

She doubtless knew nothing of sheep. The flocks of muddy, tired sheep that children sometimes look at as they are being led through the city to be slaughtered will not make a very inspiring background for lessons concerning the good shepherd. Hence the teacher must transport himself in imagination to an oriental sheepfold, and then use all his powers of description, illustration, and questioning to get the learner to understand the relationship existing between a good shepherd and his sheep in the time when Jesus taught the lessons which we are considering.

I. The SURROUNDINGS are the same as those of last Sunday's lesson, the time being October, A. D. 29, and the place Jerusalem.

II. The STORY OUTLINE is intensely interesting, and should be studied not only from the lesson text, but also with lesson helps and pictures, so that it may become real. It may be studied as follows:

1. A bad shepherd (verse 1).

2. A good shepherd (verses 2-5).

3. The disciples do not understand this teaching (verse 6).

4. Jesus explains the parable (verses 7-16).

III. As the SPECIAL TEACHING from this text may be developed along so many lines, it will be unwise for the teachers to trust to the inspiration of the teaching time for a development of a line of thought helpful for the members of his class. Let him sit down, and prayerfully consider the spiritual condition of his class, and then plan for the teaching. Two lines of teaching are suggestive:

1. Have printed in large letters on a sheet of paper the following:

THE GOOD SHEPHERD'S	
EYES WATCH	} HIS SHEEP.
EARS LISTEN TO	
VOICE CALLS	
HAND HELPS	
LIFE IS LAID DOWN FOR	
BECAUSE HE LOVES THEM.	

Have the members of the class write the points in order, one at a time, and illustrate them with biblical and other illustrations. Then press home strongly the truth that Christ is our Shepherd, and that he showed his willingness to do all these things by laying down his life for us.

2. The sheep's relation to the shepherd may be the line of teaching preferred by

some. Let those who wish to teach thus make very clear and impressive the fact that Christ, the Good Shepherd, gave his life for the sheep. What, then, should the sheep do? Let each write on his pad the following:

THE SHEEP SHOULD
KNOW AND FOLLOW THE SHEPHERD.

Jesus, as a person to be known by those who will, should be held up to the pupils. The sooner they grasp this truth the better it will be for them, and the more they live in accordance with it the fewer mistakes will they make in their spiritual life.

While knowing Jesus is a very essential part of the Christian life, there is something of equal importance: *Jesus must be followed.* These two truths are so closely related, each to the other, that it is difficult to separate them, either in thought or in practice. The better we know Jesus the more closely will we follow him. The closer we follow Jesus the better will we know him. How many are there who lost their knowledge of him when they ceased following him?

(Teacher, do not be afraid to teach these truths to the boys and girls. They will understand them, and if they do not learn them now the probabilities of their learning them at all decrease with each passing year.)

IV. In their STUDY FOR NEXT SUNDAY have the pupils learn: Whom did Jesus send out? Why did he send them? Where did he send them? What was the result?

By Way of Illustration.

"He calleth his own sheep by name." General Sherman's army was passing along a rarely frequented roadway in North Carolina. A woman stood in the doorway of her cabin, and saw regiment after regiment of men similar in appearance and dress pass by, until, as the thousands upon thousands came and went, she said in wonderment: "I reckon you 'uns ain't all got names." It seemed to her an impossibility that each soldier was a distinct and recognized identity. It would have seemed stranger yet to think that one man could know each soldier there by name. Yet far beyond these suggestions of human limitation of personal knowledge and sympathy comes the assurance that Jesus knows his every disciple by name.