

LIFE Group Leader Handout

April 15, 2018

God's Infrastructure, Part Two--Security

Pastor Mike O'Connor

Scripture--John 10:1-22 (verses 7-18 shown)

7 So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. 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, 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. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

Main Idea--The Good Shepherd Protects and Provides for His Sheep

Jesus, the Door and Good Shepherd of the Sheep:

#1 A Voice you will follow

- *Am I listening?*

#2 A Shepherd who stands His ground

- *Am I on His ground?*

#3 A Grip like no other

- *Am I in the grip of grace?*

Application (all Scripture is from John 10)

- Read verses 11-18. What do we learn about Jesus, and how does that contrast with others? What personal lessons can we take from this?
- Can you share a confirming testimony--in this case, a time when you wandered from the fold. How did you see Jesus the Good Shepherd act on your behalf during that time?
- In the past two weeks' messages, there has been emphasis on listening. Looking at verses 3-5 and 27 & 28, is it more likely that we are listening and God is not speaking or that God is speaking and we are not listening? What have been the results as you have been more aware of God's voice and your need to hear it? Has your time in the word of God or how you spend that time changed at all? Has your prayer time changed?

4 MARKS OF AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY

By Bill Donahue

The first is ***to know and be known***. I call this *storytelling*, some people would call this self-disclosure, but the idea is to open up my life to you, you open up your life to me. You know we have a deep desire to be known and it's important to know other things stand in the way; there are barriers.

It's usually fear. Fear of being misunderstood, fear of being ashamed that my story isn't valuable or maybe I'd bring some hurts and wounds from the past and you can't accept them. Or when you hear about those you say "Whoa, what is that about you?" so I'm worried you'll judge me. Maybe I've had bad experiences in relationships in the past. So lots of fears or barriers might be in the way, but our deep desire is to be known and to tell a story to others and to hear their stories so that we can know them better. So carve out a place and some time to know and be known. Community doesn't happen quickly, and if we can devote some extended time to telling our stories and getting to know each other it's a boon to building community.

A second is ***to love and be loved, to express love and receive love***. Gary Chapman's [Five Love Languages](#) book, years ago picked five areas we can do that in. With words, because some people are words people they need to hear or see in writing that you care about them, that you appreciate them. Some people are touch people, they need a hug or a handshake or a punch in the arm or something but that touch is important. It says "I connect with you, I care about you and I know you care about me. ". For some it's gifts, actual tangible things, "Hey, here's the book I want to lend you" or "I heard this great music on this CD I want to give you". Something that makes them feel loved and cared for. Service is another one. Just doing acts of service, serving others, doing little things to encourage them and lift them up. And then finally time, just spending time together is another way to say "Hey, I care about you. I'm glad you're in my life".

A third one is ***to serve and be served***. To use our gifts, abilities and talents for the sake of the people in our group and outside our group in the world around us, and to be served by people that want to serve us appropriately. That exchange builds a sense of bonding and encouragement

And then finally ***to celebrate and be celebrated***. Everybody loves to be affirmed and encouraged. I have to think today, "How can I affirm and celebrate and encourage others in my group, on my team, in my world?".

So, take some time to know and be know. To think of some ways to express love and receive love. To use aspects of your gifts, talents and abilities. To serve, and be served in return. And then be thinking..."How can I encourage someone today?"