

John 10

“Jesus: The Good Shepherd”

Scripture: John 10

Memory Verse: John 10:14 *“I AM the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me.” (NASB)*

Lesson Focus: This is one of the most precious passages in Scripture showing how deeply Jesus cares for His people, even when they are as dumb and helpless as sheep! We will teach the kids that they should see themselves as sheep that need to trust in Jesus and follow Jesus as their shepherd and leader.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Shepherd, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring It Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Shepherd’s Crook

Starter Activity: What Animal Would You Want to Be for a Day?

We will have all of the kids stay in the Summit Room for the starter activity. We will get the kids thinking about animals by asking them what animal they would want to be if they could spend a day as any animal. Share also with the kids what animal you would want to be for a day and why.

Then we will discuss, how throughout the Bible, God often uses a particular kind of animal to describe human beings: their behavior, their identity, their needs, etc.

It’s not a powerful animal like a lion.
It’s not an exciting animal like an eagle.
It’s not even that cute or cool like a dog.

Rather it is a sheep! (We have a couple of video clips to share at this point).

Q: Do sheep impress you? Not really! Sheep are actually known for being some of the dumbest animals on the earth!

They are needy, they wander off, and they have no way to defend themselves.

Q: What do sheep need to thrive and survive? A shepherd!

In our lesson today, Jesus is going to teach us about how He is the great shepherd and how greatly He cares for His sheep!

Then have the kids pretend to be sheep as you dismiss them to their classrooms!

Bible Study:

John 10:7: We start with the third I AM statement in the gospel of John.

- #1: I AM the bread of life (ONLY Jesus nourishes our souls)
- #2: I AM the light of the world (ONLY Jesus rescues us from darkness)

Jesus uses the illustration of a door or a gate to describe that people (the sheep) enter God's favor ONLY through Him (the door).

Q: Let's say that you are flying to Hawaii on a vacation. You're at the airport ready to get on the plane. What happens at the gate?

A: People first line up at the gate (like sheep) * then present their tickets to prove that they are passengers (sheep) on the flight.

Jesus is saying He is like that gate. You must go through Him before you can enter God's favor (like Hawaii)!

John 10:8-9: There have been impostors, or false saviors, that have come before Jesus.

Q: What happens if you go through the wrong gate at the airport? Instead of Hawaii, you might end up on a flight to some place awful like Cleveland, Ohio! Similarly, if we are lured away by false teachers, we will end up in an awful place spiritually, and ultimately in hell away from God forever!

In v. 9, Jesus repeats again, I AM the door, and only through Him can we enter God's favor. There is no other way!

John 10:10: Notice the contrast between the thief and Jesus.

Q: What do the false saviors represented by the thief want to do? Steal, kill, and destroy. Do they want what is best for the sheep or best for themselves?

Q: What does Jesus want for the sheep? To give them life! Does He want what is best for the sheep? Yes!

Read Psalm 23:1-3: King David of the OT expresses here how God is his shepherd. God takes care of him. God gives him what he needs. God gives him what is best for him. David knows he is just a sheep and trusts in God to take care of him.

John 10:11: Here is the fourth I AM statement of Jesus in this gospel. We just read God is known as the good shepherd in the OT, but here Jesus says I AM the good shepherd. This is yet another bold statement of Jesus claiming to be God!

Jesus is the One that takes us to green pastures and still waters (**Psalm 23:2**). Jesus is the One that restores our soul. (**Psalm 23:3**)

So Jesus is not only like the gate that we must go through to enter into God's favor (Hawaii), but then He stays with the sheep, caring for them, and tending to them. It's like Jesus gets on the flight to Hawaii with us and takes care of us while we are there!

John 10:12-13: Jesus here describes those who are hired to watch the sheep. Most experts believe He refers to the Jewish religious leaders that were more interested in their own status and power than in the Jewish people. These folks flee when the sheep are in danger.

Q: What is a coward? Someone who thinks only about themselves in the face of danger! Can you think of any famous cowards from stories or movies? *

These hired folks are cowards and abandon the sheep when their own necks are on the line. *

John 10:14-15: Wow! Remember Who Jesus is: The Son of God! And yet He says He knows His sheep and they know Him, even as the Father and the Son know each other!

Q: What is the difference between knowing someone and knowing ABOUT someone?

A: When you know someone, you are in relationship with them. You might know about certain kids at school, but you only TRULY KNOW your close friends.

This is the kind of personal and intimate relationship that Jesus invites all of you into with Himself! Your Creator, the God of the whole universe wants you to know Him like a best friend AND trust in Him as your shepherd and leader.

John 10:16: The Jewish people were indeed God's sheep for He loved them and chose them to be His people from which would come Jesus Christ, the promised Savior. But now Jesus is referring to some "other sheep".

Q: When we say that Jesus was sent for the whole world (**John 3:16**), who are we talking about? Only Jewish people? Only white people? Only black people? No! Jesus invites everyone to come and be part of His flock. The "one flock" refers now to the church, where people from EVERY tribe, tongue, and nation love and live for Jesus!

John 10:17-18: Here we see just how much Jesus loves His sheep. Not only does He defend them and take care of them, but He **willingly** lays down His life for them (this is now the fourth time Jesus has mentioned this!).

Q: What are some things that you don't really like to do, but you do anyway because you were told to do them? Homework, clean your room, etc.

While it was God the Father's intention to give His only Son as the perfect sacrifice, Jesus here says that He **willingly** gives it.

Hebrews 12:2 says that Jesus **joyfully** went to the cross. Not because it was fun, but because He loves His sheep that He wanted to redeem and be restored to Himself forever!

Key Point: Let's revisit our flight to Hawaii illustration one more time.

Q: If you want to go to Hawaii, what do you need before they will let you on the plane?

A: A ticket!

Q: How much do you think a ticket to Hawaii costs? VERY expensive!

In the same way, to enter God's "eternal Hawaii", there is a cost for the ticket and it is way more expensive than a plane ticket to Hawaii. It's so expensive that you cannot possibly buy it on your own!

But Jesus's death on the cross paid that price in full! He now offers that ticket to everyone FREE of charge! We receive it by faith, trusting in Him as our good shepherd!

Is Jesus your shepherd? That means you are His sheep, you belong to Him, and you follow His lead! You know Him and He knows you!

Or do you just KNOW ABOUT Jesus?

John 10:27: Jesus says His sheep know Him and follow Him. We show that we are His by listening to Him and following His lead.

Follow Him this week by praying to Him every day.

Follow Him this week by spending time reading your Bible.

Follow Him this week by serving someone else because you care about them.

Follow Him this week by telling someone else about Jesus and the free trip to God's eternal Hawaii that He offers to them!

John 10:28: And know that this is a one-way ticket! Once you are His, you are His forever!

Bring It Home

(Devotional for the Family)

Lesson Theme: “Jesus: The Good Shepherd”

Scripture: John 10

Memory Verse: John 10:14 *“I AM the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me.” (NASB)*

Teachers/Parents: We launched into our study by discussing what kind of animal we would want to be if we could be any animal for a day. Discuss with your kids which animal you would pick and why. Then discuss why God might use sheep to describe His people and His relationship to them more than any other animal.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read **Psalm 100:3** which gives a very straightforward answer to questions everyone asks like, “Where did we come from? Who am I?” How does this verse answer those questions?
- 2) Read **John 10:9**. Did Jesus say that He is “a” door or did He say that He is “the” door? Why is this distinction important?
- 3) In **John 10:10**, Jesus says that He came to give life and that they may have it more abundantly. How would you describe the life that Jesus alone gives? Read **Psalm 23** for some ideas.
- 4) Read **Psalm 23:6** where David expresses his most eager desire to be in the presence of God forever. Does being with Jesus forever excite you like it did David? Why or why not?
- 5) Read **John 10:14**, which describes the intimate relationship Jesus has with His sheep. Jesus “knows” His sheep. In class we talked about the difference between knowing about Jesus vs. knowing Jesus. Come up with someone you all “know about” vs. someone you all truly “know” and discuss the differences in relationship between each person.
- 6) Read **John 10:27**. The primary way Christians “hear His voice” is through reading or listening to the Scriptures like you are doing right now. What are some practical ways that you can follow your shepherd this week?
- 7) Read **John 10:31**. Why did the Jewish people try and stone Jesus? What does this indicate about who Jesus actually is?