

Like Serpents and Doves (1/21/24)

Main Verses: Matthew 10:16

Key Verses: Matthew 10:16

'Takeaway': In a spiritually dangerous world, Jesus calls those who follow him to be clever when it comes to doing what is right, so we might remain innocent when it comes to doing what is wrong.



Getting Started: Have you ever gotten into trouble for doing what was morally right?

READ: Matthew 10:16 (or have older kids help read).

Some **QUESTIONS** to consider:

Toddler/PreK:

- Why does Jesus refer to us as sheep?
- What does it mean to be “wise as serpents”?
- What does it mean to be “innocent as doves”?

Elementary:

- What does it mean that we live in a spiritually dangerous world?
- Why does Jesus refer to us as sheep? Where is he sending us?
- What does it mean to be “wise as serpents”?
- What does it mean to be “innocent as doves”?

Here are some **IMPORTANT IDEAS** we discover in these verses:

- Those who follow Jesus are often referred to as his sheep. We are dependent on him for everything, & he is a good Shepherd who always takes care of his own.
- In Jesus' culture, snakes were often thought of as shrewd or clever. Jesus calls us to do what is right, being smart about people & the world..
- But instead of being dangerous like snakes, we should also be as “innocent as doves”, so no one can accuse us of moral wrong-doing.
- In a world where we are like sheep among wolves, we honor God most & help people best when we are like both snakes & doves.

Elementary:

- There are many different belief systems in the world. We have to guard against them at all times, & remain rooted & grounded in the truth of God's Word.
- Those who follow Jesus are often referred to as his sheep. We are dependent on Him for everything, & he is a good Shepherd who always takes care of his own.
- In Jesus' culture, snakes were often thought of as shrewd or clever. Jesus calls us to do what is right, being smart about people & the world..but to do it in a gentle & smart manner.
- But instead of being dangerous like snakes, we should also be as “innocent as doves”. Jesus calls us to do what is right, but to also remember to follow him in all things, so that no one can accuse us of moral wrong-doing.
- In a world where we are like sheep among wolves, we honor God most & help people best when we are like both snakes & doves.

An **ENCOURAGEMENT** in light of God's Word:

(Toddler/PreK) Talk to God. Thank him for his Word & his presence which we can know thru faith in Jesus. Thank God that he provides for all our needs. Ask him to teach you as you grow in him to be clever like a snake in a gentle & smart manner. Ask God to also teach you to be innocent like a dove - doing what's right, following & honoring him in all things.

(Elementary)Talk to God. Thank him for his Word & his presence which we know thru faith in Jesus. Thank him for providing for all our needs. Ask him to teach you to be clever like a snake in a gentle & smart manner. Ask God to also teach you to be innocent like a dove - doing what's right, following & honoring him in all things.