



Session Two: Counterfeit vs Real



Key Passages: John 10:7-10, 14-18

Introduction: As in the last session, and before actually opening the Bible, ask people to share what John 10:10b means for them personally. *Note that other translations render this “life in all fullness”, “life abundantly” and “far more life than before.”*

Now think through their answers again, this time from a non-Christian’s perspective. Do their answers make sense? Are they understandable? Do they attract people to Christ?

Does this “life in all its fullness” seem real or counterfeit? Honestly! What has their experiences taught them?



Read John 10:7-10

Ask: What stands out for people from these verses? Why?

Consider how Jesus defines himself here. Note especially how “the gate” in those days was literally the shepherd himself, who lay in the gateway, knowing full well who was entering the sheep pen. Given this image, what does this tell us about Jesus – and this life that He brings?

Exercise: In pairs, define the “thieves” which seek to “steal and kill and destroy” which we might face today? How might we resist them?

Earlier, in verse 4, Jesus says that the sheep are obedient because they “know his voice.” How do we realistically do this, and ensure we are “tuned” to Jesus’ voice? How will this investment equip us for when the “thieves” (as defined) attack?

Quote: “I think everybody should get rich and famous and do everything they ever dreamed of, so they can see that it's not the answer.” Jim Carrey

How much do we need to hear this statement today? How might we model something different as followers of Jesus? Do we?

Can anyone recommend books and/or resources, or share stories, which have helped them in this?



Read John 10:14-18

Exercise: Ask a few people to share the best piece of advice that they were ever given (or heard someone else receive). What made this “the best”? What were the outcomes?

Now repeat this exercise, but this time asking for people’s worst advice stories. Again, what were the outcomes?

Input: Part of the challenge of following Christ is finding good advice – those who lead us deeper into this “life in all its fullness” because they are following Christ themselves. All too often, we are pressurised bad advice, by parental expectation, by societal norms, or by wrong circumstances that we find ourselves involved in (such as occult, spiritualism, etc). As believers, we long for real wisdom rather than counterfeit advice.

Look again at Jesus’ words here. His voice speaks as one who has laid down his life for us. He can only want the best for us. How do we ensure that we hear his voice above all others?

Think: And a lot of this is about **DECISION**. No one ever left Jesus saying: *That was a good sermon!* Jesus pressed people to decide, to act, to obey, to open their hearts, to follow! As disciples, there is a danger that we hear familiar words (as indeed we have done in this session) over and over again, and they fail to impact us as intended.

But it is also about **BELIEF**. Do we *really* believe Jesus’ words which we’ve heard tonight?!

Satan would love us to leave this meeting unmoved, and unaffected. And he wants us to believe that this is just fine. Contrast this with what Jesus would want for us!

Response: Based on where your conversation has travelled, shape the prayer time to suit. You may wish to:

- 1) Quietly allow space for people to repent of wrong decisions/wrong involvements/wrong relationships/wrong advice. If appropriate, ask people to courageously speak these out, and ask others to pray for them.
- 2) Allow people to share their frustrations and hurts – the counterfeit which has impacted on their loves. Encourage the group to pray for them, rather than offer further advice. Draw them back to Jesus’ words as the Good Shepherd.
- 3) Pray specifically for those who are looking, longing, for good advice at the moment. Ask them to share the situation (if they have not already done so). Now pray and purposely seek God’s wisdom, before coming together to share what people feel God is saying. Discuss this “advice” between you, and prayerfully commit this person(s) to the Lord.

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