

Week of November 22, 2021: JESUS AND HIS FLOCK

Discussion Questions Set #1

“When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice ... I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.” (John 10:4-5, 14-15)

In sermon, it was suggested that the Good Shepherd teaching of John 10 actually presents to us four important postures of Jesus towards His people – it reveals the invitational, relational, restorative and sacrificial posture of Jesus.

1. In sermon, it was suggested that Christ’s Good Shepherd imagery is contextual – fitting the culture at the time – but also spiritually profound – revealing significant truths to us even today. In reading this passage, what one or two things really stood out for you? Why does this imagery remain profound even in a world very different that the first century world?
2. Jesus’ invitational posture is shown by His calling of His sheep. Why is it important to understand that Jesus invites us to follow Him rather than forcing or coercing us to do so? Why is it important to note the expansive and gracious nature of Christ’s invitation (He call sheep from other pens)?
3. Jesus’ relational posture is shown by the expressed relationship in our text. Why is it important that Jesus reveals a relational knowledge of His followers? In sermon, we discussed that this relationship is possible because of Christ’s dwelling with us, in person prior to His death and now by the Spirit. Discuss the significance of Jesus’ choice to dwell with His people.
4. Jesus’ restorative posture is revealed in His choice to permit His flock to “come in and go out, and find pasture ... [and] have life, and have it to the full”. Why is it key to note that Jesus is interested in both our safety and security, and also about our well-being, vitality and health?
5. Jesus’ sacrificial posture is shown by His choice to “lay down [His] life for the sheep”. Why is it important to know that we have a Good Shepherd who not only chose to dwell amongst His flock – becoming “one” with the sheep, if you will – and not only to lead them toward complete restoration, but He does all of this by laying down His life for the sheep?

Discussion Questions Set #2

“Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (John 15:12-13)

Discuss what each of the following postures might look like if we were to mimic them in relation to (a) those within the church and (b) those outside of the church:

1. Invitational: Am I an inviting person? Do I share space well with others?
2. Relational: How willing are we to truly engage in “dwelling” relationship with one another?
3. Restorative: Are my relationships ones that urge others toward “life to the full, lie down in green pastures” experiences or are they ones that lean towards that which “steals, kills and destroys”?
4. Sacrificial: What might we might be willing to lay down or sacrifice – tangible things, preferences, desires – in order to see others built up in the name of Jesus. What of our life might we lovingly give for others?