



Called By Name

John 10:1-10

Welcome to 'Together, Apart', a free printable intergenerational resource to help us be church together while we're keeping each other safe.

All the sections explore the same Bible passage in a range of creative ways. Choose whichever parts work best for you. You can use the resources on-line or print whichever pages of the PDF you need.

You can find lots more free resources like this at www.reflectionary.org

Here is what you will find in each week's post:



A Word in Your Ear

A Bible passage that we can all learn from together, whatever our age.



Food for Thought

Aimed at adults and teens, some thoughts and questions on the passage.



Inner Space

A blank space for you to record your thoughts.



Looking Closer

A creative and interactive look at the Bible passage. Great for older children and anyone who likes a creative approach.



I Wonder...

An imaginative style of Bible study, perfect for younger children and those who like to immerse themselves in the Bible world.



Take a Break

A chill-out zone, with meditative colouring for adults and children, and links to audio recordings of the passage so that you can listen while resting your eyes.



Creation Station

A craft for children (or young-at-heart adults!)



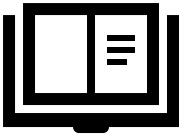
Outside In

Suggestions for activities throughout the week that link with the Bible passage.



High 5

Suggestions for spending time with God.



A Word in Your Ear

Take your time reading this passage from The Bible. Ask God to help you hear. You can decorate the space around the words if you like.

John 10:1-4, 10

'Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.

The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

(NRSV)



Food for Thought

Our passage comes in the middle of a conversation between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders, so we'll need to read the previous section to find out what's going on.

In the last chapter, Jesus has a run-in with the religious leaders over the healing of a man born blind. Some were impressed at the miraculous sign, while others complained because it had happened on the Sabbath. Jesus comments that he has "come into this world so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind". (9:29) The religious leaders overhear and catch his drift all too plainly. "What? Are we blind too?" they angrily shout.

Q: Why do you think the religious leaders were so angry? What makes someone blind?

Continuing his reply in chapter 10, Jesus tells them a parable about sheep and sheepfolds. This was a popular metaphor much used by the Old Testament prophets: God as the shepherd and his people as the sheep, but Jesus extends it to include gatekeepers.

In Bible times shepherds would put their sheep in a stone-walled sheepfold at night, and sleep across the opening. This gate(keeper) controlled which sheep were allowed in the sheepfold (God's kingdom) and which were not. He also made sure that no-one unauthorised could take sheep out - thieves would have to climb over the back wall.

Q: Where did the religious leaders see themselves in the picture of shepherds and gatekeepers and sheep? Where did Jesus see them?

Jesus then says that he is the not just the gate keeper, but the actual gate. This is one of the lesser-known 'I Am' statements, but one with profound implications. As the gate, Jesus not only determines who may enter the sheepfold / Kingdom of God, but he *is* the way in! Jesus further puts the cat amongst the pigeons (or the wolf amongst the flocks) when he declares that *whoever* enters through him will be saved. Even 'sheep of other flocks'.

This is a theme he revisits many times, most famously in John 14:6 when he says, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Q: How do you think the religious leaders felt when Jesus declared that he was the way into the sheepfold? How does Jesus' policy of who to let in differ from that of the religious leaders?

Many Old Testament prophets, protesting about godless leaders, had promised that God would get rid of the dishonest shepherds that Israel had, and would come and shepherd his people himself (eg, Isaiah 40:11, Jeremiah 23:1-4, Ezekiel 34).

Mixing his metaphors somewhat, Jesus says that he is this 'Good Shepherd'. (v11)

Q: What was Jesus saying when he called himself the shepherd? Why was this a problem for (some of) the religious leaders (see v 19-21, 31-33)?



Inner Space

What's going round your head? Here is a space for you to put your thoughts on paper. You can write, draw ... whatever you like. What will you put here?



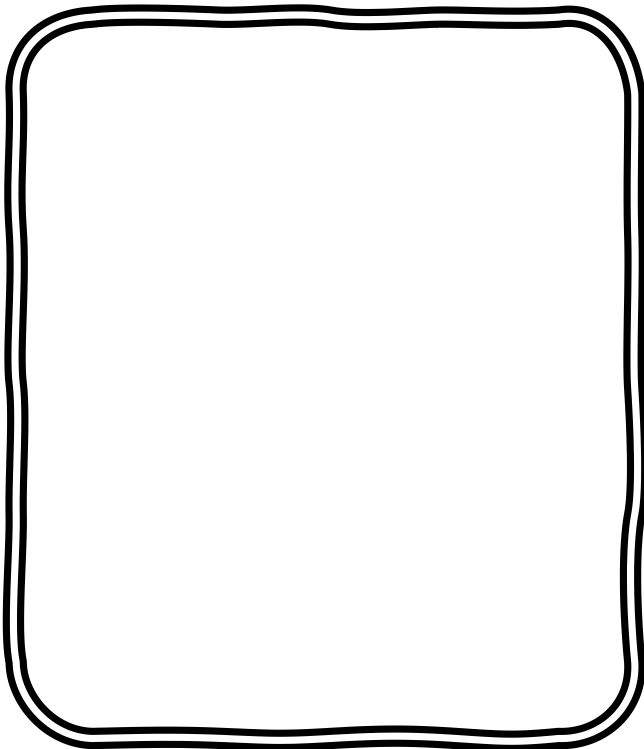
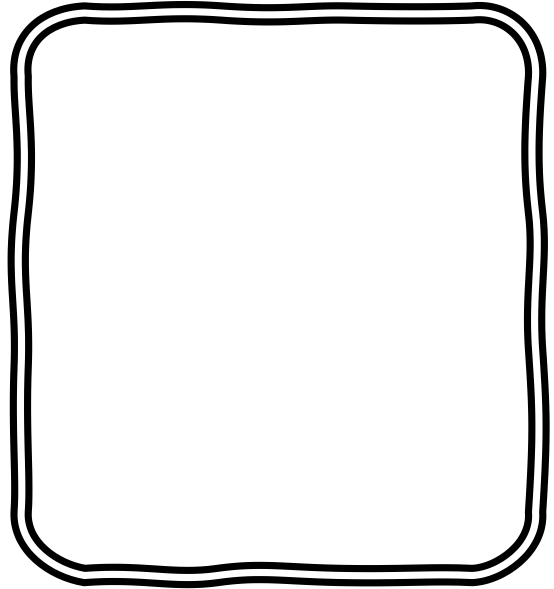
Looking Closer

Jesus talked about sheep a lot. The whole of the Bible talks about sheep a lot. Sheep are a bit of a big deal.

A shepherd looks after sheep, and a lot of famous people were shepherds: King David was one, and he wrote a famous song about it (Psalm 23).

Can you think of anyone else in the Bible who looked after sheep? Write or draw your favourite Bible shepherd here.

(Look at Genesis 4:2, Genesis 27:9, Genesis 29:9, Genesis 37:2, Genesis 47:3, Exodus 3:1, 1 Samuel 17:40, Job 1:10, Amos 7:15, Luke 2:8)



Hopefully you found Moses, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph and a whole load of other famous shepherds. The Bible says that God is like a shepherd, and we are his sheep, but this doesn't mean that we have wool and four legs! This is picture language (a 'metaphor') where we say one thing is like another thing to help us understand.

It can be tricky for us to know what God is like, but everyone in Bible times knew about shepherds, so the Bible uses this metaphor (picture) to help us understand.

How is God like a shepherd? How is God different?

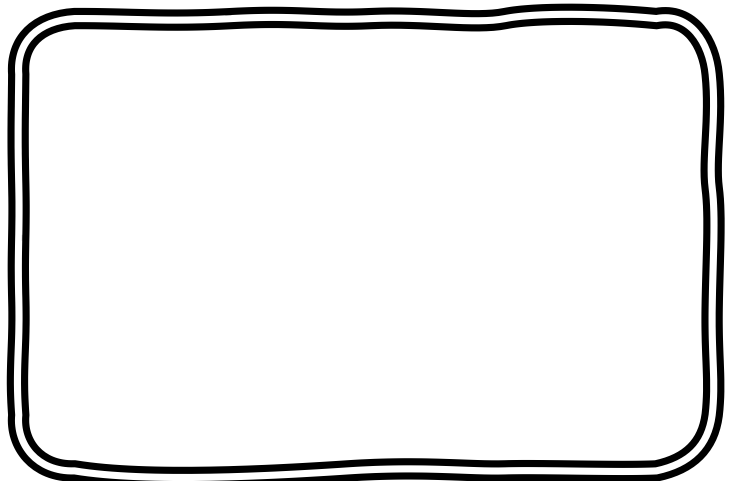
Draw a picture of a shepherd and put arrows and words to show what parts are like God.

Jesus says he is like a shepherd who calls his sheep by name. We are like the sheep and we follow him because we know his voice.

How do you think Jesus (the shepherd) knows the names of his sheep?

How do we (the sheep) know the voice of our shepherd?

Write or draw it in the box.





I Wonder...

Imagine you are in Jesus' story about the shepherd calling his sheep by name. What kind of sheep are you?

I wonder what you like best about this story. Can you show it here?

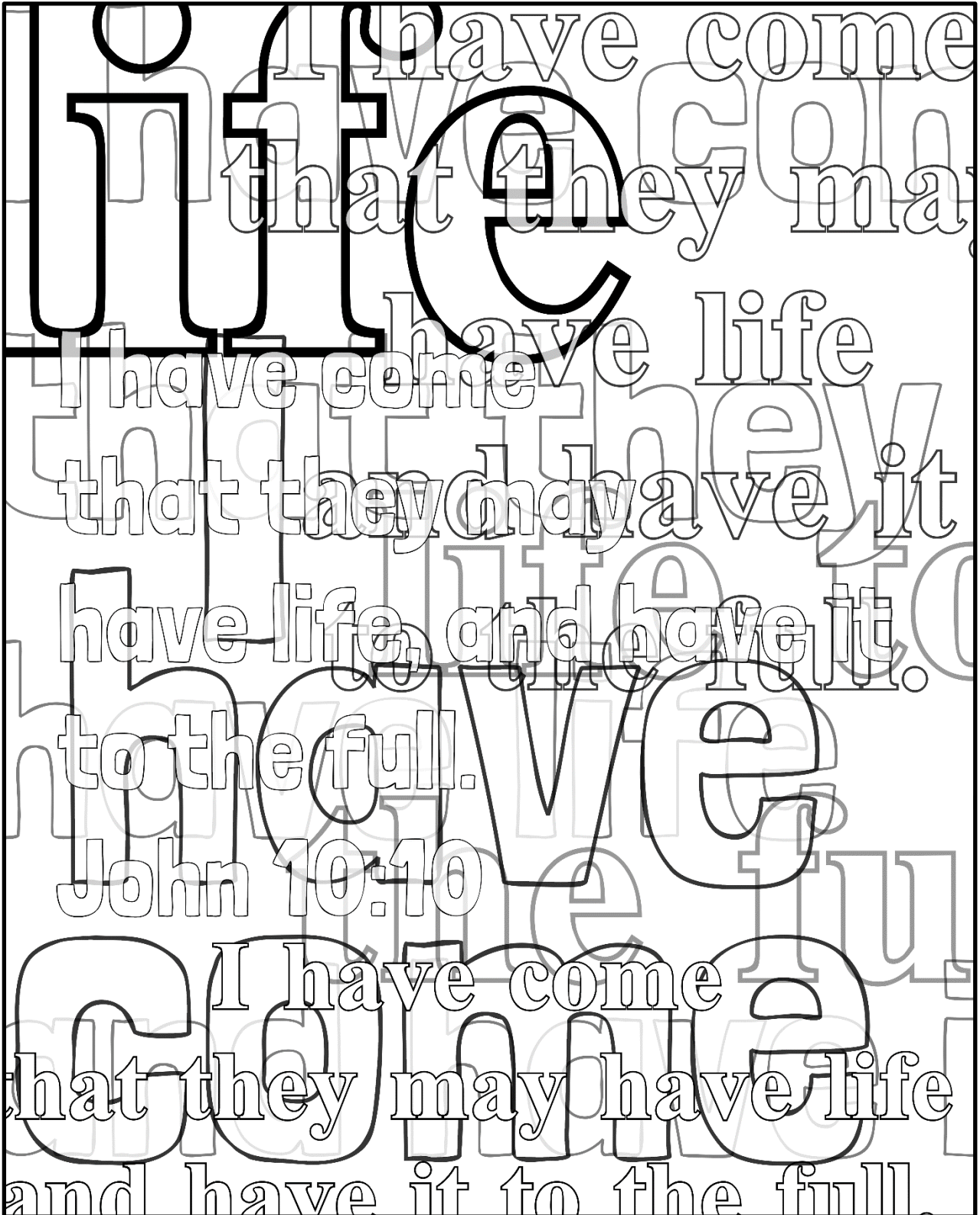
I wonder what which part you will remember?

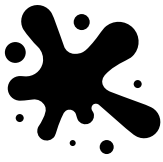


Take a Break

Put on some music, or listen to the passage being read out while you simply sit and be. You can colour the picture below, or fill it with zentangles, or you can just spend the time breathing.

John 10 on Bible Gateway audio [ESV](#) – [Message](#) – [NIV \(Dramatised\)](#) – [NIV \(Suchet\)](#)





Creation Station – Sheep Herding

Who can be the first shepherd to get all their sheep into the sheepfold? Make a flock of sheep and find out if they are really that good at following their shepherd's voice. This hilarious game will you have in a flap!

Also, check out the fabulous Racing Sheep in [the Psalm 23 edition of Together, Apart.](#)

You will need:

- Paper plates (6 for each person)
- Marker pens
- Cotton wool
- Glue stick
- Black paper & googly eyes (optional)
- Something to build a wall, such as Lego, books or shoes

What to do:

1. Flatten out five of your plates. These will be your flock. The sixth plate is your 'flapper'.
2. Give each sheep a face made of black paper or draw it on with marker pens. You can make legs as well if you like. Give each sheep a name.
3. Give your sheep a coat of cotton wool, but don't put too much on or they get hard to flap. (There's a bit too much on this one.)
4. Build a sheepfold out of books or shoes or Lego at the far end of the room. Make it a circle or square with a gap for the sheep to get in. The gap should be about 1½ times as wide as a plate (or wider for younger children).
5. When everyone has their sheep ready, you can put your flocks in different corners of the room. (Or you can play this outside if it's not too windy.)
6. On the word 'GO', you all start flapping with your spare plates, and call your sheep towards the sheepfold. (OK, calling them does not actually help, but it's fun.)
7. The winner is the first to get all of their sheep safely home, or the one with the most sheep home when everyone is too tired to keep flapping.





Outside In

"Stay with Us"

It's good to get outdoors if you can do so safely, being sure to follow physical distancing rules. If you can't get out, try bringing the outside in.

- Cut some sheep out of paper and added heads and legs with a black marker, then use blue-tack to stick them on your window so that it looks like there is a flock of sheep outside. Not in the countryside? Not a problem, make the sheep run down your road, or on the rooftops opposite!
- Dress all in white and spend the day being a sheep. Grass sandwiches, anyone?
- Get a lot of white cloth (towels, sheets, shirts etc) and some black trousers and see who can make the biggest / most beautiful / fattest / cheekiest sheep on the floor or in the garden.
- See if you can identify someone just by their voice. Choose one person to be the shepherd, and another to be the lost sheep. Blindfold the lost sheep (or turn off their camera if you are doing this via Skype) and everyone in turn recites a line of 'Baa, baa black sheep'. The lost sheep has to say which line was spoken by the shepherd.
- Look for sheep in the clouds. Can you make a picture with things from around the house and put sheepy clouds in the sky?

What else can you think of?

My ideas:

Which will you do this week?



High 5

Spend five minutes talking and listening with God. Here is one way:

Sheep and Shepherd Prayers

These prayers are based on Psalm 23. King David (who wrote the psalm) was a shepherd when he was younger, and he learned a lot about being content in God's care.

Lord, you are my shepherd, I lack nothing.

You have given me much, dear Lord. Please help me to be contented, not always yearning for more, more, more.

*You make me lie down in green pastures,
you lead me beside quiet waters, you refresh my soul.*

Faithful Spirit, in this stressful time, may I follow you in peaceful paths and lie down beside still waters, resting in your care.

You guide me along the right paths for your name's sake.

Good Shepherd, may I learn to hear your voice and to follow where you lead, for you always lead me along right paths.

*Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

Mighty Saviour, you have conquered darkness and have brought me to live in your light. Help me to see that light when all around me seems dark.

*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

Gracious Father, you invite me to share in your banquet as a dearly-loved child. Thank you for accepting me and welcoming me home.

*Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in your house, my Lord, forever.*

Eternal Lord, thank you that you knew me before I was born, you are with me through every day of my life, and I can live with you, now and for ever.

Amen.