

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

*Worshipping Together* is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. [frankston.rpca.org.au](http://frankston.rpca.org.au) [bit.ly/WTrpcaf](http://bit.ly/WTrpcaf)

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. [airdrierpcs.org](http://airdrierpcs.org)

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. [bit.ly/WkBbl](http://bit.ly/WkBbl) or [bit.ly/3yrBbl](http://bit.ly/3yrBbl)

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on John by John Calvin, William Hendriksen, and Kent Hughes. *The notes and reading this week are a repeat of the week of 9 Dec 2012*

# Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

*The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.*



*If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men\* should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father\* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

*Read, pray, repeat.*

\* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

**Reading** John 10:1-6 The Shepherd vs. the thief

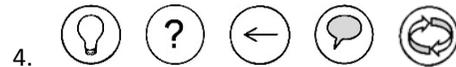
**Notes** Jesus, having healed a blind man (chapter 9), and been confronted by the Pharisees (who were blind to their blindness), explains how He is different from the Jewish religious leaders. They are thieves and robbers. They do not enter by the door of the sheepfold. They do not have sheep willingly following them because they are strangers to the sheep.

Jesus, on the other hand, is the door to the sheepfold and enters by that door. His sheep hear His voice and know Him. When He calls them by name, they come out and follow Him.

This is serious business, as Jesus indicates by His introduction of “truly, truly.” (or “most assuredly.”) It makes an eternal difference who we are following. Likened to sheep – not particularly smart and also defenceless creatures – we need to be sure who it is we are following. If you are following anyone else but Jesus, your “shepherd” will steal your eternity.

Although the image of the Lord as our Shepherd is common throughout the Bible (Psalm 23, 100, Isaiah 53 etc.) Jesus’ hearers didn’t understand. Do you understand?

- Questions**
1. What is the difference between the shepherd and the thief?
  2. How are we like sheep?
  3. What difference does it make who we follow?



- Praise** Psalm 129<sup>2</sup>
- Pray**
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to follow Jesus, by God’s help
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

<sup>1</sup> You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

<sup>2</sup> Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

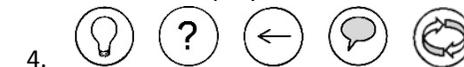
**Reading** John 10:40-42 Many believed in Him

**Notes** Because it was not time for Jesus to lay down His life for His sheep, He would not stay for the moment in Jerusalem. This was not due to fear for His life, but so He might finish the work which the Father had given Him to do. So, he went beyond the Jordan to the place where John the Baptist had been first baptising. As Jesus stayed there, many came to Him. How would they react to Him? In sharp contrast with the Pharisees’ unbelief, these people did believe in Jesus. Why?

Many of them had obviously heard John the Baptist speak of Jesus. He had said Jesus was so much greater than himself, that he was unworthy to untie His sandals; (1:27) that Jesus was the Lamb of God, come to take away the sins of the world. (1:36) John’s disciples had become concerned that people were leaving John and following Jesus but John had assured them that he must decrease but Jesus must increase, (3:30) and that Jesus was sent by the Father (3:31) to give everlasting life to all who believe in Him. (3:36)

Their conclusion was: John was a great teacher. Even though he did not perform miracles, everything he said about Jesus was true. Therefore, it would make no sense if we did not believe in Jesus ourselves. We can pray the same thing for those to whom we are talking about Jesus; that they will believe what we say about Him is true and then they will believe in Him unto salvation.

- Questions**
1. Where did Jesus now go?
  2. Why did the people believe in Him there?
  3. How can we pray for unbelievers?



- Praise** Psalm 129
- Pray**
1. Pray that those to whom you are telling about Jesus will believe in Him
  2. Pray for your family
  3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
  4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

**Reading** John 10:30-39 Jesus and His Father – One

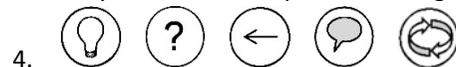
**Notes** As Jesus explains His eternal protecting care of His sheep He includes the eternal protecting care of the sheep by His Father. He concludes with the statement that He is one with God the Father. And, immediately the Jews take up stones to kill Him.

Jesus makes a bold claim. He is, in essence, one with God the Father. The Bible clearly teaches us an incomprehensible mystery – that our God is one, yet exists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus is not, as He makes clear here, the same person as the Father. Yet, His claim is not merely that He is like His Father, but that He is the same essence as the Father.

And for that, the Jews want to kill Him. They argue this way. A blasphemer must be stoned to death. Lev. 24:16. For a mere man to call Himself God is to blaspheme. Jesus is therefore a blasphemer and therefore must be stoned to death.

If Jesus were a mere man, their conclusion would have been correct. If only a man, and claiming for himself not merely being a god (“mighty ones”, as God addressed the rulers in Psalm 82) but equal to The God, then Jesus should be stoned. But as His works and His words verify, Jesus is the One sent by the Father, with whom He is equal in Power and Glory. And, though they again and again try to take Him, He will not go until He lays down His life for His sheep, so He escapes from their grasp.

- Questions**
1. How can Jesus claim to be one with God the Father?
  2. How would the Jews have been right to stone Jesus to death?
  3. Why does Jesus escape from their grasp?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 129
1. Rejoice with your family that God has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

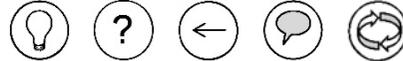
**Reading** John 10:7-13 The Good Shepherd

**Notes** Jesus continues this important teaching, explaining and amplifying for His confused listeners. He continues contrasting the shepherd with the thief. The thief (and there are many of them – including the Pharisees standing there) comes to destroy and to kill.

Jesus also presents a second category of false leader, the hired-hand, one not quite as evil in intent as the thief, but with the same fatal results. The hired hand sees the sheep as just a job and flees the one who comes to destroy the sheep because he doesn't care about the sheep.

By contrast, Jesus is both the door of protection to the sheepfold and the good shepherd of the sheep. He is the only entrance of salvation. *There is no other entrance! ...[F]aith in Christ as the Son of God is the only entrance-door. And this faith is full, personal trust in Him and in His substitutionary atonement.* (Hendriksen) He is the one who has given His life for His sheep. He is the one who came to give life to otherwise dead sheep.

Again, the question must be asked. Who are you following? One who is destroying your life and your eternity? One who doesn't care? Or the only One who gives abundant and eternal life, namely Jesus.

- Questions**
1. How does the thief harm the sheep?
  2. How does the hired-hand harm the sheep?
  3. How does Jesus protect His sheep?
  4. 

- Praise Pray** Psalm 129
1. Rejoice with your family in Jesus as your Good Shepherd. Commit to following Him, with God's help.
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

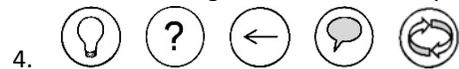
**Reading** John 10:14-21

**Notes** The Good Shepherd continues telling us about His relationship with His sheep. Jesus knows His sheep and His sheep know Him. This relationship is patterned after the very relationship between Jesus (God the Son) and God the Father – a relationship of intimate knowledge and love. This love flows from the Father to the Son as the Son, willingly, and by His own power, gives His life for His sheep.

The “good” of this Good Shepherd describes something that is beautiful. *Such is the shepherd we proclaim. He is altogether lovely—this beautiful Jesus, our shepherd. Why is he so beautiful? Because of the way he relates to us, calls us by name, and knows us, and because we know him and he sees to our every need. Why is he so beautiful? Because he is the door, and when we go in, we find protection and salvation. And when we go out, we find pasture and abundant life. Why is he so beautiful? Because of his heart. Because he laid down his life for his sheep.* (Hughes)

Do you know this beautiful Shepherd? Some of the Jews thought He was insane, or demon possessed. Others were being convinced by His powerful signs and powerful words that He was Someone worth following.

- Questions**
1. How is Jesus’ relationship with His sheep like His relationship with His Father?
  2. In what ways is Jesus the beautiful Shepherd?
  3. What is the significance of Jesus laying down His life?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 129
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to following and proclaiming your Good Shepherd, with God’s help.
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** John 10:22-30 Are you the Christ?

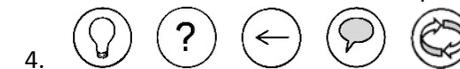
**Notes** Although the time changes (two months pass between vs. 21 and 22) in many ways the conversation does not. The Jews ask Jesus, “Are you the Christ?” (The Messiah – God’s promised and anointed King) Jesus answers in terms of sheep and shepherds.

Jesus had told them often that He was from the Father, doing things that only God’s anointed King could do. (see 5:26-27, 6:29, 51, 7:37-38, 8:23-24, 10:10) But for some of these Jews that wasn’t good enough. But rather than simply satisfy their “itching ears,” Jesus tells them why they don’t believe.

They don’t believe He is the Christ, doing the things that only God’s anointed King could do, because they are not following Him. They are not His sheep. Both their own sinful rebellion against Jesus and also God’s eternal decree prevent them from understanding. In contrast, those who are Jesus sheep follow Him. They are no more worthy of salvation, but are saved and eternally kept by Jesus and His Father.

Are you hearing Jesus’ voice and following Him? Rejoice! He has secured a place for you in Heaven. He gave you eternal life. You will never perish. No one (not even you) can take you from His and His Father’s powerful and protective hands.

- Questions**
1. Is Jesus the Christ? How do we know?
  2. What do Jesus’ sheep do?
  3. What does Jesus do for His sheep?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 129
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that you have heard Jesus voice and are following Him.
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member