

Reflection Guide

John 10:7-10

Big Idea: Jesus comes to bring Life.

For many of us around this time of year, we begin to evaluate our lives and measure the success or failure of our lives by different things. Many of these things that we measure our lives by are simply improvements to our existence. Jesus says in Luke 12:15 ““Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance (or lack of) of his possessions.” According to Jesus, a life based on dependence upon temporary and fleeting things is really no more than an improved existence. Having true life is more than this and this is what Jesus brings to God’s people.

The Way To Life

So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

So Jesus begins explaining this illustration by discussing the way to Life. If we are to have this life that Jesus comes to bring, how do we get to it? Through the Door.

This door is exclusive to the sheep.

We are the sheep - stray and wandering (Isa 53:6). This is why we are in need of life. We are spiritually dead, deceived in our independence - following the course of this world, living in the passions of our flesh and carrying out our own desires. We need a fold, and not just that but we need a Shepherd, and there’s only one way in: The Door.

This door is exclusive to the Shepherd

What Jesus says in **verse 8** identifies who the religious leaders are: robbers and thieves, but the thief and the robber is any other false shepherd that comes in to draw you away from the life that Jesus brings. We often read this verse and verse 10 and think that it’s the devil who is the one thieving here - and it may be. But the thief can be anything (legalism, trusting in our own works to save us). It can even be good things (ministry, having the perfect family, missions, good works) The thief is going to tell you that you can have life in these things, but the reality is that there is no life apart from Jesus.

Go around the room asking everyone to fill in the blank:

Recently I have felt most “alive” when I am _____.

Is this ok? Does it matter to you that this thing might be more vital to you than Jesus?

What is this “thief and robber” stealing from you?

What are the consequences of this?

short-term: contentment

long-term: your eternal soul

[35] For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. [36] For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? (Mark 8:35-36 ESV)

The Promise of Life

I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture."

Again, Jesus emphasizes that He is the only way into God's people. He is the only way that anyone enters into His flock and He is the only way anyone gets to His flock. He is the door. And furthermore, as the door, Jesus promises to provide safety and freedom and provision for His sheep - something thieves and robbers cannot provide.

Abundant Life

"The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

John's aim throughout this entire book is to convince his audience to believe in Jesus - ultimately for the purpose of having life. Just before the end of his book, John writes *"but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."*

What the abundant life is NOT: Prosperity Gospel

This message takes the things which improve our existence and it makes them *the* important things. It takes gifts and elevates them above the Giver. Abundant life is not a "Christianese" version of the American dream! Its not a life where God is obligated to give us whatever earthly pleasures we want for our glory and our comfort!

This can even be more subtle when it convinces us to get Jesus to give us the things we think will give us life (perfect kids, good marriages, good jobs, better relationships)

What "good" thing (family, health, job, relationship,etc) has been threatened recently?

How did you respond?

What did you learn about yourself?

What the abundant life is: Jesus

Jesus is the very life He speaks of. When God gives us life, He gives us Himself because He is the Source and Author of Life. He is life. (John 1:4; 3:16;4:14; 5:21,24; 6:47-48,54; 14:6; 17:3)

- This life conquers death
 - If we are honest, death is our greatest fear, and death comes to us because of sin. Jesus conquers sin and death in the gospel. He makes death participate in its own suicide.
- This life is the life of God that dwells in us
 - Eternal life: not just living forever, but an abundance of life forever - being in union with the source of joy, peace, love, grace, happiness (Col 3:1)
 - Indestructible life: (2 Cor 4:7-12) The life that Jesus brings is indestructible. It cannot be taken or destroyed by anything in this life or in this world.

What is the difference between Jesus GIVING us peace (joy, etc) and Him BEING our peace?

How is Jesus better than _____?

What can we practically do to pursue Jesus so as to experience "abundant life" in Him?