

5. Write a psalm of praise in the space below. It doesn't have to be long and complex. Simply tell the Shepherd how much you love and appreciate all He does for you. Express your gratitude. He watches over you, even fights for you—He is the Gate and really does have your best interest at heart.



Text: John 10:1-10

PROMISE

Jesus, the gatekeeper, _____ us, _____
our name, and _____ abundant life.

1. Jesus is the Gate... our _____.
2. His sheep know his voice and he _____ them by _____.
3. Jesus provides _____ life.
 - a) What you are _____
 - b) What or who you are _____ to
 - c) What or who are you _____ ...in to your
_____, your life, your marriage _____.

One Year Bible Reading

June 21: 2 Kings 1:1-2:25, Acts 13:42-14:7, Psalm 139:1-24, Proverbs 17:19-21
June 22: 2 Kings 3:1-4:17, Acts 14:8-28, Psalm 140:1-13, Proverbs 17:22
June 23: 2 Kings 4:18-5:27, Acts 15:1-35, Psalm 141:1-10, Proverbs 17:23
June 24: 2 Kings 6:1-7:20, Acts 15:36-16:15, Psalm 142:1-7, Proverbs 17:24-25
June 25: 2 Kings 8:1-9:13, Acts 16:16-40, Psalm 143:1-12, Proverbs 17:26
June 26: 2 Kings 9:14-10:31, Acts 17:1-34, Psalm 144:1-15, Proverbs 17:27-28
June 27: 2 Kings 10:32-12:21, Acts 18:1-22, Psalm 145:1-21, Proverbs 18:1

June 20 & 21, 2015

PROMISES

Life Group Lesson • Week of June 21

Life Group Lesson for the Week of June 21, 2015 PROMISES – “I AM the Gate”

Like sheep, we are prone to stray. Whether we care to admit it or not, there are times we don't use good sense—times we are weak and unaware of lurking dangers. Like sheep, we gravitate toward foreign pastures and find ourselves in harm's way. The Bible says, “All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's path to follow our own” (Isaiah 53:6a).

Perhaps our tendency to wander is not so much because our spirits are weak, but because our flesh is strong. In fact, Jesus said this to his disciples the night His suffering began. The Lord had asked them to pray so they would not give in to temptation, “for the spirit is willing but the body is weak” (Matthew 26:41). But they couldn't stay awake and pray with the Lord, as a result they all fell away.

The pull of this world is strong and the desires of our flesh are relentless. We try to satisfy our appetites in ways (portions) that are not good for us, opening the door for the enemy to get a foothold. Even the apostle Paul struggled with this inner war. He said, “I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate...it is sin living in me that does it” (Romans 7:15b, 17b). We need a gatekeeper—One willing to close the door on all forces that would undo us—One willing to keep us from wandering into a land mine.

Read John 10:1-10

The gatekeeper opens the gate for Jesus. In fact, Jesus says, “I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. “They will come and go freely and will find good pastures” (v9). Do you hear the freedom in these words of the Lord? The Shepherd's protection isn't constrictive, to keep us prisoner. His covering is there to protect us from being devoured. Staying close to the Shepherd is actually the only way to graze freely—and stay alive. Jesus alone gives us “a rich and satisfying life.”

1. According to the Bible, you and I are prone to go our own way and do our own thing. We get into trouble, and then need someone to get us out. Think of a time you strayed down a bad path. How did that road lead to trouble?

Looking back, how could your troubles have been avoided had you stayed inside the gate—near the Shepherd of your soul?

We can't reverse time. But we can learn from past mistakes and come clean before God today. The Lord knows we are weak. He doesn't want us to carry the heavy burden of regret, but give it to Him. The psalmist declares: “Acknowledge that the LORD is God! He made us, and we are His. We are His people, the sheep of His pasture” (Psalm 100:3). If you keep wandering into foreign pastures, why not simply ask the Shepherd to shut the gate on that temptation?

2. Are you willing to give the Lord permission to close the gate on your wandering? (If so, ask Him now.)
3. First John 1:9 says: “But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.” In the space below, write two things the Lord promises to do you for in this verse?

Jesus promises to not only forgive and cleanse, but to walk ahead of His sheep. In response, His sheep follow Him because they know His voice (v4).

4. On a day-to-day basis, what voices do you listen to? (Be totally honest.)

In what areas have you ignored or disregarded the Lord's voice?

Perhaps you want to get to know the Shepherd's voice. Good News flash! There is a way to recognize God's voice more clearly on a daily basis. Just remember **G-A-T-E**.

- G** – Give attention to His eternal Word (read/study the Bible).
- A** – Acknowledge that He is God and we are not (worship).
- T** – Trust Him (follow His lead, don't keep going your own way).
- E** – Endure, even when the terrain is rough (don't give up on the Lord's plan).

(continued on back)