



BREAKING THE ICE

What has been your quarantine snack of choice these last few weeks?

What is one thing that has brought you comfort in the last few weeks?

MAIN CONTENT

This week Pastor Kevin talked about the Good Shepherd. We started the message reading through Psalm 23.

Take a minute and have someone read Psalm 23.

1. What verse is most comforting to you in this Psalm and why?

Even though we may not know any, shepherds have been around for years. Shepherds lead their flock but they also follow; they follow someone or something. They choose what they are listening to and following.

2. What is the strongest voice you are listening to in your life right now? For example, the news, friends, co-workers, God.

There is one voice we should all be listening to right now, God's voice. He wants to care for us, guide us and for us to know that He is here for us. His voice can overpower every other voice in our life.

God's voice is the most important voice in our lives. He gave His Son to come to Earth and be a voice in our lives and to be the shepherd for us to follow.

We've been studying the "I AM" statements of Jesus in the New Testament book of John. This week the statement, "I am the shepherd" and, "I am the gate" both come from John 10.

MAIN CONTENT

Take a minute to reread the passage from John 10:7-18

In this scripture, Jesus is describing how a shepherd protects and provides for the sheep and that He has laid down His life for us to protect and provide for us.

3. How have you felt God's protection and/or provision in the past? What about the last few weeks?

If we call ourselves followers of Jesus, that makes Jesus our shepherd and if He is our shepherd, we are His sheep.

Sheep like to wander and explore and can follow other sheep without thinking about it. Sheep are vulnerable creatures. Just like sheep, we are vulnerable creatures and if we aren't listening to the good shepherd, we are opening ourselves up to listen to other things. Things that can cause anxiety and remind us that we are not in control.

In the midst of everything we are going through, our souls need a shepherd. A shepherd to remind us that we don't have to worry about what is going on around us, that if we draw near to Him, He will give us peace and perspective.

4. What is your perspective right now?

God wants to give us everything we need to survive and thrive in the midst of our circumstances. The fear, panic and the enemy doesn't have a seat at your table.

5. What voices do you need to eliminate from your life to help you gain peace, comfort and a new perspective?

When we quiet ourselves and ask God to speak to us, He can do it in a variety of ways: through prayer, worship and reading the Bible. The more we sit quietly and listen to God, the more we hear His voice. It may not be a clear, audible voice we hear. It could be a scripture that penetrates our heart, a prompt to send a text, call someone or a prayer for something specific.

6. How do you hear God?

Not only are sheep vulnerable but they are also valuable. We are valuable. God is not OK with lost sheep.

We are worth pursuing. Jesus laid His life down for the sheep and you are one of his sheep. He pursues us when we are lost and confused.

7. Describe a time when you felt God pursuing you. What was that situation like?

Just like sheep, we all get lost sometimes. God knew we would get lost or stumble, that's why He sent His son, Jesus. Jesus came to pursue us, to have a relationship with us.

No matter what we have done, Jesus will always be there. He will continue to pursue us until we find a relationship with Him. He is the good shepherd who wants a relationship with **YOU**.

8. What is your current relationship like with the Good Shepherd? Where do you need to invest in your relationship with Him right now?

** If anyone in your group recently made a decision to follow Jesus, celebrate with them and say an extra prayer for them! Encourage them to text "LIFE" to 615-270-2428 so we can pray for them by name.

PRAYER

God, thank you for loving us and sending your Son as the good shepherd. We ask that you refresh our souls and give us peace and comfort. Help us follow you and hear your voice over the other things that attempt to distract us from the peace you give. Give us a fresh perspective of a life filled with your promises and provision. Help us draw near to you as you draw near to us, silence the distractions and give us hope for our futures. In Jesus' name, Amen.

ACTION STEP

This week take some time to sit quietly and ask God these three things:

1. What are you wanting me to learn right now? What are you teaching me?
2. What do you want me to do today? Is there someone you want me to pray for or to reach out to?
3. Where do I need to trust you?

Read Psalm 23. Thoughtfully ask God for the things He provides in this scripture. If it's helpful, write the scriptures down and place them around your house to remind you of God's protection and provision for you.