

## REFLECTION GUIDE

### JOHN 10:16-29 | THE ONLY TRUE SECURITY

#### KEY TERMS

**One flock / one shepherd** - In verse 16, Jesus mentions *other sheep* before stating *there will be one flock, one shepherd*. This is a reference to Jesus creating a new people of God made up of both Jews and Gentiles who have looked to him as Savior and King.

**Christ** - The term *Christ* (or "Messiah" in Hebrew) means something like "Anointed One." In Jesus' day, many Jews were looking for a *Christ/Messiah* to come to rescue and restore God's people. This hope was built on many Old Testament passages including Daniel 9:25, Zechariah 9:9, Isaiah 53:5, and Micah 5:2, and more.

**Eternal life** - In the New Testament, *eternal life* (v. 28) refers not only to the duration, but also the quality of life that is available in Jesus. In verse 28, Jesus emphasizes the duration aspect when he says *they will never perish*.

#### SYNOPSIS

After identifying himself as *the Good Shepherd* who will *lay down [his] life for the sheep* (vv. 14-15), Jesus continues with the metaphor and says, *I have other sheep that are not of this fold*—a reference to his welcome of Gentiles into the people of God (v. 16). Jesus then once again foreshadows his death (*I lay down my life*, v. 17), but he wants his audience to know that he is going to do this willingly and that everything that will happen to him is God's will. At this point, some think he *has a demon*, while others push back and say that someone with a demon could not heal the blind (vv. 19-20; Jesus healed a blind man in John 9 just prior to this discussion).

Verse 22 signals a likely shift in time and setting, although not in theme. John's Gospel is arranged literarily, not chronologically, and what John seems to be doing here is putting together two instances where Jesus used the same imagery. In this section, the crowd asks Jesus to tell them plainly if he is the *Christ*, and Jesus again points to his *works*—which are works that only God can do (vv. 24-25). The reason they don't believe, according to Jesus, is that they *are not among [his] sheep* (v. 26). Jesus' true sheep, on the other hand, receive *eternal life* and *will never perish* (v. 29).

#### GOING DEEPER

Read Romans 8:38-39 and Psalm 23:1-4. Jesus promises that no one can snatch his sheep out of his hand (John 10:28). How do these passages help you trust in God's care and security? In what areas of your life do you need to rest in this truth rather than live in fear or uncertainty?

#### DID YOU KNOW?

In verses 28-29, Jesus says that no one can snatch his sheep out of his hand or the Father's hand. In the ancient Near East, a shepherd's hands symbolized protection and strength. With this image, Jesus emphasizes both his divine power and the complete safety of his people that rests upon him and not human effort.

## **REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

### **JOHN 10:14-29 | THE ONLY TRUE SECURITY**

#### **LEARNING THE WORD**

1. Read John 10:14-29. Make 3-5 quick observations. What is the main idea? What stands out to you?
2. In verse 24, Jesus is put on the spot with a provocative question: "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." What is the nature of their inquiry? Why do they feel Jesus is holding out on them?
3. In verse 25, Jesus responds to the question above (from verse 24). Where does Jesus place the blame for their lack of understanding?
4. Through this passage, we see a division between two groups of people (or sheep). What benefits come to the sheep who belong to Jesus? In other words, how many good things can you identify in these verses that come to Jesus' sheep?

#### **LIVING THE WORD**

5. What are some of the ways that people in our world determine what is true and what is false? What criteria do *you* apply to determining reality in your life?
6. Jesus points to his 'authority' in making his claims in these verses. What is the nature of his authority and how does it influence the way he establishes his identity?
7. In these verses, Jesus says four times that he will "lay down his life for his sheep." In Scripture, things are often repeated for emphasis, so this is important to comprehending what Jesus will do for this sheep. What do we learn from the fact that Jesus' death was (a) voluntary, (b) according to the Father's plan, and (c) could be taken up again?
8. Verses 27-29 offer some of the greatest encouragement possible to Christians. What is Jesus teaching us about the security of the believer? How should this reality influence your spiritual life?