

Small Group Guide: "Security in the Shepherd"

Based on John 10:22-42

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin by thanking God for holding us securely in His hands and ask the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and reveal areas where the group needs to surrender more fully to Christ.

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Question: What's one thing (besides God) that makes you feel safe or secure? It could be a routine, a place, a person, or even something quirky like Anthony's "corner claiming" when traveling.

Sermon Recap (5 minutes)

- The religious leaders demanded Jesus tell them plainly if He was the Messiah
 - Jesus had already told them repeatedly through His words and works
 - They were looking for a political savior, not a spiritual one
 - Jesus declared: "I and the Father are one" and "No one can snatch them out of my hand"
 - The security of believers rests in God's grip on us, not our grip on Him
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Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text (15-20 minutes)

1. **Why do you think the religious leaders kept asking Jesus to tell them plainly who He was when He had already done so many times?** What does this reveal about unbelief?
 2. **Read John 10:27-30 together.** What does Jesus say about His sheep? List all the characteristics and promises mentioned.
 3. **What did Jesus mean when He said "I and the Father are one" (v. 30)?** How did the religious leaders understand this claim (v. 31-33)?
 4. **How does Jesus' response using Psalm 82 (vv. 34-38) expose the hypocrisy of the religious leaders?**
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Personal Application (20-25 minutes)

5. **Anthony mentioned we often look for "practical saviors" in politics, circumstances, or other external things.** Where are you most tempted to look for security outside of Christ?
 - Career/financial stability?
 - Political outcomes?
 - Relationships?
 - Control over circumstances?
6. **"You are not holding on to God. He's holding on to you."** How does this truth change the way you view your relationship with God? What anxiety or fear does this address?
7. **Anthony said, "That thing you've closed your hand around most tight, that's the thing Jesus is coming for."** What is that thing for you? What makes it so hard to surrender?
8. **The religious leaders had "limits" with Jesus—areas they wouldn't let Him touch.** Be honest: Where have you drawn a line and said to Jesus, "This far, but no further"?

Going Deeper (15-20 minutes)

9. **Compare the religious leaders' response to Jesus with the "common people" in verses 40-42.** What was the difference in their hearts? What can we learn from this contrast?
10. **Anthony mentioned that Christians aren't "leaning against the cross" acting superior, but rather "on our face before King Jesus making room for others."** How does this image challenge the way we share our faith or view those who don't yet believe?
11. **How does knowing that "nothing can separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:38-39) impact how you face:**
 - Personal failure or sin?
 - Difficult circumstances?
 - Spiritual doubts or dry seasons?

Practical Application (10-15 minutes)

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Surrender Inventory

- Each day, ask God to reveal one area where you're clinging to control or security apart from Him
- Journal about it and specifically surrender it in prayer
- Share your progress with an accountability partner from the group

Option 2: Security Audit

- Make a list of things you turn to for comfort, safety, or security when stressed
- Evaluate each one: Is this a gift from God to enjoy, or has it become a functional savior?
- Bring your findings to God in prayer, asking Him to reorient your heart

Option 3: Gratitude for God's Grip

- Each morning this week, thank God specifically that HE is holding you
- Recall a moment when you felt like you "let go" of God—thank Him that He didn't let go of you
- Share your story with someone who might need encouragement

Key Takeaways

1. **Jesus has been abundantly clear about who He is**—the issue is never lack of evidence, but unwillingness to believe and surrender.
2. **We look for practical, political saviors**, but our greatest need is spiritual—freedom from sin and reconciliation with God.
3. **Our security is in God's grip on us, not our grip on Him**—nothing can snatch us from His hand.
4. **Jesus wants the things we cling to most tightly**—not to harm us, but because they're leading us to death.
5. **True believers come to Jesus humbly**, recognizing their need, not demanding He meet their expectations.

Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Share:

- Areas where you're struggling to trust God's grip on you
- Things you know you need to surrender but find difficult
- People in your life who are looking for security in all the wrong places

Pray specifically:

- For hearts that hear and respond to the Shepherd's voice
 - For courage to surrender the areas we've kept from Jesus
 - For friends and family who don't yet know the security found in Christ
 - For Awaken Church as it transitions to two services and seeks volunteers
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Looking Ahead

- **Next week:** Awaken begins two services (9:00 AM & 10:45 AM)
 - **Coming sermon series:** Vision, values, and mission focus leading to the annual meeting
 - **Serve opportunity:** Consider volunteering in Kids Ministry (once every 6 weeks rotation)
 - **Upcoming event:** Father-Daughter Dance (watch for ticket information)
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For Further Study

- **Read:** Psalm 82 (the passage Jesus quotes)
 - **Read:** Romans 8:31-39 (nothing can separate us from God's love)
 - **Reflect:** What other "I AM" statements has Jesus made in John's Gospel? How do they reveal who He is?
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"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand." - John 10:27-28