



# Believe

JOHN

MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

## Community Group Material:

*Bible Reading: John 10:14-18; 22-30*

**Bible Reading:** John 10:14-18; 22-30 NRSV14

I am the good shepherd. I know my own & my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me & I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, & 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 in order to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, & I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.' (10:14-18) 22 At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 & Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. 24 So the Jews gathered around him & said to him, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.' 25 Jesus answered, 'I have told you, & you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; 26 but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. 27 My sheep hear my voice. I know them, & they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, & they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. 30 The Father and I are one.' (10:22-30)

### SUMMARY:

Jesus' metaphor of the Good Shepherd reveals his sacrificial love for his followers. His declaration about willingly "laying down his life for the sheep" highlights his unwavering devotion. This metaphor also alludes to the emerging Trinity. In John's Gospel, "Good Shepherd" applies to both Jesus & God the Father, underscoring their joint role in safeguarding believers unto eternity. This addresses fundamental questions for many Christians: "Can one forfeit their salvation?" "If one were to falter in faith, would God abandon them?" "Does our eternal destiny hinge on a lifelong commitment to faith?" In this context it's vital to recall our rebirth into God's family; we are God's beloved children—not mere

servants or slaves. Our status as God's children is immutable; it transcends performance-based evaluations. This enduring bond cannot be revoked or altered; therefore, we can be assured of eternal salvation.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Consider Jesus' saying about "other sheep" (other Jesus' followers) "not of this fold": "I have other sheep that don't belong to this fold. I must bring them also, & they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd." (10:16)
  - a. For us today, in 21st-century Toronto, in CIT what might these "other sheep" look like?
  - b. Based on this, what should be our attitude & actions towards newcomers to CIT? Discuss.
2. Jesus said: "I give [my sheep'/believers] eternal life, & they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand... [or] the Father's hand" (10:28-29). According to John's Gospel:
  - a. What does this imply about our eternal destiny? Is it guaranteed or uncertain? Is it conditional on our living? Discuss.
  - b. What if a Christian believer denies the Lord/'walks away from Jesus,' will this affect their eternal destiny? Discuss.
3. John 10:27-30 are among the "strongest verses" supporting the idea of "eternal security" ("Once saved always saved"). Are there other NT verses which (appear?) to contradict this teaching? If so, what are they? Discuss.
4. How would you help someone who says "Initially I was 'on fire for Jesus,' I read my Bible & prayed daily, I attended Christian meetings & witnessed for Christ. But, in recent months I haven't done any of those things. I feel distant from the Lord & I'm conscious of my sins...".
  - a. "Am I still saved? Or am I 'lost'?"
  - b. "Have I 'gone too far' away from the Lord?" Is there a way back? (If so, what is it?)
5. How would you help someone who says: "I believed & received Jesus when I was young, but then I 'gave up being a Christian' for many years. Now I've decided to return to Jesus." They want to know:
  - a. "When I was away from Jesus, was I still 'saved'? Or did I 'lose my salvation'?"
  - b. "Do I have to start my Christian life all over again from 'square one'?"
6. Jesus said: "What my Father has given me [the sheep/his flock] is greater than all else, & no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand" (10:29).
  - a. What does this suggest about our value in God's sight? Are we "worthless sinners saved by grace"? Or are we God's "treasured possession"? Discuss.
  - b. How should this influence our view of ourselves & others as believers/followers of Christ?