



## WEEKLY STUDY

### Week 8

We continued our year-long series on the Book of John by turning to John 10:1-14. In this passage, Jesus is referring to sheep and a shepherd. In the illustration, Jesus spoke about a thief and a true shepherd. The sheep are smart enough to recognize both, but they will only follow the Shepherd. May that become more and more true for you this week!

Peace of Christ,  
Pastor Mark  
Lead Pastor of Discipleship

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this or your own prayer.

*Jesus,  
I listen for your voice. You speak. Help me to hear. I want to become deeply familiar with your ways so that my life will reflect you in the world around me.  
Amen.*

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## DAILY STUDY

### MONDAY: JOHN 10.1-14

*“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.<sup>2</sup> The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.<sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.<sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.<sup>5</sup> But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.”<sup>6</sup> Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.*

<sup>7</sup> Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.<sup>8</sup> All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them.<sup>9</sup> I am the gate; whoever enters through me

will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

<sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. <sup>13</sup> The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

<sup>14</sup> "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—

- Jesus uses the imagery of the sheep, the shepherd, and a thief. Even though we don't all have daily experience with sheep, we can understand the relationship between the sheep and the shepherd. Are you able to tell the difference between the voice of Jesus and the voice of one who is not Jesus? Do you see evidence that there is a thief who seeks to steal, kill, and destroy?
- *Jesus, today I listen for your voice. I want to follow you no matter where you lead me.*

## **TUESDAY: PSALM 23**

*The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.*

<sup>2</sup> *He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,*

<sup>3</sup> *he refreshes my soul.*

*He guides me along the right paths  
for his name's sake.*

<sup>4</sup> *Even though I walk  
through the darkest valley,*

*I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.*

<sup>5</sup> *You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.*

*You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.*

<sup>6</sup> *Surely your goodness and love will follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord  
forever.*

- David knew the shepherd life well. He recognized that God did all of the same things he did as a shepherd. He leads, he leads to green pastures, and he brings refreshment and comfort. Highlight the things that Jesus, the Good Shepherd does for you. Which of these things do you need most right now?
- *God, you are always with me. In every dark valley and in every green pasture. May your goodness and love follow me around!*

### **WEDNESDAY: 1 PETER 2.24-25**

*“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”<sup>25</sup> For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

- In the metaphor of the sheep, it is easy to see how we run around and go astray. We are so easily distracted and get lost out in the pastures of the world. But Jesus, the Good Shepherd, tracks down the lost ones. He comes looking for us. He pursues us like we are the most important thing to him. The only hope we have for rescue is to be healed by Jesus who took our sin to the cross—and he has come through. Now we can return to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.
- *Jesus, thank you for coming after me and offering me forgiveness. May I die to sin and live for righteousness today.*

### **THURSDAY: JOHN 1.9-14**

*The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.<sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.<sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—<sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.*

<sup>14</sup> *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

- In the message we heard that Jesus is personal. He has come to know us and be known by us. When he came into the world, the world did not recognize him even though the world was created through him. The sheep didn’t recognize the shepherd. But Jesus is persistent and when we read his words and listen to his voice, we can know and believe that he is the Son of God, the Savior of the world.
- *God, thank you for sending us the true light in Jesus Christ. Let me see his glory today, full of grace and truth.*

### **FRIDAY: MATTHEW 21.12-13**

*Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out all the people buying and selling animals for sacrifice. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves.<sup>13</sup> He said to them, “The Scriptures declare, ‘My Temple will be called a house of prayer,’ but you have turned it into a den of thieves!”*

- Jesus was aware of the thief who comes to steal, kill, and destroy. He was so tuned into the voice of the enemy that he could see him coming—even through the unjust operation of the money changers in the Temple. How do you discern the voice of the thief? What untruths have held you captive?
- *Jesus, give me eyes and ears to see and hear those things that distract me from a life of prayer and following you.*

## SATURDAY: ACTS 22.14-16

*“Then he said: ‘The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth.’<sup>15</sup> You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard.<sup>16</sup> And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.’*

- “You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard.” Ananias had spoken these words to Paul who was at the very beginning of his conversion. Paul had an encounter with Jesus that left him temporarily blind. Now he was being told that he would be a powerful witness for Jesus sharing what he had *seen* and *heard*. Can you imagine how he was paying attention to those two senses after his baptism? He was looking and listening for the work and words of Jesus. What if you had that same sense of anticipation?
- *Thank you Jesus for the opportunities to witness to what I have seen and heard from you. I dedicate my ears to every word from your mouth.*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

In this week’s message we heard,

“If you hear a voice in your suffering that says you don’t matter, that God doesn’t care for you, that is a lie from the thief. Be familiar with it. There is no voice from God that will say your suffering or you in your suffering doesn’t matter. The sheep don’t matter to the thief. When you hear you don’t matter, that is not the Shepherd, not Jesus.”

- Have you ever thought about the need to be able to identify the voice of the one who steals, kills, and destroys?
- What voices and messages have you heard in times of suffering?
- How will you pay attention to the voice of the Good Shepherd this week?