

Text in your attendance to # 208.904.3222 Message: Here

Text to give to Real Life, simply text your amount to # 208.515.7441

If you are new with us, text your attendance to # 208.904.3222 Message: New

## ***"I am the good shepherd" John 10:11-15***

If you know Jesus for who He really is, you will want Him to lead you as the good shepherd.

### **Who is the Good Shepherd?**

- He is not a novelty, painting on a wall or a lonely man in a field.

Colossians 1:15-20 (NIV) The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup> For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

- Image - the likeness, a reflection in a mirror. He is also the manifestation of God, God fully revealed in Jesus.
- He created all things and holds all things together, *He is supreme.*
- He is the good shepherd because *He laid His life down for His sheep.*

*"Under the old covenant, the sheep died for the shepherds; but under the new covenant, the shepherd died for the sheep" Warren W. Wiersbe*

John 10:11-15 (NIV) "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. <sup>13</sup> The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. <sup>14</sup> "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me - <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father - and I lay down my life for the sheep.

- Jesus calls Himself "the good shepherd" because He is the true shepherd in contrast to the false shepherds and hired hands who over centuries had exploited God's people.

Ezekiel 34:1-5 (NIV) The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who only take care of yourselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock?' <sup>3</sup> You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. <sup>4</sup> You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. <sup>5</sup> So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals.

- They were neglecting their responsibilities to God's flock and ruled harshly.
- God's sheep were scattered and God prophesied He would come to save.

Ezekiel 34:11-12 (NIV) "For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. <sup>12</sup> As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.

### **What does the Good Shepherd do for His sheep?**

Psalms 23 (ESV) The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. <sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. <sup>3</sup> He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. <sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. <sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. <sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

- I shall not want: Means sufficiency, provision and being utterly content at the same time.
- He makes me lie down: The only way sheep will lie down is if they feel safe, fed and free from pests and friction with other sheep.
- He leads me beside still waters: Fast water makes sheep anxious because they can drown easily; still water makes for safe drinking water.
- He leads me in the paths righteousness: Sheep need to be managed and led. If left alone they will graze in the same field until the grass is gone and they have destroyed the field. Their paths will turn into ruts and then gullies. If shepherds don't manage and lead their sheep well, they will become sick and their land will be destroyed.
- Even though I walk through the valley: If we let Jesus lead us in the paths of righteousness, He will be with us. Even though we will go through valleys and danger in life, He will lead us to the mountains of good grass.
- Your rod and staff comfort me: The shepherd used a rod and staff as equipment for the trade. The rod represents protection and discipline. The staff is used to *catch* and *guide* sheep, to *lift up* sheep. When used correctly, the staff offers both comfort and direction to the sheep.
- You prepare a table: In the spring, shepherds would go out in advance and plan where to graze the sheep. They would remove plants that were poisonous to the herd. They would strategically spread out salt and minerals for the sheep during the summer, and clean out watering holes for healthy nourishment.
- You anoint my head with oil: Flies and parasites present real health challenges for sheep. Flies imbed their larvae in the sheep's nose and cause great health troubles. Shepherds in the old days would use olive oil, sulfur and spices to prevent parasites from burrowing in their nostrils by treating the heads of their sheep.

## How shall we respond to THE Good Shepherd?

Psalm 23:6 (ESV) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

This is the natural response when we have experienced the goodness of Jesus our shepherd. We desire to dwell with Him.

- We thank Him!
- We praise Him!
- We obediently follow and listen to Him.

*Often our challenge is that we don't really want a shepherd. We want a consultant.*

**For Small Group Discussion:** Which "I Am" statement has been most impactful to you so far?

**Opening Question:** Have you ever had any interactions with sheep before? What was that experience like?

**Main Point:** Jesus is The Good Shepherd and His sheep have abundant life if we remain under His care.

**Main Scripture:** John 10:11-18 (Additional Scripture: Matthew 9:35-36, Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34:11-16)

**Questions:**

1. Do you know THE Good Shepherd? Have you yielded to His care for you? Do you see Him for who He really is?
2. What would it look like for you to begin to 'dwell' with Jesus as your shepherd? What are some of the differences between a hired hand and a shepherd?
3. How might you be able to tell if a sheep doesn't have a shepherd?
4. How do you respond when you hear the shepherd's voice? When is it easier for you to hear His voice? When is it difficult?
5. Read Psalm 23. What part resonates with you the most, and why?
6. What are things you do to intentionally remain in the care of the Good Shepherd?
7. Are you going through your own dark 'valley' now? Are you willing to trust Him to lead you through it? He will, but He can only do that if you remain close to Him and follow Him.
8. How can you personally help bring more sheep into the fold? What are some names God has placed on your heart?

**Tips and Resources:** *The Way of the Shepherd* by Dr. Kevin Leman

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked ESV are taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.