

Dr. Jerry Nelson and Dori Sear

The Good Shepherd

1. (v. 10:1-5) In verses 1-5, Jesus describes a scene and situation familiar to his listeners – the care of sheep. Don't spiritualize these verses until you have understood their literal meaning. In your own words describe the actual shepherding situation to which Jesus refers.

What does the thief do? What do the sheep do in response to the thief?

The watchman was apparently a hired under-shepherd who guarded the gate during the night. What does the watchman do?

What things does the shepherd do?

What do the sheep do in response to the shepherd?

2. (v. 10:6-10) Read Ezekiel 34 as background for all of John 10:1-21. Because the listeners didn't understand the points Jesus was making in verses 1-5, Jesus now explains his words in verses 6-17. But notice he doesn't confine his explanation strictly to the situation in verses 1-5.

To what, in the story of verses 1-5, does Jesus first compare himself? By going "through" him, what three results do the sheep gain?

What was the thief's purpose toward the sheep and what was the sheep's response?

Based on the earlier teaching of Jesus in the Gospel of John, what does "enter through" Jesus probably mean?

3. (v. 10:11-13) To what, in the story of verses 1-5, does Jesus now compare himself?

What does the shepherd do for his sheep? (Jesus will say more on this theme in verses 14-18.)

What is the "hired hand's" relationship to the sheep, what does he do and why does he do it?

What is the extent of Jesus' love for you?

4. (v. 10:14-16) To what, from verses 3 and 4, does Jesus now speak?

What specifically about the relationship of the sheep and shepherd does Jesus refer to?

Again what does Jesus say the shepherd does for his sheep?

Read Acts 1:8 - If the "sheep pen" refers to the Jewish people, to whom must the "other sheep" refer?

What is Jesus' desire regarding the "other sheep"?

What will the "other sheep" do and what will be the result?

Read Ephesians 2:11-18 - What are Jesus' intentions regarding Jews and Gentiles?

What implications for missions to do these verses have?

5. (v. 10:17-18) In John 14:15 Jesus said, "If you love me, you will obey my command." In verses 17-18 what is Jesus' relationship with the Father and why?

In what two ways does Jesus exercise authority over his own life? What is not true regarding the control of his life?

To what is Jesus referring when he speaks of "laying down his life" and "taking it up again"?

Read Romans 5:7-8. What is the astounding nature of Jesus' love for us?

6. (v. 10:19-21) How might Jesus' words in verses 17-18 have contradicted the popular understanding of what the expected Messiah would be like and do?

To what do some of the Jews attribute Jesus' words?

What is the counter argument of others and what previous experience with Jesus impressed them?

Personal Reflection

(v. 10:1) "The man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and robber." Does this thief exist today, and if so, who is he? What does he steal? What does he ultimately want?

