



TIME OF GRACE®

Grace notes

Don't Take the Bait

John 10:7-18: ⁷ “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. ⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

Points to Ponder

1. How does the devil use our weaknesses to draw us away from God? Give some examples?
2. If you were the devil, what would you do to lure you? Is there someone in your life you can confess your answer to in order to protect yourself from that temptation?
3. Agree/Disagree—The devil is happy if you're a church-going, Bible-reading, hymn-singing Christian as long as you don't deal with your habitual sins.
4. The love of money was the bait the devil used on the disciple Judas. It led to Judas betraying Jesus to his enemies and ultimately Judas' suicide. Compare Matthew

26:69-75 and Mark 16:1-8. What does Peter's story teach us about what could have been the end to Judas' story?

5. When you are tempted by the devil's lures, why is it so comforting to remember that you have a Good Shepherd in Jesus?

What sort of bait tempts you? What is so interesting to you that you just might turn your back on God to swim toward it? Sadly, the devil knows that answer even better than you do. He sees your blind spots and has thousands of years of experience tempting people just like you. This message will uncover your idols so you know where to focus your defenses.

What else does God say?

James 4:7: Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

James 5:16: Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.