

John 10:11-28

“I AM The Good Shepherd”

Scripture: John 10:11-18, 27-28

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! It is closely linked to our lesson last week where Jesus said He was the door of the 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: A New Puppy!

Ask your kids to imagine they were going to bring home a new puppy tomorrow. How exciting that would be!

Q: What supplies would you need to buy to be ready for the new puppy?

A: Food, dishes, leash, collar, kennel, etc.

Puppies have a lot of needs don’t they! You would definitely need to be prepared. But you are going to need more than just some supplies, you are also going to need to be ready for some RESPONSIBILITY.

Q: What responsibilities would you have with the new puppy?

A: Feeding him, potty-training him, going for walks, taking him to the vet, etc.

Then share these key concepts:

- 1) Having a puppy is a huge responsibility! It is up to YOU to make sure the puppy is well taken care of. *
- 2) Back in Jesus’s day, they didn’t really have puppies, but they had sheep and shepherds.

Q: What was the responsibility of the shepherd?

A: To take good care of those sheep!

Jesus is going to use sheep and shepherds once again to teach us a very important truth not only about Who He is, but also who we are! Let’s take a look!

Bible Study:

John 10:11a: Here is the fourth I AM statement of Jesus. This is another one of those statements that was loaded with meaning to His audience. Let's go back to the OT for a minute to better understand what this means.

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. Even though David is a powerful king, he sees himself as a simple sheep who trusts in God to take care of him! *

So we see how 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 saying He 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**)

John 10:11b: But not only does Jesus take care of the sheep, He says He gives His life for them! We are going to talk about this some more in a little bit. *

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 run away 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: Wow! Remember Who Jesus is: God the Son! And yet He says He knows His sheep and they know Him. Is this a big deal or what? To say that God knows you and you know God?

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 10:15: This is now the second time that Jesus said He gives His life for the sheep.

Q: What does it mean to give your life for someone?

A: It means you love that person so much that you will do ANYTHING for them. You are more interested in THEIR good than your own good.

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

Q: What does **John 3:16** say? When it says God so *loved the whole world*, who is He talking about? Only Jewish people? Only white people? Only black people? No! Jesus invites ALL PEOPLE to come and be part of His flock. The "one flock" refers now to the church, where people from EVERY tribe, tongue, and nation follow Jesus!

John 10:17-18: Four times now Jesus has mentioned that He gives His life for His sheep. Do you think this is important if He says it four times? YES!

Q: How did Jesus lay down His life for the sheep? A: His death on the cross for sins!

But this fourth time He mentioned that He lays it down willingly!

Q: What are some things that you don't really like to do, but you do anyway because you were told to do them? A: 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** offers it. *

Hebrews 12:2 says that Jesus **joyfully** went to the cross. Not because it was fun, but because He LOVES His sheep and He wanted them to be with Him forever!

Key Point: Let's revisit our imaginary puppy that we talked about at the beginning.

You've had your puppy now for a few weeks and you are learning some responsibility. But maybe you are starting to get a little tired of all of the work taking care of him. *

Do you think Jesus gets tired of taking care of His sheep? NOPE! Even when they make mistakes and do dumb things like a puppy would do, Jesus still loves His sheep.

Is Jesus YOUR shepherd? Or do you just KNOW ABOUT Him? When you believe in Jesus, you become His. You belong to Him! You know Him and He knows you! *

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 every day, or reading your Bible, or showing kindness to someone else.

John 10:28: And know that once you are His, you are His forever!

Bring It Home

(Devotional for the Family)

Lesson Theme: “I AM The Good Shepherd”

Scripture: John 10:11-18, 27-28

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

Teachers/Parents: We got our lesson started by talking about puppies. Puppies are probably about as common to us modern Coloradans as sheep were to people in Jesus’s day! If you could have a puppy, what kind of puppy would you want to have? What might you name it? Discuss what would be the best part of having a puppy and what would be worst part.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) **Read Psalm 23.** We started our lesson looking at this famous Psalm. How does David see himself as stated in this Psalm?
- 2) **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?
- 3) **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?
- 4) **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.
- 5) Between **John 10:11** and **John 10:18**, how many times does Jesus mention that He loves His sheep so much He will lay His life down for them? If you are a believer in Jesus, how does it make you feel that Jesus laid down His life for YOU?
- 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?