

**Sermon: He Came to Give Life****Text: John 10****Discussion Questions:**

Let's begin our discussion in John 10 by looking back at a very familiar passage of Scripture: **Psalm 23**. Have someone read the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm aloud for the group.

- The overarching metaphor that God uses in this great Psalm is that of a shepherd.
  - What do you think of when you think of shepherds?
  - What do you think of when you think of sheep?
- We're told in verse 1 that we (sheep!) lack nothing. Talk about this for a few minutes. What do you think it means that we lack nothing?
- Verses 2 and 3 describe what God—our shepherd—does for us. He makes us lie down; He leads me beside quiet waters; He refreshes our soul; He guides us along right paths. Talk about what these verses mean to us...and if YOU PERSONALLY have experienced God doing this for you.
- What do you think it means that God guides us along right paths FOR HIS NAMES SAKE? Why is it important to keep this in mind?
- We've all had experiences of walking through dark valleys (v. 4). What are the promises that God makes to us (His sheep!) that we need to hold on to while in the midst of those valleys?
- What's the difference between a rod and a staff—and why are both important tools in the hands of a shepherd?
- Verse 5 can seem a bit overwhelming, and possibly even a bit confusing. What do you think God meant when He said that He “prepares a table before us in the presence of our enemies”? What might this look like in our everyday lives?
- Anointing a person's head with oil is a very powerful symbol (v. 5). What are some things this can mean?
- We're told that God our shepherd goes ahead of us...to guide us and lead us (vv. 2-3). Here in verse 6, we're being told what *follows* us. What do you think it means that goodness and love will follow you?
- What comfort can we take from knowing that we will dwell in God's house forever?

**Examination:**

- Read **John 10:1-21**
  - Jesus is continuing His discussion with the Pharisees, after calling them “blind” in chapter 9. He introduces the concepts of the “sheep pen” and the “gate” in verse 1. Assuming the sheep pen is the Kingdom of God, and Jesus is the “shepherd of the sheep,” what do you think Jesus means by the “gate” in verse 2?
  - Much like Psalm 23, Jesus is now referring to Himself as the shepherd. Verses 3 and 4 talk about the “voice” of the shepherd—and the fact that the sheep know and follow his voice. What do you think Jesus meant by talking about this? What is it like to know and follow the voice of Jesus?

- Talk about the fact that Jesus “calls His own sheep BY NAME.”
  - In verses 7 and 9, Jesus is now explicitly calling Himself “the gate.” Who do you think He is referring to in verse 8—when he describes “all who have come before” Him?
  - Compare what Jesus says in verse 9, with what Jesus says in John 14:6.
  - Many Biblical scholars view John 10:10 as one of the most powerful and significant verses in the entire Bible. Why do you think they might say that?
  - In verse 11, Jesus makes another of His “I AM” statements. Exploring verses 11-15—what is it that Jesus DOES as the GOOD SHEPHERD?
  - Discuss verse 14 in light of what Jesus said in Matthew 7:21-23.
  - Who are the “sheep that are not of this sheep pen” (v. 16)?
  - Jesus points to a day when there will be ONE FLOCK—ONE SHEPHERD (16). When is that day?
  - Based on verses 17-18, whose idea was it for Jesus to come to earth to give His life as a sacrifice?
  - Wow—the responses to Jesus seem to put people into one of two VERY EXTREME camps. Some believe Him to be demon-possessed and “raving mad.” (v. 20) Others believe that He is truly GOD! Why do you think this is? Is it still the same way today?
- Read **John 10:22-42**.
    - Since John 7:1, Jesus has been in and around the temple courts during the time of the Feast of Tabernacles—which is equivalent to our Thanksgiving (fall harvest celebration). Verse 22 now informs us that Jesus is back in the temple courts for the Festival of Dedication—which we now call Hanukkah. What do you know about Hanukkah, and when in our current calendar would this have been?
    - Have someone in the group look up where, exactly, Solomon’s Colonnade would have been in the area of the temple grounds. Why do you think John gives us this very specific detail of time and place (Festival of Dedication—Winter—Solomon’s Colonnade)?
    - Jesus states in verse 25 that He HAS told them that He is the Messiah. When has He told them this, and how clear has He been? What works has He done that have corroborated these claims?
    - WHY don’t many of the people believe what Jesus says (v. 26)?
    - How important is it to understand that Jesus “knows” every one of His sheep, and that “no one will snatch them out of His hand.” Can we base the doctrine of security on this teaching?
    - Can Jesus be any clearer than He is in verse 30 with respect to who He is?
    - What is the response to this level of clarity (v. 31)?
    - Jesus is telling the people to “believe the works” (v. 38). Can we still use this “argument” today with respect to helping people come to faith? Does it work?
    - Why do you think John continues to inform us that “many people believed in Jesus” (v. 42)?

**Application:**

The HUGE question that this chapter ought to spark in us is: “Is Jesus MY Shepherd?” And if He is: “How am I doing at listening to His voice?” Pray these simple prayers: *“Lord, thank you for being my shepherd. Please lead me beside quiet waters. Give me your peace. Help me listen to you.”*