

# **Growth Group Questions**

*Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 21, 2024*

## **Introduction**

On the day of my ordination, the pastor who preached had as his theme “Be a shepherd, not a cowboy.” Why is the shepherd such a good picture of the pastor, and why is the cowboy not?

## **Into the Word** – Acts 20:28-32

1. Who does the Church belong to and how was it acquired? (v. 28) Why is that important for pastors and church leaders to remember?
2. Describe the kinds of “savage wolves” that Paul predicted for the Ephesians, and for us.
3. Why do you think Paul was brought to tears as he warned the Ephesians about these savage wolves?
4. Ultimately, what does Paul say in verse 32 is our hope and strength against those who would attack God’s flock?

## **Into the Word** – 1 John 4:1-6

5. God tells us to “test the spirits” who would teach us. What practical ways can you test pastors, churches, and groups that you come across?
6. John states that true teachers of the Gospel will confess that “Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.” Why is that such an essential teaching? (You may want to read the *People’s Bible*

on this section. It is excellent at describing the context of why John might have chosen this doctrine as the primary one for testing.)

7. Verses 4-6 give a second test to identify a true teacher. Who is the authoritative source that all true Christian teachers will adhere to?
8. Today, we might consider the authority of God’s Word and the proper use of the sacraments as two doctrines most under attack. Test the following statements. What’s wrong?
  - 1) The Bible contains the Word of God.
  - 2) The Lord’s Supper is a spiritual eating of Christ’s body and blood.

## **Into the Word** – John 10:11-18

9. What, above all, proves Jesus is our Good Shepherd? (v. 11)
10. What else does Jesus do for us as a shepherd?
11. What do you think Jesus meant when he said he had other sheep that aren’t a part of the sheep pen he was talking to? Why is that so important for us in particular?

## **Closing Prayer**

Savior and Shepherd, thank you for your protection and guidance. Help me to trust in your plan of goodness and lead me to find rest in knowing your care and concern for me. Help me to follow you more faithfully with every day. Amen.