



ICEBREAKER: What is an area (sport, entertainment, band, media..) that is easy for you to follow? Why?

READ: John 10:1-31

“The desert is a desperate place. Our shepherd is skilled and courageous. If we remain under his leadership, if we recognize his voice, we will find safety and flourish. To make this come alive, I need to recognize the perilous environment of my life, my need of guidance, and the requisite skill that can tell the right voices from the wrong voices.”--Gary Burge, John (NIVAC)

CONTENT QUESTIONS

I. The Sheep :: Read John 10:1-6

“You may regularly go to a place of worship. You may have a full, devout set of doctrinal beliefs. You may be trying very hard to believe and obey God. However, what is your real, daily functional salvation? What are you really living for, what is your real--not your professed--god?”--Tim Keller, Counterfeit Gods

1. What are the two options for sheep (people) to follow? How do you (personally) discern if you are hearing from and following The Good Shepherd or a false shepherd?

2. Read 2 Timothy 3:1-17. What are attributes of people who one should not listen to (3:1-9)? What are attributes of people who one should listen to (3:10-17)?¹

3. What do you follow after as your functional savior, what is your real--not professed--god? (what/who do you follow for pleasure, significance, comfort, importance, advice etc.)

II. The Shepherd :: Read John 10:7-18

“The shepherd does not die for his sheep to serve as an example, throwing himself off a cliff in a grotesque and futile display while bellowing, ‘See how much I love you!’ No, the assumption is that the sheep are in mortal danger; that in their defense the shepherd loses his life; that by his death they are saved. That, and that alone, is what makes him *the good shepherd*.--D.A. Carson, The Gospel According to John (PNTC)

¹ Meditate on Psalm 23 to see the result of following the Good Shepherd

1. What are differences between Jesus (the Good Shepherd) and the false shepherds (7-18)?²
2. Where in your life (family, work, church etc.) do you see the impact of “the thief that comes only to steal and kill and destroy” and where do you see the effects of Jesus who came to bring unity and life (10:10, 16)?
3. Compare Acts 2:22-28 and John 10:14-18. Why did the Good Shepherd lay down his life (quote above too)? What was the result of him being raised? How can we respond (Acts 2:25-28)?

III. The Savior :: Read John 10:19-31

“Controversy and danger are certainly in the air in this passage. Often when we think of Jesus as the ‘good shepherd’ we imagine pictures of him with flowers in his hair, surrounded by happy children, with a few sheep to give the picture a pastoral touch....The reality-the real question he was talking about when he spoke of himself as the good shepherd-was and is very different. It was and is all about power and rule, about God’s kingdom and the world’s kingdoms, about God appointing a true king, not where there had been a vacuum waiting for someone to fill it, but where there had been too many kings, too many rulers, and all of them anxious and ready to strike out at anyone trying to stake a new claim.”

--Tom Wright, John for Everyone

1. What are the two responses to Jesus (19-21, 31)? What is the reason people reject him (25-26)?
2. What claims does Jesus make (27-30) that cause people to want to kill him (31)? Why (quote above)?
3. How do different people you know respond to who Jesus is? Where do you have unbelief about the claims of Jesus?

CONNECTING QUESTIONS

1. What do you practically do to learn, understand and know Jesus so that you can follow him and discern true and false teaching?
2. Where are you experiencing “abundant life” currently? Where are you feeling the effects of life destroyed?
3. What is one passage, thought or idea that stood out to you in this lesson? Why? How can the group pray for you to apply it to your life?

² See Ezekiel 34 on the difference between true and false shepherds