

A New Heart—Captives with Hope
Study Questions
Ezekiel 33:21-33; 34:11-16, 23-24

Warm-up

1) What kind of music do you like to listen to, and who are some of your favorite musicians? What do you like about them?

A little deeper

2) [Ezekiel 33:21-22] God had kept Ezekiel mute except to deliver His warnings about the fate of Jerusalem. Once the city fell, He released Ezekiel to speak as he wished, and His messages would become words of hope rather than of warning. **Why do you think God held Ezekiel back during the period of warning, but let him speak freely during the period of hope? What's a common response to words of warning, and how does that compare to common responses to words of hope?**

3) [Ezekiel 33:23-33] Many Israelites felt entitled to their homeland because they were descended from Abraham—they mistook God's blessing for their right. **What are some situations today in which we mistake some of our temporary or conditional blessings from God as things we're entitled to? Are there any warnings that people today generally agree are important, but then they don't do anything about them?**

4) [Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23-24] Through Ezekiel, God declared that He would shepherd His flock through Jesus, using the name of King David to give hearers a sense of who He would be. **What images from these verses resonate most deeply with you? Who are some people that need this sort of care in our communities, our workplaces, or in our wider world? What might it look like for our Shepherd to give them the care they need?**

Bringing it home

5) When have you felt the most loved by God?

6) In what ways are you like a stubborn and/or lost sheep right now? Is there anything that you're facing consequences for right now after turning away from God at some point in the past, or are there warnings you're hearing but doing nothing about?

What would it look like to turn toward God and let Him care for you again?

7) When have you been a shepherd to others on the Lord's behalf? How closely did the truth and love you shared with others reflect the truth and love Jesus would have shared? What opportunities do you have coming up in which you could allow our Good Shepherd to work through you?