

Family Devotional

From October 16, 2016

Read: **Ezekiel 34:1-12**

Reflect: What is the role of a shepherd?

Who do they protect?

Why was Ezekiel speaking to the shepherds?

Do you think he was referring to shepherds that care for literal sheep or a person that watches or/and guides people in a spiritual sense?

What would we call them today?

Who do we know that is often referred to as the Good Shepherd?

Read: **John 10:14-16**

Jesus is the best shepherd of all! He stepped at nothing to create a way for us to know God. As part of His flock, we get to join in His mission to welcome the lost sheep. One of the best ways to welcome people is to love them unconditionally. That means loving them not based on who they are or what they do, but solely because they are a child of God, created in His image and loved by Him. We can't love others very well when we are focused on our own needs and wants. That is what the "shepherds" in Ezekiel were doing. They cared more about themselves than taking care of the flock.

This is one of the main reasons Jesus puts us in relationships with other Christians. When we are in a community of people that are all looking out for each other, then everyone is taken care of and loved, just like Jesus intended.

Challenge: This week when there is something you really want, take a moment to say it's not about me, but about someone else. Put the interest of someone before your own. Maybe you choose to watch what your little sister wants to watch instead of what you would choose, or you help your mom with an extra chore before you go play. These don't have to be huge things, but try to do something beyond what you would do just to make yourself happy and let it be a reminder of just how much Jesus loves you and the other person.

Remember: Work together as a family to memorize/meditate on Philippians 2:3-4 this week.

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

Ideas: Write this passage down and hang it on the refrigerator. Say it together as a family during meal time each day. Write it on a chalk or white board and erase a couple of words each day until you can say it by memory.

Respond: "Dear Jesus, thank you for protecting like a shepherd protects His sheep. Help me to put other's interests before my own and show them the same love and protection you show me!.....Amen."