

## The Shepherd's Rescue (8/13/23)

**Main Verses:** Ezekiel 34:10-12

**Key Verse:** Ezekiel 34:12

**'Takeaway':** While human leaders can fail us, God, like a good shepherd, will never stop caring for his flock, for those who belong to him through Jesus.

**Getting Started:** What does a good shepherd do?



**READ (or have older kids help read):** Ezekiel 34:10-12 (also perhaps John 10: 11-15)

Some **QUESTIONS** to consider:

Toddler/PreK:

- According to these verses, what does a good shepherd do?
- How does God care for his flock like a good shepherd? In Ezekiel 34:15 who does God say he is?
- In John 10:11, what does Jesus say the good shepherd does?

Elementary:

- How are the descriptions of a Good Shepherd in Ezekiel 34 and John 10 alike? Who is the Good Shepherd? (Ezekiel 34:15 and John 10:14)
- What does the Good Shepherd do? Why is that such good news for us?
- In John 10:11 Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." What does this point us to?

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

Toddler/PreK:

- The people needed a new, good shepherd because the previous ones had treated them badly and did not obey God.
- A good shepherd takes care of his sheep by seeking the scattered, gathering them close to him, and feeding them.
- God, our Good Shepherd, does all of these things, as well as keeping us safe through faith in Jesus. Human leaders may fail us, but God never will.
- In Ezekiel 34:15 God declares that he himself will shepherd his sheep. He sent Jesus, his Son so that through faith in Jesus (entering through the "gate"), we can live with God forever, safe in his loving arms.

Elementary:

- The people needed a new, good shepherd because the previous ones had treated them badly and did not obey God.
- A good shepherd takes care of his sheep by seeking the scattered, gathering them close to him, and feeding them.
- God, our Good Shepherd, does all of these things, as well as keeping us safe through faith in Jesus. Human leaders may fail us, but God never will.
- In Ezekiel 34:15 God declares that he himself will shepherd his sheep. He sent Jesus, his Son so that through faith in Jesus, we can live with God forever, safe in his loving arms.
- Faith in Jesus means believing that Jesus died on the cross for our sins and was resurrected on the third day so we can live forever with him. It involves: (1) **admitting** that we have lived me-centered lives instead of God-centered ones; (2) **believing** that Jesus is our only hope for forgiveness, freedom, and life forever with God; and (3) **committing** ourselves to following Jesus' loving leadership.

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

(Toddler/PreK) Talk to God, thank him for being our Good Shepherd. Thank God that he will always care for his flock through Jesus. Ask him to teach you and help you to live the way he wants you to live through faith in Jesus.

(Elementary) Talk to God, and thank him for being our Good Shepherd. Thank him that no matter what happens in our lives, or what human leaders do, we can know that he will always care for us through faith in Jesus. Ask God to search your heart and help you to live in the way he wants you to live through faith in Jesus. You may want to **admit** that you have lived a me-centered life instead of a God-centered one. You may want to tell God you **believe** that Jesus is your own hope for forgiveness, freedom, and life forever with him, and then to **commit** yourself to following Jesus' loving leadership. If you pray something like this, or have questions about it, please talk to a trusted adult.