

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Acts 4:5-12

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. (v1)

1 John 3:16-24

John 10:11-18

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost & guide us into your fold. Feed us, & we shall be satisfied; heal us, & we shall be whole. Make us one with you, for you live & reign with the Father & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- John 10:11-18

[Jesus said:] ¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd & does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming & leaves the sheep & runs away—and the wolf snatches them & scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own & my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me & I know the Father. & I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, & they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, & I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. How does the Good Shepherd compare to the prophets’ shepherds? *See Jeremiah 10:21, 23:1-6, 25:34-36, 50:6; Zechariah 11:15-17, 13:7-9; Ezekiel 34:1-31*
2. Identify each of the parts in Jesus’ analogy: Good Shepherd, hired hands, wolf, the Father, the sheep, the other sheep, his voice, the one flock, laying down his life, taking it up again, the Father’s command (*see Matthew 26:26-46*).

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. It’s been said that Lutherans are devoted to the Good Shepherd like Roman Catholics are to the Sacred Heart. List at least 5 things that give you comfort & encouragement in each reading above.
4. Take a worship book or hymnal & see how many songs referencing this Gospel story you can find. Which of them do you like best? What specifically do you like best about them?

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. The funeral Commendation Prayer calls the deceased “a sheep of your [the Savior’s] own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming.” How does treating others not living in Christian community (i.e. congregations) as “other sheep” (v16) who haven’t heard the Shepherd’s voice yet (v16) change your perspective on evangelism & works of mercy, especially regarding your role?
6. Christian community is modeled on the connection between Jesus & his Father (v15); listening to his voice gives it unity (v16); they know each other as ones for whom Jesus died (vv11, 15); the love of God is shared through his death (vv17-18). How does this challenge your assumptions about congregational life & “membership”? How is Jesus’ death & God’s love evident in your congregation’s ministries? How does this all make it OK & healthy & good for you when you don’t get your way in the congregation? When your opinion doesn’t hold? When your wants aren’t addressed?

TLC

The good “gardener” tenderly loves & cares for his “vine”

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: I am the good shepherd.

The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (*v11*)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Jesus says, I am the good shepherd.

I know my own & my own know me. (*John 10:14*)

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