



REVEILLE'S GPS WEEKLY SCRIPTURE GUIDE

Explore scriptures and daily devotionals that reflect on this Sunday's sermon message. Sign up to receive the daily devotional email at www.bit.ly/devotional-rumc.

April 15-21, 2024

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sermon Title: "What Makes the 'Good Shepherd' Good?" by Pete Moon

Use the space below to reflect on the questions in this week's devotionals, make class and sermon notes, and write down prayers and concerns.

Focus Question (Before Sermon):

Questions for Small Groups and Individuals (After Sermon):

1. Our New Testament reading declares Jesus to be our "good" shepherd. As the sermon has or will state, the issue here is leadership. How do we lead people? How do we embody his role in our various leadership roles whether it be work, community, or family? Describe a leader you have known who embraced the "good shepherd" image of Jesus in our reading.
2. Jesus contrasts his "good" leadership with those who are the hired hands. Describe a time when you worked with a leader who exhibited this hiring tendency. What do hirelings and wolves look like today?
3. All of this describes what we today label "servant leadership." Talk about what that means to you and how you employ or try to employ this model in your life.
4. Name an area in your life where you can make your leadership and work not about you but about those around you.

Monday, April 15: Read John 10:11-18

What makes a good "shepherd"? This focus of our readings and sermon this week is so important in today's world where we are constantly seeking direction and leadership from so many sources. We intentionally seek it in our political leaders and we subconsciously seek it in our social media feeds. We have repeatedly heard Jesus called the "Good Shepherd," and this week we will take the time to truly examine the components of what that really means. We begin with Jesus's own words in today's gospel reading. Christ points out at least three essential components of being a good shepherd: 1) a willingness to lay down one's life for one's sheep, 2) deeply knowing your flock, and 3) an openness to bringing others into the fold. What message is there for us today as both leaders and followers?

- **Relationship Opportunity:** *Discuss leaders who have demonstrated these three essential qualities and ones who haven't. How can we tell the difference in those we follow today?*

Tuesday, April 16: Read Psalm 23

Psalm 23 famously declares that God is our shepherd. Our God guides us through many places, including the Valley of the Shadow of Death. It also speaks of God the Shepherd as a provider, causing our cup to run over, taking us to still waters, preparing tables, and more. Let us take time today to recognize the times when we have enjoyed (and are currently enjoying) God's generosity and provision. Let us also take time to recognize when we were granted rest and peace.

- **Discipleship Opportunity:** *Where could we be more intentionally and fully providing rest and abundance to those who need it most? Pick one place to start today.*

Wednesday, April 17: Read 1 John 3:16-24

In our fifth week of Easter, we celebrate that Christ's tenure as a Good Shepherd didn't end with the crucifixion. It was only beginning. Through God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit made available to us through Christ's life, death, and resurrection, we are constantly being led to places where we can not only be good sheep, but good shepherds ourselves. The earliest Christians demonstrated this in world-changing ways, and today's reading leads us to become more like Christ, who abides in us. We, too, are to love, lead, include, sacrifice, and know others as we are loved, led, included, sacrificed for, and fully known. What part of today's scripture speaks most loudly to you today? What will you do about it?

- **Discipleship Opportunity:** *Where is one place you can replace words with actual deeds today?*

Thursday, April 18: Read Acts 4:5-12

Our Good Shepherd has not led us to a life of timidity and passivity. Jesus has equipped and enabled us to a life of courage and impact. Our "green pastures" promised in Psalm 23 don't shield us from the world; they nourish us so we can change the world. Peter and the apostles, filled with Holy Spirit and guided through their dedicated, intimate discipleship with Christ, changed the world despite unimaginable resistance from the prevailing culture, politics, and leadership of their day. Where are we being called to do the same?

- **Study Opportunity:** Research historical and modern figures whom you believe demonstrate Christ-based teachings to stand up to power that goes against Christ's values. What evidence do they give that they are good shepherds and good sheep?

Friday, April 19: Read Psalm 100

On Sunday, Psalm 100 will serve as our call to worship. Together, we will joyfully proclaim, "He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture." Let us embrace the joy of this statement. Let us recognize the burdens we can lay down as those of Christ's flock. Let us willingly embrace the responsibilities we can take on as fully protected, fully known, and fully empowered members of the flock.

- **Relationship and Discipleship Opportunity:** *Discuss with others what is joyful about being "sheep"? What does this truly mean? Where does our own responsibility need to come in?*

Saturday, April 20: SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: 1 John 3:17-18

"How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."

Sunday, April 21: Let us prepare our hearts and minds by praying our Prayer of Common

Confession: *Gracious Lord, all of us have opportunities to lead. This morning, we are reminded that our Lord led as a Shepherd. We have not followed him. We have been more concerned about our own needs, our own fulfillment. He laid down his life and called us to do it daily, but each day we are all too often consumed with ourselves. Christ surrounds us and will not abandon us, but we quickly abandon the needs of those around us. In your grace forgive us, O Lord, and lead us once again into the way of the Good Shepherd, for it is in his name we pray. Amen.*