

# Together by Design: God's Plan for His Church

Metaphor #2 "Flock"

May 16, 2021

*The church is where the Holy Spirit brings together believers in Jesus according to God's design.*

1. Five of six church metaphors have roots in the Old Testament
  - Family—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (12 tribes were his sons)
  - Flock—God as Shepherd; Israel his sheep (David is key here)
  - Field—the land belongs to God (Lev. 25:23)
  - Bride—the books of Song of Songs and Hosea
  - Body—*maybe by rejecting the LORD as their king, this was lost*
  - Building—Exodus (tabernacle) and 1 Kings (temple)

## The "flock of God" (Psa. 23; Ezek. 34; John 10; Acts 20; 1Pet. 5)

1. Four marks of false shepherds
  - Doing a job for pay and not **caring** (John 10:12-13)
  - **Minimizing** dangers (John 10:10; Acts 20:28-29)
  - Forgetting who's in **charge** (Psa. 23:1; 100:3)
  - Expecting a reward too **soon** (1 Pet. 5:1 and 4)
2. Four marks of false sheep
  - Keeping up a dangerous and deceitful **act** (Matt. 7:15)
  - **Bullying** other sheep (Ezek. 34:20-22)
  - Wanting to lead a **mini-flock** (Acts 20:30)
  - Not hearing and following Jesus' **voice** (John 10:26-27)

*And you, my sheep, the sheep of my pasture,  
are my people, and I am your God,  
declares the Sovereign Lord.*

Ezekiel 34:31

## On Your Own (better with a friend)

1. READ ALOUD Ezekiel 34:1-31. If in a small group with others, take turns each reading about five verses. What did you hear? Make a list of what God promises that he will do for his sheep.

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2. READ ALOUD John 10:1-30. If in a small group with others, take turns each reading about five verses. What did you hear? Make a list of what Jesus promises that he will do for his sheep.

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3. What about the metaphor of the church as the "flock of God" is easy to understand? What is difficult to understand?

4. Sheep are not the largest, strongest, smartest or fastest animals on the planet. Why would Jesus refer to his followers as sheep?

5. READ Isaiah 40:10-11. What attributes or qualities of God do you find in these verses? Which ones encourage you personally?