

**TO HELP US STUDY**

Jesus loved people, and he wanted them to know this. So he tried to help them understand by telling about shepherds and how they take care of sheep.

When Jesus lived, shepherds did not go home at night and leave their sheep alone in the fields. Instead they brought their sheep to a special sheep pen (called a *sheepfold* in older Bibles) so that the animals would be safe during the night. The pen had high walls and only one small door or gate where the sheet could go in and out. A single man could guard the gate to keep wolves and robbers out and to keep the sheep safe inside.

Often several flocks of sheep spent the night together in the same sheep pen. In the morning, when the shepherds came back to the pen, each one could call out the names of his own sheep and they would come out the gate. If a stranger called, they would not come. They came only when their own shepherd called, for they knew his voice and trusted him. Then they would follow the shepherd into the valleys to eat and rest and play.

After Jesus talked to the people about this, he said to them:

1. "I am the \_\_\_\_\_ for the sheep."
2. Is there any other way into the church or into heaven except through Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Then Jesus said, "I am the \_\_\_\_\_." (11)
4. What does the good shepherd do when the wolf comes or when any danger comes to his sheep? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What does a bad shepherd do when danger comes? \_\_\_\_\_
6. If a shepherd leaves his sheep unguarded, what does the wolf do? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Can you explain Jesus' words, "I lay down my life for the sheep"? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Jesus said, "There shall be \_\_\_\_\_ flock and \_\_\_\_\_ shepherd."

Because Jesus is the good shepherd, we know he will take care of us—just like the good shepherd keeps his sheep safe from wolves. Jesus will keep us from harm and even die for us to help us.

**TO HELP US REMEMBER:** Continue learning the names of the Old Testament books, going through *Daniel*.

**TO CHALLENGE TEEN THOUGHT**

How many songs in your church's hymnal are based on John 10 and Psalm 23? List them.

**TIPS FOR TEACHING PARENTS**

This lesson is different than usual, since we do not actually have a story. Instead we have a beautiful lesson Jesus taught. It is not a story, but it is a lesson all people young and old have loved. This is the type of teaching children love, especially small children. For it starts off with physical things—sheep and wolves and pens and gates and shepherds. From these physical things that children can easily understand we can learn the spiritual truth that Jesus takes care of us. How could Jesus have taught us this truth more forcefully?

**FOR ADULT STUDY:** Mt 10:30; 15:31; 2 Tim 1:12; Heb 2:17-18; 4:15; 13:20; 1 Pt 5:4, 7.