



FIRST LIGHT CHURCH

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Date: 10/30/22

Series: I Am

Text: John 10:1-10

BIG IDEA: Jesus is the door to eternal life.

ICEBREAKER: When was a time that you had an awesome experience because someone gave you special access?

CONTEXT: In Chapter 9, Jesus had just healed a man who was born blind and encountered opposition from the Pharisees. Next, the author, John, continues to share with us the teachings of Jesus concerning who he is and what his ministry is about. John is going to show us how a true shepherd cares for his flock and how Jesus is the only one who can lead us to eternal life.

PASSAGE: Have a volunteer read John 10:1-10.

DISCUSSION:

1. In this teaching, Jesus refers to a door and a thief. Who do they represent?
2. What do we learn about the thief in this passage? (verses 1, 5, 8, 10a)
3. What might be some of the reasons Jesus wants us to know there are thieves?
4. What does Jesus teach us about the sheep in verses 2-4?
5. How can we recognize Jesus' voice today?
6. What was Jesus communicating when he said that he is the door for the sheep?
7. What promises does Jesus give in verse 9, and why are they significant?
8. How does Jesus contrast himself with the thief?
9. How have you experienced what Jesus describes in verse 10?

APPLICATION:

10. How are you doing at following Jesus?
11. How does this passage change how you see Jesus?

K4 CONNECTION:

We have an enemy who wants to steal, kill, and destroy whatever he can in our community. He wants to destroy marriages, steal joy, and kill dreams, but we know a good shepherd who wants to provide an abundant life to everyone under his care. We go and share our faith in Jesus because we know that he is the only one who can give us what we truly want. The abundant life that those in our neighborhoods, our schools, and our workplaces want is found by coming to Jesus.

CARE AND PRAY:

- Thank Jesus for his care and protection in your life.
- Share any prayer requests with one another.

COMMENTARY

[v.1] What Jesus says in verse 1 creates a mental picture of a sheepfold. The flock has been brought into an enclosed space, surrounded by a fence or rock wall. Then an intruder breaches the idyllic scene of safety, climbing in rather than coming through the gate. That person is up to no good. He is a thief and robber, not a shepherd, who can move openly, freely, entering by the door.

Jesus is responding to the Pharisees. By refusing to acknowledge the power and glory of what Jesus did by giving the blind man sight, they show their purblind spiritual deformity. Worse, they show that they are not shepherds but thieves and robbers. They care not for the Lord's flock, the sheep of his pasture. They care only to indulge their own selfish rapacity, even if it means stealing and killing sheep.

[v.2] Jesus explains in verse 2 that the shepherd does not need to climb over walls and sneak around using intimidation and attempting to convince others that good things, such as giving sight to a blind man, are actually sinful acts. The shepherd can walk right through the gate. The difference between Jesus and his opponents is well stated by Proverbs 28:1: "The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion."

[v.3-5] Jesus goes on in John 10:3 to describe how both sheep and gatekeeper accept the shepherd. The gatekeeper opens to him, and the sheep recognize his voice. The shepherd has specific knowledge of which sheep belong to him. He has named them. He calls them by name. They willingly follow him. Imagine several flocks of sheep in a pen, each belonging to different shepherds. When one of the shepherds arrives and summons his flock, calling them by name, all the sheep will hear the voice of the shepherd. Only those who belong to that shepherd, the ones whose names he calls, respond to him. The metaphor continues in verse 4, as Jesus depicts the shepherd bringing out all of his own, going before them, and the sheep following him because they know his voice. The alternative is articulated in verse 5, where Jesus asserts that the sheep will not follow the stranger because "they do not know the voice of strangers."

Jesus is the Shepherd. The Pharisees and those opposed to Jesus are thieves and robbers. The sheep who hear the voice of Jesus, the ones he calls by name and leads out, are the sheep of his flock. The sheep who do not know his voice do not belong to him. Jesus is explaining why some in the crowd see him heal the blind man and believe that he is the Messiah and say so, even if it gets them tossed out of the synagogue (9:22), while others see him do the same thing and think he is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath (9:16). The sheep who belong to Jesus know the voice of Jesus, and they will not be misled by the voice of the Pharisees. All of this imagery, moreover, indicates that Jesus is the one who brings to pass the new exodus and return from exile. He will shepherd his flock all the way to the green pasture by still water in the Land of Promise.

[v.7-10] In verses 1–6, Jesus was clearly the shepherd, but in verses 7–10 Jesus names himself as the door, indicating that any true shepherd of God's people will enter by him.

When Jesus says that all who came before him were thieves and robbers (v. 8), he refers to the abusive leaders of the people in his own day and throughout Israel's history. Jeremiah castigated false prophets (Jer. 23:9–40), as Ezekiel did wicked shepherds (Ezek. 34:1–24). Obviously, the leaders

of God's people who honored and feared the Lord, men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other faithful men in Israel's history, are not included when Jesus condemns "all who came before me" as "thieves and robbers" (John 10:8).

The sheep, Jesus goes on to assert in verse 8, did not listen to the thieves and robbers. The true people of God will not be misled by charlatans.

The picture in verse 9 communicates the safety of the sheepfold. In order to be protected from wolves and thieves for a night of rest in the sheepfold, the sheep must enter through the door, Jesus. The sheep in the fold will be saved from danger. Similarly, to leave the fold and find pasture, nourishment, water, and exercise, the sheep must exit through the door, Jesus. In verse 10 Jesus again contrasts himself with the thieves, who only steal, kill, and ruin, while Jesus came to give life.

Commentary used from the ESV Expositors Commentary - John 10:1-10

WHERE'S THE GOSPEL

The sheepfold was commonly attached to the shepherd's home. Thus, to enter the sheepfold was to come home. As the "door of the sheep," Jesus is the only means of coming home to God—of becoming a member of the household of faith. Jesus is the merciful Shepherd who provides shelter, security, and pasture for his beloved sheep. The shepherds who preceded him in Israel's history were mercenaries—fleeing the sheep quickly when under threat; and fleecing the sheep regularly for personal gain.

Commentary used from the ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible - John 10:1-21