

Getting Practical:

Many times I find myself being a goat. For many years I was proud of being a goat and even quietly boasted in it. It's difficult being in a community with other broken and messed up people. Sometimes we come to believe that doing things on our own will be more beneficial to everyone. We probably don't outwardly reject the community, but in a sense that is exactly what we're doing. Let me personally tell you that this belief has many holes in it. These holes lead to many problems that arise when we are without accountability, encouragement, proper equipping, and a unified message being proclaimed to the world. **We can't be goats in the Great Shepherd's flock.**

Community

- Think of some areas where you may have resisted listening to the voice of the Great Shepherd. Confess these areas to Him, and discuss these areas with another sheep that can help you think of tangible ways to stay accountable to staying a sheep.
- Think of people in your community that seemingly desire to be sheep. Think of ways to invite them to join in this journey with you.

Read Luke 12:22-48:

- "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, **so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness**; by his wounds you have been healed. **For you were like sheep going astray, but now have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls!**"

*May we be thankful and respond to the call of our Great Shepherd

Don't Miss

- Look at the "Love Your Neighbor" section in the weekly bulletin
- The Four Corners Offering during June is for Kids Food Basket.
- Stop and pray this week for those in our community who are hurting

Ezekiel 34 "God's Sheep"



EverGreen
Ministries
June 13, 2010

message notes:

- Dependent

- Confident

Explore the Story, Discover Your Life **A Study for Small Groups and Individuals**

Remembering – “God’s Sheep”

- Look at your message notes. What part of the message made you wonder, want to know more, held particular meaning for your life, or just caught your attention?

Being Shaped by the Text: Ezekiel 34

In chapter 34 we see that God is not pleased with how the shepherds (leaders in their community) have been leading their sheep (Israel). There will be consequences for them and also the sheep they lead. However, God speaks of a day when the Great Shepherd will restore and lead His sheep.

- In verses 1-6 we see the failures of the shepherd being highlighted. What are these failures? Remember to view this through the given imagery (shepherd/sheep).
- God spends the rest of the chapter explaining how he will rescue his sheep from the hand of these shepherds. How is he going to accomplish this?

Digging Down: Goat, Sheep, & Shepherd

Read John 10:1-17

Jesus fulfills this concept of a divine shepherd in Ezekiel 34. It’s important for us to understand the imagery used within the John passage, because even the people listening to him didn’t understand (v6). In order to do this we need to understand the difference between a shepherd, sheep, and goat...yes, a goat.

Read Matthew 25:31-46 to help explain the next section.

**Read This - Shepherds are usually younger teenagers who have the responsibility of watching, feeding, and protecting their flock which typically consist of goats and sheep. The sheep are huddled behind their shepherd, and they follow him wherever he walks. It is rare to see a sheep that has wandered from his shepherd. Goats are a pain in the butt! They typically do whatever they want and scatter all around the countryside. Goats pose many problems for their shepherds. They act differently than the sheep, and they find it difficult to listen to the shepherd’s voice.*

Questions to Discuss – Goats...

*What does Jesus say regarding the goats in Matt 25:41-46? How is this different than what he tells the sheep in v34-40?

*“They typically do whatever they want and scatter all around the countryside.” In what ways do we do this in our lives? How have we left community? Why do we “go it alone?” What do you feel are the dangers in this attitude?

Questions to Discuss – Sheep...

*How, as Jesus’ sheep, do the ideas of us “knowing” his voice (John 10:14-15) connect with the actions of His sheep in Matt 25:34-40? Is it possible to “know” and not respond?

*Notice that sheep gather together as a flock...What does this tell us about community and following our Great Shepherd? How can we be better sheep within the flock?

Questions to Discuss – Shepherd...

*As totally dependent sheep, we are to listen to the Great Shepherd’s voice. What is His voice saying to us? What parts of his voice are we listening to? What parts are we not?

*According to Ezekiel, our Great Shepherd will cause us to be “showers of blessing” to the world...What does this look like, and is it happening?

EXPLORE!