

***Nurturing Faith...
Every Day in Every Way***

May 7, 2017

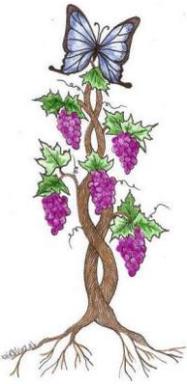
Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:42-47

Psalm 23

1 Peter 2:19-25

John 10:1-10



The sheep follow him because they know his voice.

John 10:4, NRSV



Steal the Sheep. Object: None.

I am reminded of a story that Jesus told that we might call "Steal the Sheep." Jesus said that sometimes a person climbs over the fence into a sheep pen. "Anyone who does that must surely be a thief and a robber" Jesus said, "because the shepherd who cares for the sheep would not climb over the fence, he would enter the gate." Jesus went on to explain that the gatekeeper knows the shepherd and will open the gate for him. The sheep know the shepherd and will recognize his voice and follow him. The sheep will never follow a stranger they will run from a stranger!

The Bible says that when Jesus told this story, the people didn't understand it. Do you think you understand what Jesus was talking about? Well, let me tell you what I think this story means. I think that in this story, we are the sheep and Jesus is the shepherd. Jesus loves us and he wants only what is best for us. He will watch over us and care for us and keep us from harm. He will provide everything that we need. The one who would climb over the fence and try to steal the sheep is a false teacher. He is one who will try to lead us astray and trick us into following him instead of following Jesus.

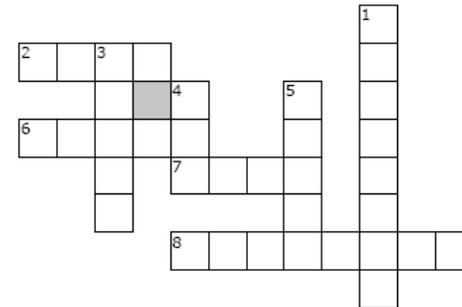
When someone tries to get you to follow them, listen to what they say and then ask yourself, "What did Jesus say?" If what they are saying is not the same as what Jesus said, watch out! Remember the warning that Jesus gives at the end of our Bible lesson today, "A thief comes only to rob, kill, and destroy. I came so that everyone would have life, and have it in its fullest."

Dear Jesus, we know that you are the good shepherd. We love you and want to follow you each and every day. Help us to watch out for those who want to lead us astray. Amen.

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Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. Jesus says, I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. Alleluia. (John 10:14)

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 2. An opening in a fence for entrance or exit
- 6. The sound made when people speak or sing
- 7. The word or words by which a person or thing is known
- 8. A person who takes care of sheep

DOWN

- 1. Someone not known or not familiar
- 3. Someone who steals
- 4. A small area surrounded by a fence in which animals are kept
- 5. A farm animal with thick curly wool

SHEPHERD	THIEF	NAME	VOICE
SHEEP	GATE	STRANGER	PEN

"SHEEP" ART: Give the child a piece of construction paper and a small amount of a cotton ball. The child can tear apart the cotton ball and glue little amounts of cotton on their page. Show the child how to draw little legs and ears on the sheep. Write or trace "I am the good shepherd; I know My sheep, and My sheep know Me" at the top of the page or "in and around" the cotton sheep!

TOOTHPICK GATE: Let the child draw or trace sheep on a piece of paper OR use sheep stickers. Then have the child paste toothpicks over the sheep pictures to look like sheep behind a gate!



THE SHEEP FOLLOW HIM
BECAUSE THEY KNOW HIS VOICE.

