

light and following

John 10.1-21

Background: In the Old Testament the title shepherd related to the leaders of Israel (Kings, prophets) and most especially to God himself. It was fairly common place to refer to God as the Shepherd of Israel.

Read Psalm 23 and remember together some OT stories that remind you of God being the shepherd king of Israel.

Comprehension:

1. Jesus used a figure of speech - read John 10.1-6

What stands out to you? Is anything hard to understand?

2. Jesus explained his figure of speech – John 10.7-21

2.1 the gate and the thief - read John 10.7-10 (cf. 10.1)

What is the purpose of the gate? How is Jesus like the gate of a sheep pen? What two options do people face?

2.2 the good shepherd and the hired hand - read John 10.11-13 (cf. 10.2)

Here Jesus pinpoints two important aspects of the relationship between the shepherd and his people. What are they? Why is this GREAT NEWS! for sheep?

2.3 the good shepherd and the watchman - read John 10.14-15 (cf. 10.3)

Hosea 9.8 reads 'The prophet, along with my God, is the **watchman** over Ephraim, yet snares await him on all his paths, and hostility in the house of his God.' Why might this part of John's gospel remind you of John the Baptist? Who ultimately is the watchman who welcomes Jesus as the good shepherd?

2.4 the good shepherd and the followers - read John 10.14-18 (cf. 10.4-5)

What is the specific way that Jesus has 'gone ahead'? Jesus predicts a flock that comes from more than one sheep-pen, what does he mean? How is it that the voice of Jesus would continue to call his sheep after his death?

Think it through: Why would it have sounded to the original hearers that Jesus saw himself as being more than just another under-shepherd (more than just a human prophet or king) but actually God the Shepherd-King? Are you OK with that? Why/why not?

Application:

Share the implications that arise for you out of Jesus being the good shepherd.

How do his sheep follow Jesus today? How are you going at that?

Prayer: