

KBC Christmas 2025

The Good Shepherd

Week 1 - Jesus is the Good Shepherd

Focal Passage: John 10:11-16 ESV

Purpose: Christians will celebrate Christmas in knowing Jesus as the Good Shepherd. May our Christmas celebration deepen knowing the Good Shepherd came for His people.

Series Graphic (SLIDE 1)

Opening Idea

The traditional nativity set includes the Jesus, Mary, and Joseph set in a stable. Some sets add animals like sheep, cows, donkeys, and camels. Others are more extravagant with wise men, angels, and even shepherds. Now, there can be debate about accuracy (wise men and shepherds visiting at the same time), but I think that we might be mistaken with how many shepherds are actually in the set. Maybe, we should actually see that there is one more shepherd than we usually acknowledge. More than just a baby in the manger, we can see that baby as a Shepherd. In fact, we can see that baby as the better Shepherd. Truth be told, the baby is the Good Shepherd!

This Christmas, let's look at Jesus' words about Himself. Who is Jesus? May God open our hearts and minds this Christmas season to know Jesus better and to celebrate Christmas a little deeper knowing Jesus better. I hope Christmas 2025 is a special year for you. Let's open to John 10 and begin our Christmas Season!

Read

John 10:11-16 ESV

(SLIDE 2) **11** I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. **12** He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. **13** He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. **14** I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,

(SLIDE 3) **15** just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. **16** And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

Series Graphic (SLIDE 4)

Notes on John 10:11-16 The Good Shepherd

Jesus is the Good Shepherd (v. 11)

Jesus reveals that He is the Good Shepherd. This revelation is given in context of an interaction with the religious leaders in regard to Jesus healing a blind man. The religious leaders cast the healed man out of the temple grounds. Jesus finds the man and the man believes in Jesus and worships Him. Jesus says that He came into the world that blind people might see and that those who see might become blind. This reveals Jesus' work to heal the blind man and his judgement against the Pharisees. Jesus teaches that the Pharisees are not legitimate shepherds but deceive the people to look like shepherds.

Then in verse 11, Jesus proclaims, "I am the Good Shepherd"! Where the others who claim to shepherd are selfish and deceive, Jesus is good because He cares for the sheep. The quality that separates Jesus from other shepherds is His goodness. What makes Him good? Jesus directly says that He will lay His life down for the sheep. Jesus is the only good person. Jesus' condition as good is because He is sinless making His heart good, His mind good, His motives good, and Jesus fully and willingly obeys God the Father. The goodness of Jesus means that He "lays down His life for His sheep." Laying down His life is seen in two ways. The first meaning of laying down His life is that He lays aside His ability to summon the full capacity of His deity to provide and protect Himself. He took on flesh and endured human suffering. He was born under an oppressive rule and would experience the full extent of human life. He would not relinquish His deity, but Jesus would not use His power to His full personal benefit. The second meaning of laying down His life would be a prophesy of the way Jesus would willingly die and endure God's full wrath for sin that Jesus did not commit. Jesus will lay down His life as a substitutionary atonement for His people's sins so that they would no longer be condemned and would receive the peace of Christ to life in peace with God the Father. Jesus is the only one who could do this because He is the only one who is good.

Jesus' identity as a Shepherd shows that He cares for His people. Jesus cares for His people in stepping down from Heaven to earth, taking on flesh, being born as a baby, suffering under Pontius Pilot, growing in wisdom and stature, suffering rejection and hatred from the world, revealing God in the flesh to God's people, healing, providing, teaching, living with, and proclaiming the Lord's favor to man. The shepherd who lives among, walks with, protects, provides, and leads the sheep shows that he cares deeply for His sheep.

The "Not Shepherds" (v. 12-13)

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, so then there are other shepherds. What shows Jesus as the Good Shepherd also shows why others are not good, nor are they actually shepherds. Jesus calls them "hired hands". These people are workers who have other concerns that are greater than the sheep.

They are more concerned about the job than the sheep. The shepherd owns the sheep, and the sheep belong to him. The hired hands do not own the sheep. There is no great impact for losing the sheep. The life of the hired hand is more important than the life of the sheep. Jesus gives a scenario where a wolf shows up, and the sheep are in danger. The hired hand cares more about his own life than the sheep. Jesus says that the hired hand will leave the sheep to the wolf. The wolf harms the sheep and there is no one to protect them because the hired hand is gone. This behavior shows that the hired hand cares nothing for the sheep. This is in direct contrast with the shepherd who values the sheep over his own life. The good shepherd lays down His life for His sheep.

Intimate Shepherding (v. 14-15)

Jesus, once again, identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd. He will say that His goodness is revealed in His willingness to lay down His life for His sheep. But Jesus adds another aspect to His goodness. There is a familiar relationship between the shepherd and the sheep. Jesus says that He knows His sheep. The knowledge the shepherd has of the sheep is intimate and personal. He knows their name and their condition. Jesus, God the Son, knows all things about all people. Being God, He knows everyone past, present, and future. But Jesus uses a personal possessive pronoun. He refers to the sheep as “my own”. The sheep that Jesus is referring to are sheep who belong to Him. Since these sheep belong to Jesus and He knows them, they also know Him. This is an unclear reference to what degree or depth the sheep know the Shepherd. Nevertheless, the shepherd’s sheep know him, so Jesus knows His people and they know Him. Jesus then gives a reference point to understand the knowledge Jesus has for the sheep. The shepherd knows the sheep just as God the Father knows the Son and the Son knows the Father. This is the most intimate and deepest form of knowing that exists. There is no greater depth of knowing or loving what exists between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. From this depth of knowing, God the Son lays down His life for the beloved sheep from knowing the Father and loving Him. It is love that causes the shepherd to lay down His life for His sheep.

One Flock with One Shepherd (v. 16)

The earlier insight into the perfect knowledge the shepherd has about the sheep in terms of time is clarified in verse sixteen. This is an encompassing idea for all who belong to God. There are not multiple flocks that will exist separately from one another, but they are unified in the shepherd to be one flock. This is aligned with Jesus’ statement to come in John 14:6 where Jesus will say that no one comes to the Father except through Him. This one flock that Jesus refers to here isn’t identified by the sheep, but by the shepherd. The sheep may differ in place, time, and appearance, but there is only one shepherd. It is the shepherd who is responsible to unify the flock and only he can do it. Jesus says that the sheep who belong to other flocks at some time

will be brought into the shepherd's flock. The way the sheep know the shepherd is that they know his voice. Again, this shows that the only way the sheep are unified into one flock is through the shepherd. The sheep recognize the shepherd's voice, and they respond to it. One Shepherd with one flock of sheep!

Celebrate Christmas – The Good Shepherd is Born! (SLIDE 5)

Jesus Came for You - His sheep (SLIDE 6)

Christmas reminds you that you were scattered and lost

Jesus is the Good Shepherd and He Came for You

Beware of the “Not Shepherds” (SLIDE 7)

There are people who look like shepherds, but are not the Good One

You have been affected by the Not Shepherds

The Not Shepherds point you to the Good Shepherds

Seek the One Loving Shepherd (SLIDE 8)

Begin each day searching for the Good Shepherd

Talk about the Good Shepherd

Worship the Good Shepherd daily

You are part of One Flock (SLIDE 9)

You belong to a greater flock – you need the Shepherd's sheep

You are not alone – The Flock is Dynamic

There are more to join

The flock is identified by the Shepherd, not the sheep

Christmas Response (SLIDE 10)

- You Need the Good Shepherd and The Good Shepherd Comes for You!

- Think and Talk about Jesus as the Good Shepherd
 - Use Candy Canes for your table centerpiece this year to think about and guide your family discussions about Jesus as the Good Shepherd
 - **Candy Cane Image (SLIDE 11)**

Read

Isaiah 40:9-11 ESV (SLIDE 12)

9 Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!” **10** Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. **11** He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom and gently lead those that are with young.

Series Graphic (SLIDE 13)