

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

4 Year Olds

Sunday Morning

Study 13

I am the Good Shepherd

The Good Shepherd

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word.

Objective To teach that the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep, and that is exactly what Christ did for us.

Key Verses

John 10:1-18—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - John 20:31 (October Memory Verse)

“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

Hook

Have the students all gather together in one corner of the room. Tell them that they are sheep in their pen (You can rearrange tables to create a sheep pen if you like). Have all the students sit down and close their eyes. Tell them that all the teachers will take turns calling out instructions (hands on heads, stand up, touch your nose, etc.), but the students are only to move when one specific leader calls out instructions. If they move when a different leader speaks, they are out and have to leave the sheep pen.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In John 10:1-18 Jesus tells us two important points about sheep and shepherds. First, He says that the relationship between shepherds and their sheep is intimate. The sheep and the shepherd know each other so well that the sheep know the shepherds voice. They can tell the difference between the shepherd calling to them and the voice of a stranger.

The second point that Jesus makes is that there is an easy way to differentiate between a good shepherd and a bad one. When trouble comes, in the form of a wild animal or a poacher, the bad shepherd (hired hand) flees and leaves the sheep to defend themselves. A good shepherd, however, will put himself between the sheep and whatever is trying to harm them. A good shepherd will defend the sheep, even if it means being hurt in the process. Why does the good shepherd lay down His life for the sheep? Because good shepherd's love sheep, and don't want to see any harm come to them.

Jesus is the ultimate example of a Good Shepherd, because not only did He place Himself between us and the greatest peril that has ever existed, but He willingly laid down His life to save ours.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

Have you ever been in a crowded room or a shopping mall, and even though it was very noisy, when your parent or guardian called out to you, you could hear them? There is a special bond that people share with those that they love and trust the most. When Jesus tells us that He is our Good Shepherd, He is saying that His sheep know His voice.

How do you know your mom's voice? How do you know your grandpa's voice? The answer is that you spend lots and lots of time with them. Jesus wants to spend time with you! Jesus wants you to be so close to Him, to be such good friends with Him, that you know His voice. He wants you to be able to tell the difference when He is speaking to you and when an imposter is trying to lead you astray. In the same way that sheep run away from a stranger but follow their shepherd, Jesus wants us to follow Him and His voice, and run away from all the other things that are trying to get us to follow them. The reason that we should listen to Jesus and hear His voice is because the Shepherd saves and gives life, but the imposter, the thief, come only to "kill, steal, and destroy."

LOOK (Continued)

Another reason that Jesus is our Good Shepherd is because of what He tells us in verse 11: He “gives us His life for the sheep.” In the Old Testament, it tells us that when King David was a shepherd and bears and lions came and stole some of his sheep, David went and tracked down the lion and the bear and fought them in order to get his sheep back (1 Samuel 17:34). You and I were taken captive by something else, sin. Jesus chased us down and fought for us in order to have us back. Jesus did not run away and leave us in harm’s way. He came and rescued us.

In order for Jesus to save us He did something unthinkable. He laid down His life and died so that we could be set free and have life. But then, Jesus rose from the grave, and now He sits at the Father’s right hand in Heaven, waiting for us. David fought and conquered bears and lions, but Jesus fought and conquered death itself. Jesus is our Good Shepherd because He loves us, He wants to spend time with us, and He laid down His life, conquering death, when we were lost and in trouble.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Review the lesson by discussing ways in which Jesus is our Good Shepherd.

Pray: Thank the Lord for laying down His life for us. Thank Him for His desire to be so close to us that we know His voice. Praise Him for His work in saving us from death and offering us life.

Parent Question: What makes Jesus our Good Shepherd?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on John 10:1-18 by David Guzik

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

A. Contrast between the Good Shepherd and the false shepherds of Israel.

1. ([Jhn 10:1-2](#)) Jesus is the true, legitimate shepherd, who enters in the way that is proper and prepared.

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.”

a. **Most assuredly, I say to you:** This follows – at least thematically – in John’s gospel after the great conflict with the religious leaders regarding the man born blind. The religious leaders had shown themselves to be so unhelpful and cruel to the man, his parents, and the common people in general that Jesus felt it necessary to talk about the contrast between His heart and work as a leader to God’s people and the heart and work of many of the religious leaders of His day.

i. **Most assuredly:** “This is a phrase peculiar to the fourth Gospel, and it generally introduces a solemn asseveration about Jesus or his mission.” (Tenney)

b. **He who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber:** Political and spiritual leaders were often called *shepherds* in the ancient world ([Isaiah 56:11](#), [Jeremiah 31:5](#)). Jesus explained that not everyone among the sheep is a true shepherd; some are like thieves and robbers. One mark of their being **a thief and a robber** is *how they gain entry among the sheep*.

i. The idea is that there is a **door**, a proper way to gain entry. Not everyone who stands among the sheep comes that way. Some climb **up some other way**.

ii. The religious leaders gained their place among God’s people – the **sheep** spoken of here – through personal and political connections, through formal education, through ambition, manipulation, and corruption.

c. **He who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep:** A true shepherd comes in the legitimate and designed way: through love, calling, care, and sacrificial service.

i. God always intended that His people be led, fed, and protected by those who come in the legitimate, intended way. The **door** is there for a reason. Some will always climb over the barriers, but God has the barriers and the door there for a reason.

ii. “Whoever, therefore, enters not by Jesus Christ into the pastoral office, is no other than a thief and a robber in the sheepfold. And he enters not by Jesus Christ who *enters* with a prospect of any other interest besides that of Christ and his people. Ambition, avarice, love of ease, a desire to enjoy the conveniences of life, to be distinguished from the crowd, to promote the interests of one’s family, and even the sole design of providing against want—these are all ways by which *thieves and robbers enter into the Church*. And whoever enters by any of these ways, or by simony, craft, solicitation, &c. deserves no better name.” (Clarke)

2. ([Jhn 10:3-6](#)) The sheep and their shepherd.

“To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

a. **To him the doorkeeper opens:** In the spiritual picture Jesus spoke of, the door for the sheep pen had a **doorkeeper** – one who watched who came in and who went out. The **doorkeeper** knows the true shepherd and appropriately grants him access.

i. In towns of that time, sheep from many flocks were kept for the night in a common sheepfold, overseen by one **doorkeeper** who regulated which shepherds brought and took which sheep.

b. **He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out:** The shepherd calls the **sheep by name**, showing that the shepherd has a personal connection with the sheep. The shepherd **leads them**, providing direction and leadership – without *driving* the sheep.

i. “As we have names for horses, dogs, cows, so the Eastern shepherds for their sheep.” (Dods)

ii. “In my youth some shepherds in the Scottish Highlands not only called their individual sheep by name, but claimed that an individual sheep would recognize its own name and respond to it.” (Bruce)

iii. “In this Gospel, Jesus calls the following ‘sheep’ by name, Philip, Mary of Magdala, Thomas, and Simon Peter; and on each occasion it is a turning-point in the disciple’s life.” (Tasker)

iv. **And leads them out:** “It was the custom in the eastern countries for the shepherd to go at the head of his sheep, and they *followed* him from pasture to pasture.” (Clarke)

c. **For they know his voice:** In the common sheepfolds of ancient times, the shepherd merely gave his distinctive call and his sheep came out from the others, following him out of the sheepfold. Sheep are experts at discerning their shepherd’s **voice**.

i. “There is a story of a Scotch traveller who changed clothes with a Jerusalem shepherd and tried to lead the sheep: but the sheep followed the shepherds voice and not his clothes.” (Dods)

ii. During World War I, some soldiers tried to steal a flock of sheep from a hillside near Jerusalem. The sleeping shepherd awoke to find his flock being driven off. He couldn’t recapture them by force, so he called out to his flock with his distinctive call. The sheep listened, and returned to their rightful owner. The soldiers couldn’t stop the sheep from returning to their shepherd’s voice.

d. **Jesus used this illustration:** This is a picture both of the work of Jesus among His sheep and of what those who seek to serve among the sheep of Jesus should focus upon. Adam Clarke described six marks of the true and legitimate minister of God in these first six verses of [John 10](#):

- He has a proper entrance into the ministry
- He sees the Holy Spirit open his way as a doorkeeper to God’s sheep
- He sees that the sheep respond to his voice in teaching and leadership
- He is well acquainted with his flock
- He leads the flock and does not drive them or lord it over them
- He goes before the sheep as an example

3. ([John 10:7-10](#)) The true shepherd protects and promotes life; the false shepherds take away life.

Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

a. **I am the door of the sheep:** Jesus used another picture from sheep farming in His time. Out in the pasturelands for sheep, pens were made with only one entrance. The door for those sheep pens was the shepherd himself. He laid his body across the entrance, to keep the sheep in and to keep out the wolves. The shepherd was in fact the **door**.

i. “Primarily uttered for the excommunicated man, these words conveyed the assurance that instead of being outcast by his attachment to Jesus he had gained admittance to the fellowship of God and all good men.” (Dods)

b. **All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers:** *Thief* implies deception and trickery; *robber* implies violence and destruction. These take away life but Jesus gives life and He gives it **abundantly**. These are the con men and muggers of the spiritual world.

i. Alford sees the **all who have come before** basically to be those religious leaders who were actually tools in Satan’s hand – as Jesus told some of these religious leaders that their father was actually the devil. “Because the Pharisees are blind leaders, they are also bogus shepherds, and come under the category of those designated in [John 10:8](#) *thieves and robbers*.” (Tasker)

ii. “Jesus does not say that they ‘were’ but that they ‘are’ thieves and robbers. The emphasis is on His own day.” (Morris)

iii. “Manes (that made heretic) made an argument from this text against Moses and the prophets, as going before Christ. But Austin answereth, Moses and the prophets came not before Christ, but with Christ.” (Trapp)

iv. “*klephtv* [*kleptes*], and *lhsthv* [*lestes*], the thief and the robber, should be properly distinguished; one takes by *cunning* and *stealth*; the other *openly* and by *violence*. It would not be difficult to find bad ministers who answer to both these characters.” (Clarke)

c. **But the sheep did not hear them:** Jesus seems to say that *His* sheep are evident because they will not **hear** (follow after) the voice of the thieves and robbers who come after the sheep.

i. “They no doubt assumed authority over the people of God and compelled obedience, but the true children of God did not find in their voice that which attracted and led them to pasture.” (Dods)

d. **He will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture:** Jesus described the settled, satisfied life enjoyed by His sheep, those over whom He exercises a shepherd’s care.

i. **Go in and out:** “This phrase, in the style of the Hebrews, points out all the actions of a man’s life, and the liberty he has of acting, or not acting.” (Clarke)

ii. “To ‘go out and in’ is the common O.T. expression to denote the free activity of daily life. [Jeremiah 37:4](#), [Psalm 121:8](#), [Deuteronomy 28:6](#).” (Dods)

e. **I have come that they may have life, and they may have it more abundantly:** Jesus said this to contrast His shepherd-like care with unfaithful and illegitimate leaders. They come to **steal, and to kill, and to destroy**. Jesus comes to bring **life** to His people.

i. "The Greek word for 'abundance,' *perissos*, has a mathematical meaning and generally denotes a surplus... The abundant life is above all the contented life, in which our contentment is based upon the fact that God is equal to every emergency and is able to supply all our needs according to His riches and glory in Christ Jesus." (Boice)

- Abundant life isn't an especially long life
- Abundant life isn't an easy, comfortable life
- Abundant life is a life of satisfaction and contentment in Jesus

ii. "Life is a matter of degrees. Some have life, but it flickers like a dying candle, and is indistinct as the fire in the smoking flax; others are full of life, and are bright and vehement." (Spurgeon)

- Someone with a lot of life has *stamina*
- Someone with a lot of life has *increased energy*
- Someone with a lot of life has *a large sphere of living*
- Someone with a lot of life has *the ability to do things*
- Someone with a lot of life has *an overflow of enjoyment*
- Someone with a lot of life has *what it takes to win*

iii. Abundant life sheep give honor to the shepherd. They are a credit to him.

4. ([Jhn 10:11-15](#)) The good shepherd will lay down his life for the flock.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, *he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.*"

a. **I am the good shepherd:** Jesus said it so plainly there could be no mistake what He meant. He fulfills the ideal of shepherd-like care for the people of God as illustrated in the Old Testament and in that culture.

i. Jesus announced "Himself as the good Shepherd – the great antagonist of *the robber* – the pattern and Head of all good shepherds, as *he* of all thieves and robbers: the Messiah, in His best known and most loving office." (Alford)

ii. What Jesus described as a **good shepherd** is actually a very remarkable shepherd. Shepherds may take risks for the safety of the sheep, but it is probably rare to find one who would willingly die for their sheep.

iii. "In the Latin tongue the word for money is akin to the word 'sheep,' because, to many of the first Romans, wool was their wealth, and their fortunes lay in their flocks. The Lord Jesus is our Shepherd: we are his wealth." (Spurgeon)

iv. **Gives His life for the sheep:** "*He is giving his life still.* The life that is in the man Christ Jesus he is always giving for us. It is for us he lives, and because he lives we live also. He lives to plead for us. He lives to represent us in heaven. He lives to rule providence for us." (Spurgeon)

b. **Sees the wolf coming:** It was assumed that wild animals (**the wolf**) or bandits (*the thieves and robbers* previously mentioned) would threaten the sheep. The question was, "How will the shepherd respond?"

i. "The purposes of this **wolf** are the same as those of the thief in [verse 10](#), and in the allegory he is the same; – *the great Foe of the sheep of Christ.*" (Alford)

c. **The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep:** The bad shepherd (**a hireling**) will not defend the sheep and thinks the flock exists for his benefit, but the **good shepherd** lives and dies for the good of the sheep.

- The good shepherd sacrifices for the sheep (**gives His life**)

- The good shepherd knows his sheep (**I know My sheep**). We think of sheep as being all the same. The shepherd knows they are individuals with their own personalities and characteristics.

- The good shepherd is known by the sheep (**and am known by My own**)

- i. “There is a mutually reciprocal knowledge between Jesus and His sheep. And the existence of this knowledge is the proof that He is the Shepherd.” (Dods)

- ii. The faithful pastor will, as an under-shepherd, display the same characteristics as the Good Shepherd. He will sacrifice for the sheep, know the sheep, and be known by them. He will be a **shepherd** and not a **hireling** who **does not care about the sheep**. He can never hope to display these characteristics to the same extent as Jesus, but they should reflect his heart and his goal.

- iii. “How many there are of whom we have reason to fear that they must be hirelings, because, when they see false doctrine and error abroad, they do not oppose it! They are willing to put up with anything for the sake of peace and quietness.” (Spurgeon)

- iv. The title *pastor* translates the same ancient Greek word used here for **shepherd**. It is a title that is only rightfully earned, not granted or assumed.

d. **As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father:** The work of Jesus as the **Good Shepherd** was rooted in His close relationship with His God and Father.

5. ([Jhn 10:16](#)) Jesus speaks of other sheep.

“And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.”

a. **Other sheep I have which are not of this fold:** These **other sheep** are Gentile believers, not of the fold of Israel. Jesus said that He **must bring** these sheep also, who would also **hear** His **voice**.

- i. “Do not imagine that I shall lay down my life for the Jews, *exclusively* of all other people; no: I shall die also for the Gentiles; for *by the grace*, the merciful design and loving purpose of God, *I am to taste death for every man*, [Hebrew 2:9](#); and, though they are not of *this fold* now, those among them that believe shall be *united* with the believing Jews, and made one fold under one shepherd, [Ephesians 2:13-17](#).” (Clarke)

- b. **There will be one flock:** A **fold** of sheep is a part of the flock in its own structure or enclosure. A shepherd might separate the sheep into different groups to care for them better. There is **one flock** and **one shepherd**; but Jesus calls His sheep from more than one **fold** (group or structure of people).

- i. “Nothing is said of unity of organisation. There may be various folds, though one flock.” (Dods)

- ii. “What was to hold this enlarged flock together and supply the necessary protection from external enemies? Not enclosing walls by the person and power of the shepherd. The unity and safety of the people of Christ depend on their proximity to him.” (Bruce)

- iii. “The unity comes from the fact, not that all the sheep are forced into one fold, but that they all hear, answer and obey one shepherd. It is not ecclesiastical unity; it is a unity of loyalty to Jesus Christ.” (Barclay)

- iv. “All who are one with Christ have a certain family feeling, a higher form of clannishness, and they cannot

shake it off. I have found myself reading a gracious book which has drawn me near to God, and though I have known that it was written by a man with whose opinions I had little agreement, I have not therefore refused to be edified by him in points which are unquestionably revealed. No, but I have blessed the Lord that, within all his blunders, he knew so much of precious vital truth, and lived so near his Lord.” (Spurgeon)

v. The early Christian Bible translator Jerome, when translating his influential Latin version mistakenly translated *one fold* instead of **one flock** in this verse. His Latin Vulgate reading is the erroneous foundation for a doctrine of Roman Catholic exclusiveness.

vi. “In Jerome’s version, Jesus seems to be saying that there is only one organization, and the obvious deduction was that there could therefore be no salvation outside the formal organization of the Roman Church. This became official Roman teaching.” (Boice)

6. ([Jhn 10:17-18](#)) Jesus claims to have power over life and death.

“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”

a. **Therefore My Father loves Me:** God the Father saw the beauty of character and self-sacrifice in God the Son, and He loved the Son all the more because of it.

b. **That I may take it again... I have power to take it again:** In this sense, we can say that Jesus “raised Himself” from the dead. He had the power to lay down His life, and He had the power to take it up again.

i. “When any ordinary man dies he only pays ‘the debt of nature.’ If he were even to die for his friend, he would simply pay a little earlier that debt which he must pay ultimately, but the Christ was immortal, and he needed not to die except that he had put himself under covenant bonds to suffer for his sheep.” (Spurgeon)

ii. Anyone can lay down his life; only Jesus could take His life up again. Because Jesus has the power to take up His own life, it is evidence of His unique relationship with His **Father**.

iii. It doesn’t surprise us that Jehovah’s Witnesses deny that Jesus could take His own life up again. Yet many others (such as Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Fred Price and others) teach that Jesus was a helpless victim in hell, saved only by the intervention of God the Father.

c. **This command I have received from My Father:** The death of Jesus was completely voluntary, but it was not an indirect suicide in any sense. It was part of a plan to submit to death and then to emerge from it victoriously alive, according to the **command... received from** God the Father.