John Series X

Jesus is the Good Shepherd

March 13, 2015

I. WELCOME, 15 mins.
Prepare a couple of easy, fun and dynamic icebreaker games to get your group warmed up. Help your cell members to put aside their busy & stressful life. Prepare their minds to come before God.

II. WORSHIP, 20 mins.
Prepare a few songs that help to bring your members to come to the throne of God. As you worship, help your members to encounter with God and experience God’s presence. During this time, the cell leader should also lead the group to pray aloud for the following prayer items:

A. MISSION ORGANIZATION: __________________, and their needs are: __________________
(Please contact the church if you don’t know the needs of the mission organization.)

B. CHURCH MINISTRY:
 3/18 Bi-Weekly Prayer Meeting
 3/28 Men’s Breakfast
 3/29-6/7 Love & Logic Parenting Class
 4/3 Good Friday Service
 4/5 Easter Sunday Celebration

C. Newcomer: __________________ Identify newcomers before cell meeting.
Sick members, friends or relatives: __________________ Please also discuss how you may show your cares to them.

III. WORD, 45 mins. By sharing God’s word, the group may discuss how you may apply it in everyday life.

A. Sharing message from last Sunday’s sermon: (Try and listen to the sermon online once again.)
   1. What is the key message from last Sunday sermon? What did God talk to you through the message?
   2. How would you respond to the message? What action will you take after listening to the message?

B. Discussion Topic: Jesus is the Good Shepherd
Scriptures: John 10: 7-18
Memorizing Verse: The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (10:10)

The Scripture often uses the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep to describe our relationship with the Lord. The true shepherd loves and cares about his sheep. The Prophet Ezekiel reproached the Israelites that the shepherds of Israel only know to take care of themselves, but in fact, they ate the curds, clothed themselves with the wool and slaughtered their choice animals, but did not take care of the flock, God’s people. Therefore, they were not true shepherds. (Ez.34:2-6)

During Jesus’ time, the Pharisees always regarded themselves as God’s assigned shepherds. Nevertheless, they expelled the blind, (who were one of God’s sheep) which Jesus healed, out of the synagogue on the Sabbath day. They didn’t care for (God’s people), His lambs, let alone loving them. They completely misrepresented the title of ‘shepherd’. Today, we would like to review what Jesus had said and try to comprehend how Jesus is the true shepherd and the good shepherd.

1. Jesus is the gate for the sheep (10: 7-10):
   A) Save the sheep (10-7-9a): Jesus said, “I am the gate for the sheep.” Frequently, Scripture refers to God’s people as, ‘the sheep of His pasture.’ Note that the gate used here is singular, meaning there is only one gate to enter to the sheep pen. There was only one way into the pen and the same way, or gate, led out of the pen. There is no other way we may enter into the kingdom of God without going through Jesus, the gate of salvation. This does not mean that the sheep pass in and out of the Lord’s provision as they please, but rather they choose to stay in the security and safety of Christ.
   B) Find pasture for the sheep (10:9b): The Lord Jesus not only gives us salvation, he also knows our needs. He looks after us and provides our needs. Likewise, we should also have faith to seek God’s kingdom and his righteousness, and then we will be able to receive His rich provision. (Matt. 6:33)
C) **Give the life of the sheep to the full (10: 10)**: The thief came to grab all the valuable things from you, but the Lord is the good shepherd. He comes to “give” – not just to give you an eternal life, but to give you a life in abundance. The word, “abundance” is *perissós* in Greek, meaning beyond what is anticipated, exceeding expectation. “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.” (Col. 2:9) As such, however much you have in the Lord, however much abundance you will have in your life.

2. **Jesus is the good shepherd, not a hired hand (Jn. 10: 11-15):**
   
   A) **Good shepherd cares about the need of the flock (10:11-13):** The relationship between God and us is a life connection. The Lord cares about the need of the flock even before the sheep recognizes its master. For example, Jesus healed the man who had been lame for 38 years and the man who was blind from birth. Jesus is not a hired hand, as the hired hand expects to get paid, not to give out love. Jesus genuinely cares for us.

   B) **The good shepherd knows his sheep (10:14):** Jesus loves each and every sheep who belongs to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. He knows each sheep’s voice, and every sheep should learn to know more about its master, to love him more, and to follow him more closely.

   C) **The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (10:15):** Jesus is willing to lay down his life for the sheep. Not only God the Father’s will, but his true love has been shown to all the sheep in the world. (Jn. 3:16). Jesus accomplished his redemption for us. He also pleaded before God the Father to grant the Holy Spirit to those who believe in him. The Holy Spirit will always reside in the believer, because Jesus will never forsake his sheep. The model of God the Father and Jesus the Son is the model of the shepherd and the sheep.

3. **The Lord Jesus also cares about the sheep outside of the sheep pen (10: 16-18):** The sheep inside of the sheep pen refers to believers, as they have passed through the sheep gate. The sheep outside, are the unbelievers. Nevertheless, Jesus said, they are also his sheep! Jesus is not only the shepherd of the sheep inside, but the sheep who are outside. He is patient with us, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. Today, Jesus is still telling all of his disciples to, “go and make disciples of all nations, baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matt. 28:19-20)

**Discussion:** (Please pick the questions that are suitable for your cell group’s needs.)

1. What is the biggest difference between working for a boss in a company and working for your family?
2. Jesus said I am the good shepherd. What is your understanding of Jesus as the good shepherd?
3. What’s the difference between a good shepherd and a hired hand?
4. What is abundant life? How do you get it?
5. The life of our Lord Jesus is a life of giving. Since we all are Jesus’ disciples, we should all follow Jesus’ example. Think, what can I give to my cell group? To those who aren’t believers yet, what can I give them?

**Prayer:**

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you. You are our good shepherd, so we don’t have any wants. You not only gave us a renewed life, but an abundant life. Lord, help me to become more humble so that I may learn to know you more and love you deeper. Help me to be willing to experience your loving heart towards the lost sheep, so that we may also love our brothers and sisters. Give us a willing and eager heart to bring those who have not known you before you. May they also accept an abundant life from you. Thank you, Lord, for listening to our prayer. In Jesus precious name, AMEN!

**IV. WORK (Pray for each other), 10 mins.**