John 10:11-21 Study Hints for Discussion

Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further are not actually intended to be the answers to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class. The Class Preparation Guide includes the questions below, and it can be given to students at the end of the previous class; then, they can pray, read, and think ahead to prepare for the next week’s Bible lesson. And/Or, consider giving each student the Verse-by-Verse Scripture Handout, which includes the Bible verses to be studied before class and other questions.

1. What is the difference between the good shepherd and the hired hand?

The good shepherd cares for each of his sheep as his own possession, and he will face danger to save any of his sheep. The hired hand works for wages and will run away when facing danger and leave the sheep unprotected.

2. How did Jesus describe His relationship with His sheep and His Father? What might He mean by this description?

Jesus knows His sheep and His sheep know Him. The Father knows Jesus and Jesus knows the Father. Jesus
and all who trust Him as their Lord and Savior have a close and personal relationship. The Father and the Son have a close and personal relationship.

3. What did Jesus say He was willing to do for His sheep? Did He do this for His sheep? 

Lay down His life. Yes, when He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins.

4. In addition to the people He was talking to, who might the other sheep be that Jesus wanted to bring into His sheepfold?

The Gentiles (those not Jews) who would come to believe in Him until He returned as He promised. They would listen to His voice and follow Him into the one sheepfold and join with the Jews who also believed in Him.

5. Why might it have been important for Jesus to teach that His Father had commanded Him to use His own power when He laid down His life in death and when He took it up again in rising from the dead?

Jesus taught that He only did what His Father commanded Him to do. Jesus obeyed His Father in everything He said and did. He said that His words were the words of His Father. Therefore, He said that when you saw Him, you saw the Father. Some might have thought that Jesus had chosen to die of His own will and that Jesus
chose to raise himself from the dead of His own will apart from what the Father wanted Him to do. Jesus wanted to teach that His Father and He were in perfect agreement regarding His life, way and time of death, and way and time of His resurrection. Only God could raise himself from the dead without external help, so in these words Jesus taught in advance that He was God and then He proved the fact by His way and time of death and resurrection.