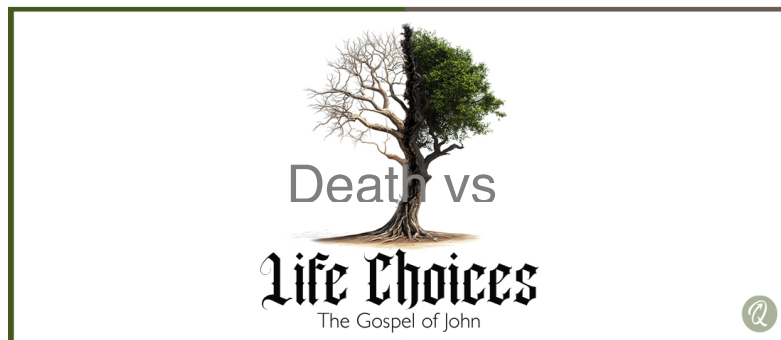




- Faith in Jesus brings us close to Jesus and into the care of Jesus.

1 "Anyone refusing to walk through the gate into a sheepfold, who sneaks over the wall, must surely be a thief! 2 For a shepherd comes through the gate. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice and come to him; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 He walks ahead of them; and they follow him, for they recognize his voice. 5 They won't follow a stranger but will run from him, for they don't recognize his voice." 6 Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn't understand what he meant, 7 so he explained it to them. John 10:1-7

7 "I am the Gate for the sheep," he said. 8 "All others who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. 9 Yes, I am the Gate. Those who come in by way of the Gate will be saved and will go in and out and find green pastures. 10 The thief's purpose is to steal, kill and destroy. My purpose is to give life in all its fullness. 11 I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:7-11

Psalms 23:1; Psalm 100:3 & Psalm 79; Ezekiel 34:11,15; Ezekiel 34:31; Isaiah 40:11

The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. John 10:11

12 A hired man will run when he sees a wolf coming and will leave the sheep, for they aren't his and he isn't their shepherd. And so the wolf leaps on them and scatters the flock. 13 The hired man runs because he is hired and has no real concern for the sheep. 14 "I am the Good Shepherd and know my own sheep, and they know me..." John 10:7-14

Modern-day application:

- Just because "pastor" is your title doesn't mean Jesus is your lord.

The corruption of some is not an indictment against all church leaders.

11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. Ephesians 4:11-12

I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding. Jeremiah 3:15

The Bible provides guardrails:

Leaders must have proven character (1 Timothy 3:1-7)

Accusations must be handled carefully (1 Timothy 5:19)

Sin must be confronted openly (1 Timothy 5:20)

What Jesus is saying:

- The heart of the good shepherd loves and cares about you.

But the warning is this:

- There is an enemy that loves and cares about himself.

I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep... John 10:7

The agenda of the enemy is this:

- You can have salvation without Jesus.

All of our righteous acts are like filthy rags. Isaiah 64:6

- He wants to steal your relationship with Jesus.
- He wants to kill the Life that God has promised you.
- He wants to destroy everything that you were created to be and do.

The love of your Shepherd:

- You have a shepherd who knows you personally.

The shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. John 10:3

I know my sheep and my sheep know me. John 10:14

- You have a shepherd who cares for you constantly.

- You have a shepherd who has proven His love for you sacrificially.

The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. John 10:11

You were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 2:25

No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. John 10:18

Because the Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need! He lets me rest in the meadow grass and leads me beside the quiet streams. He gives me new strength. He helps me do what honors him the most. Even when walking through the dark valley of death I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me, guarding, guiding all the way. You provide delicious food for me in the presence of my enemies. You have welcomed me as your guest; blessings overflow! Your goodness and unfailing kindness shall be with me all of my life, and afterwards I will live with you forever in your home. Psalm 23

VISION:

TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions that can be used in Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

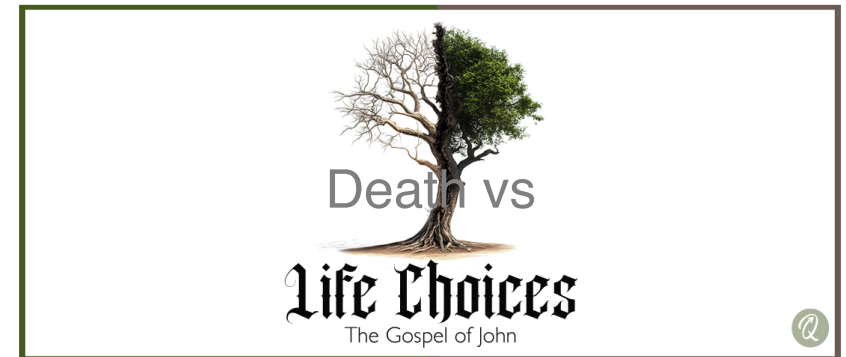
- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain.
- What are some practical ways we learn to recognize the voice of Jesus in everyday life, and how do we discern it from other "voices" around us?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the only gate to salvation, and how does that challenge the idea that we can reach God through other paths or good works?
- Where have you seen the enemy try to steal, kill, or destroy in your life, and how have you experienced the "full life" Jesus promises?
- How does knowing Jesus willingly sacrificed His life for you change the way you view your worth and your relationship with Him?
- What does it mean to be personally known by Jesus, and how does that affect the way we pray and trust Him?
- What are the characteristics of a "hired hand" versus a true shepherd, and how can we recognize spiritual leadership that genuinely cares for people?
- How can we honor God's design for pastors and leaders while still being wise and discerning, especially in a culture that often distrusts spiritual authority?
- Why do you think God sets such high standards for church leaders, and how do these guardrails protect both leaders and the church?
- In what ways does the enemy try to convince people they can have salvation without Jesus, and why is that lie so dangerous?
- Which line from Psalm 23 speaks most to your current season of life, and how have you experienced the Shepherd's constant care?

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Today's Talk..



**The love of the Shepherd
for you.**

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Sunday, January 18th, 2026