

“I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD”

John 10:1–21 (ESV)

Key Verse: 10:11, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

1. Jesus continues this conversation immediately after the healed blind man was thrown out by the Pharisees (9:34, 40–41). According to verses 1–5, how do sheep distinguish between the true shepherd and a “thief or robber”?
2. Look at verses 3–4; note how the shepherd calls his own sheep “by name” and leads them out, going *ahead* of them. At that time, sheep from multiple flocks were put in one pen overnight. How does the shepherd’s voice serve as the sole way of separation? In our confusing world, how can we train our ears to listen to the voice of Jesus?
3. In verses 7–9, Jesus shifts the image to the door or gate. What double promise does he make to any sheep that enters through him? What does the phrase “go in and out and find pasture” mean for the daily security and freedom of the sheep? How do Jesus’ words here (esp. verse 10) help us come out of our anxieties about our performance?
4. Contrast the detailed descriptions of the hired hand and the shepherd in verses 11–13. What motivates each one when the wolf approaches? How does the concept of “ownership” alter the relationship between the leader and the flock? How might you be living like a hired hand, and how does a relationship with Christ change this?
5. Read verses 14–18. Jesus knows the sheep just as the Father knows him, and he sets his own destiny in laying down his life. Who takes his life from him (18)? Note verse 16: what is his ultimate goal for sheep outside “this fold”? How does knowing that Jesus laid down his life for you take away the pressure to perform in daily life?
6. Review how Jesus the door gives us security and salvation and how Jesus the good shepherd gives us guidance and the sacrifice of his own life. How can we change from self-reliant people to those who actively trust his shepherding care of us?