

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE GOD

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JOHN 10



Jesus, the good shepherd, is God, and is one with the Father in heaven.

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

Jesus is the shepherd – In this passage Jesus introduces the sheep/shepherd figure of speech. The Jews listening did not understand what He was saying. We need to be careful not to judge them too severely, as Jesus at first didn't even tell them who He was talking about.

Jesus is the gate – Not only is Jesus the Shepherd, He is the gate. The gate is the only way in. And, everyone who comes in through the gate will be saved. Jesus is the only way to eternal life! We can't work our way in, buy our way in, or sneak in.

Jesus claims to be God. Jesus goes on to say that He is not just the Shepherd, but the Good Shepherd. The Jews became impatient and demanded He tell them plainly if He was the Christ (no more shepherd talk!). That is when Jesus calls God His Father and tells them that He is one with the Father! The Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus because by declaring that He was one with the Father, He made Himself to be God. This was very serious claim, much like if somebody today told you he was God. It would have been blasphemous if it were not the truth – a truth they could not understand. To make things clearer, Jesus told them that He is the Son of God, God is His Father, the Father is in Him, and He is in the Father! They then tried to arrest Jesus, but He escaped! Jesus' description of His relationship with the Father in this passage is one of the passages that helps us understand the idea of the Trinity.

WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

John 10 is one of the clearest pre-cross explanations of the ministry of Jesus. The Gospel is explained throughout the entire shepherd/sheep analogy. Jesus says that He is the good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep. There is no mistaking the gospel here. Perhaps the most beautiful verse in the entire chapter is verse 18, where Jesus demonstrates His incredible love for us all. Jesus said that His death is His willing choice for His sheep. The Transfiguration showed that Jesus had not lost His awesome power. If He wanted to escape the cross, He certainly had the power to do so. But He chose, instead, to lay aside His power and willingly give up His life for us.

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ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

Bible Passage: Isaiah 45:17

Connecting the passage to Christ:

Isaiah prophesied the salvation of Israel when he said they would receive an everlasting salvation. Jesus said He came as the Good Shepherd to give eternal life to His sheep and that they would never perish (Read John 10:28).

Questions for reflection:

- Is there any everlasting salvation that could come any other way than through Jesus? (No. Jesus said that He alone was the door into the sheep pen.)
- This passage tells us that Israel will be saved. But it seems like the Jews rejected Jesus. How could this passage point to our salvation? (Paul tells us that Israel does not just refer to Abraham's natural descendants, but to all who would believe by faith Romans 9:6-8.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.



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ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

COUNTING THE PROMISES

Supplies:
white board

Read through this entire chapter and make a list of the promises we receive as the sheep of the Good Shepherd. Here are a few. You might find more!

The sheep know the shepherds voice – vs. 4

The sheep entering through the gate will be saved – vs. 8

The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep – vs. 11

The Good Shepherd knows His sheep – vs. 14

Jesus gives His sheep eternal life, and they will never die – vs. 28

No one can snatch the sheep away – vs. 29

- Draw the children out about the meaning of these and other verses.



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GOD IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE

Talk about John 10:38 and tell the children that this is an example of just how amazing God is. Ask them to describe to you how Jesus can be in the Father and the Father in Jesus. Or read John 10:30 and get them to explain to you how Jesus and the Father could be one when they are separate persons.

Note: Don't get into theological trouble. The point of talking about this is to help the children understand that we cannot fully understand God. He is holy and completely different than we are. In fact, what we understand about God is what He has told us!

One of the main assaults of some cults is to say that the word "Trinity" is not in the Bible as if believing in the Trinity is to believe something unbiblical.

God is infinite and incomprehensible, thus we cannot fully grasp His nature. But we do understand that the Father is God, the Eternal Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. These three enjoy total unity of essence. So we see in the Bible a tri-une (three-one) God. We use the word "trinity" because it is the best word we have to describe what God has said about his nature in the Bible.



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GUESS THE VOICE

Supplies:

tape recorder

Record the voice of some of the most prominent and well-known members of your congregation (members your children would know). Record them reading verses from John 10. After they read the verse, have them pause for five seconds, give a greeting to the class, pause for an additional five seconds, then give their name. Use the following verses:

John 10:1-3

John 10: 4

John 10:5

John 10:14

John 10:16-18

John 10:27 -28

All these verses talk about the sheep recognizing the voice of the shepherd. Keep score to see who can guess the most. Then ask the children the following questions:

- How can we hear the voice of the Shepherd today? (Jesus' words are recorded in the Bible for us to hear by reading His Word.)
- How can we follow the voice of the Shepherd today? (We need to follow what the scripture teaches. Of course, believing in the Gospel, the death and resurrection of Jesus, is the key.)
- Ask the children to point out the Gospel in this chapter.

PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.



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IN CLASS PROJECT

AN ACTIVITY

Supplies: pencil and paper

Draw a picture of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, caring for His sheep. Write the words of John 10:14 on your picture.

FOR THE OLDER GRADES

WHAT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT VERSE?

Supplies: pencil and paper

Assign the class to read the chapter and then make a determination as to what is the most significant verse and why. Then, after giving them some time to complete their answers, ask them to share their thoughts with the class. There is no absolute correct answer. However, Jesus mentions laying down his life four times in this chapter in verses 11,15,17, and 18. Repetition is often a way to bring emphasis. But again, there is no wrong answer.

(Note: If your students tend to be distracted with writing assignments, have them put their names on their papers and say you are going to show their parents their work. That can be a great motivator and, in the case of a student who does not take the lesson seriously, you can say you told them you were going to speak to their parents.)

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Trinity – The Trinity is the word we use to describe the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Though it is not found in the Bible, it is a word theologians have created to describe the mystery found in the Godhead. Simply put, God is three separate persons in one God. Each of the persons is equally God. Our little minds can't comprehend how you can have three persons but only have one God and how each of the persons is all of God. Jesus said in John 10:30, "I and the Father are one," and "the Father is in me, and I in the Father." It is statements like these that we cannot comprehend that have led us to make a term like "the Trinity" to describe our incomprehensible God.

