

Small Group Discussion Guide

"The Word Incarnate: Jesus, The Good Shepherd"

Based on John 10

Opening Prayer

Begin by asking God to illuminate His Word, give courage to apply truth, and build unity in your group.

Icebreaker Question

What's one area of your life where you find it easier to know what's right than to actually do what's right?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **The Once-For-All Faith:** God has been faithful throughout history in revealing His plan, sending His Son, and establishing His church.
2. **Jesus is the Good Shepherd:** He knows His sheep by name, they hear His voice, and no one can snatch them from His hand.
3. **Authority Over Death:** Jesus has the authority to lay down His life and take it up again —our greatest fear (death) is no problem for Him.
4. **Eliminating Gray Areas:** Often we don't lack clarity about what's right; we lack the courage to do what we know is right.
5. **Faith Seeking Understanding:** Knowledge of Scripture should lead to conviction, which drives our behavior and builds confidence, consistency, and courage.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text (John 10:1-42)

1. **Read John 10:1-18.** What are the key differences between the Good Shepherd and the thief/hired hand? What does this reveal about Jesus' heart toward His people?
2. **Read John 10:27-30.** What promises does Jesus make to His sheep in these verses?
3. The sermon connected John 9 (the healing of the blind man) with John 10. How does the story of the blind man illustrate the spiritual blindness and deafness discussed in the sermon?

Addressing the "Gray Areas"

4. The pastor challenged the idea of "gray areas," suggesting we often know what's right but lack courage to do it. Can you identify a "gray area" in your life that might actually be a clarity issue disguised as a courage issue?
5. What are the common reasons we create "gray areas" rather than following what Scripture clearly teaches? (Fear of rejection, financial concerns, social status, wanting to be liked, etc.)
6. In what relationships (marriage, parenting, friendships, workplace) do you find it hardest to speak truth in love? What specifically makes it difficult?

Application in Community

7. The sermon stated: "The issue is not always knowing how. For many of us, it may be we just don't want to do it." How can this small group help each other move from knowing to doing?
8. How can we as a church body better reflect the character of Christ in our community, even when it might cost us socially or financially?
9. The pastor mentioned that mercy, peace, and love need to be multiplied in the body of Christ. What would it look like for our group to multiply these qualities in our immediate circles?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Eliminate a Gray Area

- Identify one "gray area" in your life where you know what's right but haven't acted on it
- Pray for courage and take one concrete step toward obedience

- Share your experience with an accountability partner or the group next week

Option 2: Meditate on Your Security in Christ

- Read John 10:27-30 daily
- Journal about what it means that you cannot be snatched from Jesus' hand
- Note how this truth affects your anxiety, decisions, or relationships

Option 3: Practice Truth-Speaking in Love

- Identify one relationship where you've been avoiding a difficult but necessary conversation
- Prepare prayerfully, focusing on the character of Christ (grace, mercy, love)
- Initiate that conversation this week with humility and love

Prayer Prompts

Close your time by praying for:

- **Clarity and Courage:** That God would remove the "gray areas" and give courage to obey what we know
- **Each Other's Specific Challenges:** Share one area where you need courage to do what's right
- **The Church:** That we would be a people of conviction and character, living out Christ's love faithfully
- **Those Who Don't Know Jesus:** That we would shine light in darkness and lead people to the Good Shepherd
- **Marriages and Families:** For grace to speak truth in love in our most intimate relationships