



FIRST LIGHT CHURCH

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Date: 11/06/22

Series: I Am

Text: John 10:11-18

BIG IDEA: Jesus lays down His life for us.

ICEBREAKER: What animal best represents you and why?

CONTEXT: In this week's passage, Jesus continues to develop the sheep and shepherd relationship. Jesus just identified Himself as the door of the sheepfold, and now He tells everyone that He is the Good Shepherd, the one who owns, cares for, feeds, protects, and lays down His life for His sheep.

PASSAGE: Have a volunteer read John 10:11-18.

DISCUSSION:

1. What does it mean that the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep? Why would He do that?
2. Who are the sheep?
3. What are the differences between the Good Shepherd and the hired hand?
4. Do you think Jesus had anyone particular in mind when He referred to the hired hand? If so, who?
5. In verses 14 and 15, Jesus used the word "know" multiple times. What does it mean to know someone?
6. Jesus said that just as He and His Father know each other, He and His sheep know each other. What does having that kind of intimate relationship with Jesus mean to you?
7. Who are the other sheep in verse 16?
8. In verse 16, Jesus said there would be one flock and one shepherd. What implications does that have for followers of Jesus today?
9. Why are Jesus's words in verse 18 so significant?

APPLICATION:

10. How does seeing Jesus as the Good Shepherd impact the way you relate to him?
11. Are you trusting the Good Shepherd to care for you?

K4 CONNECTION:

Jesus's desire is that his "flock of sheep" would be comprised of people from every tribe, tongue, and nation (Revelation 7:9). As disciples of Jesus, we must intentionally seek out those who do not know the Good Shepherd and share the good news of the Gospel message with them.

CARE AND PRAY:

- Thank God for how He cares for you.
- Pray for someone in your life who does not know the Good Shepherd. Commit to connecting with that person and having a Gospel-centered conversation with them.
- Share prayer requests with one another.

COMMENTARY

[v.11-13] Jesus states both that He is the “good shepherd” and what the good shepherd does: he gives his life for the sheep. The good shepherd does not steal, slaughter, or ruin the sheep for his own ends. Instead, the good shepherd sacrifices himself to protect and provide for the sheep. Jesus helps us understand the shepherd’s risk and resolve by showing how the hired hand flees danger (v. 12), leaving the sheep for the wolf to ravage. The hired hand cares for himself more than for the sheep (v. 13), unlike the good shepherd, who cares for the sheep more than for himself.

[v.14-16] Jesus characterizes the relationship between Himself and His sheep in the most intimate and fulsome way possible, comparing it to a relationship closer even than that between man and wife. He had spoken of the sheep’s knowing the shepherd’s voice in verse 4, and now in verse 14 He asserts that as the good shepherd, He knows His own and they know Him. The comparison Jesus uses in verse 15 beggars description and outstrips the possible: Jesus asserts that He knows His own and His own know Him “just as the Father knows me and I know the Father.”

The relationship between the omniscient Father and the omniscient Son is the ultimate example of shared personal knowledge between two parties. No shared history goes further back or contains more shared joy and grief than that between the eternal Son and His eternal Father. No emotions could be more sincerely felt or expressed than what the Almighty Father and Son feel for each other and communicate to each other. This is a relationship whose depths are unsearched by the most sublime expressions of art, music, or poetry. And this same depth of intimacy, Jesus declares, may be found in the relationship Jesus shares with His sheep, His people.

Jesus asserts in verse 16 that He has other sheep that are not of this fold, likely a reference to the Gentiles He will call to Himself in addition to the Jews He drew to Himself during His earthly ministry. There will be one flock under Him, and one shepherd, sharing a unity that goes beyond racial distinction, cultural background, or societal preference.

[v.17] Jesus explains why the Father loves Him: because He dies on behalf of the sheep and will rise from the dead. When we see someone make sacrifices for another, our respect and appreciation and esteem grows for the one making the sacrifices. Jesus seems to be saying that the Father loves Him because of the self-giving love Jesus will demonstrate for the sheep on the cross. When Jesus says that He lays down His life “that [he] may take it up again,” He speaks of His death and resurrection. Jesus will die, giving everything He has to give in His earthly life so that He can rise from the dead to a glorified and indestructible life. The Father’s love for Jesus multiplies from the Son’s delight in and agreement with this plan of salvation that He is willing to give everything to accomplish.

[v.18] Jesus makes it clear that this is not a mop-up job. That is, this explanation of His death and resurrection is not damage control. It is not that something has gone wrong and Jesus is attempting to make defeat look like victory. No, Jesus willingly gives His life. No one is taking from Him something He is attempting to keep. The statement at the end of verse 18, “This charge I have received from my Father,” applies to the two things Jesus says He has authority to do: lay down His life and take it up again.

The Father authorized the Son to go and die for the sheep. The Father authorized the Son to rise from the dead. The Father loves and admires the self-giving love of the Son.

Commentary used from the ESV Expositors Commentary - John 10:11-18

WHERE'S THE GOSPEL

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, whose “goodness” cannot be overstated. Like David, the shepherd-king, Jesus risks His life to care for His sheep (cf. 1 Sam. 17:34–37). He knows His flock by name, and each of His sheep recognize and love His voice. Though the gospel is not a private story, it is most definitely a personal one. Jesus delights in His whole flock and in each one of His sheep. Jesus’ flock and sheepfold is enormous, exceeding the borders of Israel. He has come for lost sheep from every tribe, language, people, and nation (Rev. 5:9).

But as the promised King, the greater David, Jesus literally laid down His life for the sheep on the cross. What a glorious paradox: The Good Shepherd became the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Even throughout eternity, Jesus will be known as the Lamb who shepherds His people and guides them to “springs of living water” (Rev. 7:17).

Commentary used from the ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible - John 10:11-18