is He claiming about Himself and His identity by calling Himself: A. The Door (See 10:7-9), B. The Good Shepherd (See 10:11)?
6. What does Jesus mean that He will give abundant life? (See 10:10) How can He give us abundant life?

7. What do verses 11-13 show us about how we need to treat the people under us or that God has given us to care for?

8. What happens to the sheep who know and follow the Good Shepherd's voice? (See 10:3-4, 9-10, 27-29)

9. What is implied by the fact that Jesus and His sheep know each other just as He and His Father know each other? (See 10:14-15)

10. Why is it important that there is only "one flock and one shepherd"?

11. At the Feast of Dedication, what did the religious leaders demand to know about Jesus? What was Jesus answer? (See 10:22-30).

12. What did the Jews want to do to Jesus, and how did He respond? (See 10:31-32, 39)

Jesus, The Good Shepherd

Jesus was called the Good Shepherd because He called Himself the Good Shepherd in the Gospel of John. His claim to this title is not casual by any means. In fact, Jesus' claim to be the Good Shepherd has a meaning that is both deep and wide. Although the title, good Shepherd, is only found in the New Testament, Jesus was intentionally reaching into the Old Testament with His words. When Jesus claimed to be the Good Shepherd, He was speaking to the Pharisees who claimed to know the Scriptures.

The book of Ezekiel is a prophecy regarding shepherds and sheep. The prophecy is regarding shepherds that were overseers for the people of God, and another shepherd that was to come later. The Shepherd to come later was the Messiah that Israel was waiting for. By calling Himself the good shepherd, Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah that the Scriptures foretold.

Jesus' claim to be the Good shepherd is just one of seven other declarations regarding who He was. There are seven times Jesus begins a statement with the words "I Am" and claims a title or role. They are commonly called the "I AM" statements. By calling himself the Good Shepherd, Jesus was claiming to be the Almighty God.