

An Important Thing About Being Part of the Flock:

_____ is _____ doing.

Three Marks of Opposition to Jesus:

1) It is _____.

2) It is _____.

3) It is _____.

Two Promises for the Sheep:

1) Eternal _____

2) Eternal _____

Questions for Further Growth

For the week of April 25, 2010

1. When you hear the word *shepherd* what comes to mind? Do some quick research on the internet (Google, Wikipedia, etc.) as to what a shepherd was like in Jesus' day. Does this change, affect, or alter your understanding of Jesus' claim that he is the Good Shepherd?

2. Jesus was most likely alluding to Ezekiel's prophecy in raising the imagery of sheep and shepherd. Read Ezekiel 34:1-31. What do you think was going on in the life of Israel at the time? What do you think God was saying to the Israelites through this prophecy? How might Jesus' have seen himself as a fulfillment of the prophecy? What parallels do you think Jesus saw between Ezekiel's time and his own?

3. Read Psalm 23. What is the image of the Lord as our Shepherd in this psalm?

Many times this psalm is read at funerals or on occasions of death, but it is really a psalm about life and living. Why do you think it is so comforting during times of grief? Re-read it carefully...how is it *really* about our life and how we live?

The last phrase is traditionally translated, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." But the Hebrew cannot comfortably be translated this way. (This is how the King James originally translated it into English and it has stuck!) The Hebrew phrase is literally "for all of my days". Does this change your understanding of the last part of the psalm? If so, how? If not, why not?

4. Jesus says that he will hold onto his sheep; that no one can snatch them from his hand. Read Romans 8:28-39. How does it make you feel to read these words of Paul? What does this passage mean to you and your faith journey?

An Important Thing About Being Part of the Flock:

Salvation is God's doing.

Three Marks of Opposition to Jesus:

1) It is determined.

2) It is irrational.

3) It is ironic.

Two Promises for the Sheep:

3) Eternal life

4) Eternal security