

THE TAKE AWAY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sunday, August 15, 2021

Message Summary

In this week's message, Pastor John Carter taught about how the shepherd guides and guards the flock under their care, in particular against false ideas, teachings and doctrines. Every believer – including you – needs to be under a shepherd and have access to the ministry gifts that can only be found within the body of the flock – the Church. Without them, you risk the potential of chasing every “new” thing that blows your way. The issue is that we live in a culture where we don't want to submit to authority, because we want to be our own authority. And correction from leadership has become hard to receive. But the Bible clearly says that one of the key roles your shepherd must play in your life is one of spiritual covering and authority. But this means you also have certain responsibilities as sheep! You must receive your shepherd into your life, and you must join your sheepfold. When you receive your shepherd, you willingly follow them. You follow their example, their authority and their guidance. And when you identify your sheepfold, you give yourself to them. You draw close into the fold and give yourself to the life of the Church. This is something only *you* can choose to do for *you*.

Key Scriptures:

- **[Ephesians 4:11-15 NKJV]** 11 And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ--
- **Read John 10:1-30** where Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd, and talks about the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep.
- **[John 10:14, 27-28 NKJV]** 14 "I am the good shepherd; and I know My [sheep], and am known by My own. ... 27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the shepherd's responsibilities to you, the sheep?
2. What are your responsibilities as a sheep?
3. Why do you think it is important to “receive” your shepherd into your life?
4. Why do you need to be part of a sheepfold?

Life Application:

This week as you study the key scriptures, consider what Pastor John said, “As members of the body of Christ, we need to know which part of the body (the Church) in our region we belong to. We need a sheepfold. We need to ensure that we are huddled in close to the safety of the sheepfold. Now, more than ever.” So the question for you this week is: Are you? Are you huddled in close to your sheepfold? Covid tried to separate us, to spread us out, but now we have the opportunity to draw in close again. Ask the Lord to show you this week what you need to do to draw closely back into the life of the sheepfold – the Church.