

for men. His words must be reviewed in the light of the excommunication of the teacher, is of no effect. The great reality is life in Himself of which the Pharisees cannot deprive the one who receives it. Study Jesus' claim to be the Good Shepherd :

(a) His perfect power, vs. 8-10. He contrasts His own conduct with that of the false teachers. Note that He offers a full salvation ; safety, liberty, abundant provision.

(b) Perfect self-sacrifice, vs. 11-13. The same contrast is made and His own death foreshadowed.

(c) Perfect knowledge, vs. 14-16. This includes the knowledge of God and of humanity.

This Lesson thus lays bare principles underlying the Christian life. Special attention should be given to the claims of Jesus and their relation to the individual. Note how as opposition advances, He unfolds His message in such a way that all grasp it. When this Lesson is viewed in the light of Calvary, it becomes a powerful appeal to human sympathy and love. In view of Jesus' claim, we should accept His guidance and so enjoy the privileges He offers.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

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To boys and girls the concrete is easy, the abstract difficult. Fortunately, there is the concrete here in abundance; the angry Pharisees face to face with the justly indignant Jesus ; a sheepfold, a brazen-faced intruder therein, the shepherds, the sheep, the calling out of the sheep in the morning, the flock in the pastures, the thief and the wolf, and the shepherd risking his life ; the Father above, and the whole world of men of various folds.

1. *Seek to get the scholars into the atmosphere of the passage.* To do so, first recall by questioning the healing of the blind man in the preceding chapter (Lesson XI. previous Quarter). through Jesus' compassion and power ; and especially the fierce and cruel treatment of him by the Pharisees, who, as religious teachers and leaders, should have rejoiced in the good that came to Him. Follow this with the conversation of ch. 9 : 39-41, of which the Lesson is a continuation. Then, have the class glance through the Lesson passage, which is all about sheep

and shepherds. By question, or otherwise, make this sheep-pasturing country, with its flocks and sheepfolds and shepherds real to the scholars. (See the Geography Lesson.)

2. *Introduce the personages of the Lesson.*

(a) The thief and the robber, of v. 1 : the same persons. They went into the fold only for their own gain (v. 10). They sneak in, or climb in ; they have no right there. These are the Pharisees—false teachers, who, pretending to be good, oppress and wrong the people.

(b) The shepherd, vs. 2-4. Question out all the marks of the shepherd in vs. 2-4 : comes in by the door, because he has a right to ; calls his own sheep ; is recognized by them ; leads them out, goes before them, is followed by them, for they know his voice. Contrast the stranger, v. 5.

3. Follow out the parable, vs. 6, etc. For a definition of a parable, see Exposition. Why did the Pharisees not understand ? Why is it so difficult for us to see ourselves as others see us, and especially as God sees us ? Jesus gives His interpretation of the parable :

(a) He is the "Door", v. 7. Explain that "all that ever came before Me" means, not the old prophets, who were sincere, but these false Pharisees. Who are the "sheep" ? The true servants of God, like the blind man of ch. 9. Into what does Jesus, as the Door, lead ? The kingdom of God, evidently. What gain to those who enter ? V. 9 names three things, salvation, protection and freedom ("go in and out"), food, and (v. 10) the greatest thing of all, life,—eternal life in all its fulness.

(b) He is the "Good Shepherd", v. 11. Question as to the perils of the sheep from storm and precipice, and wild beast and robber : the test of the good shepherd will make its own invincible appeal—ready to die for the sheep. Eph. 5 : 25, and the first three verses of Hymn 46, Book of Praise, are the best comment. Have the scholars note the precious truth in v. 14, the mighty missionary promise of v. 16, and the sweet willingness and obedience described in v. 18.

How greatly Christ loves men ; how easy it is to enter God's kingdom through Him ; how much it means for those who thus enter in ; are the points with which to conclude.