

***I Made my Family Disappear - John 10:9-16***  
**Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

**Notes from the Sermon**

Kevin McAllister is kind of an American folk hero. Shamed and shunned by his family, he gets banished to the attic as punishment for being a bit of a troublemaker. But when the big family, including aunts, uncles, and cousins wakes up late on the morning of their trip to France for Christmas, they forget Kevin and he is left Home Alone. At first the kid is a bit afraid, but then he realizes he is totally independent, as he proclaims, "I made my family disappear." Meanwhile, two bandits, Harry and Marv, also known as the wet bandits are casing his neighborhood and decide that the best house to rob is the McAllister home. When they realize Kevin is by himself they believe it makes the house easy pickings, but nothing is further than the truth. Kevin comes up with a master plan to defend the house and stand against his fears, and what ensues is about fifteen minutes of booby traps and physical comedy that left audiences laughing and put Kevin McAllister (A.K.A. Macaulay Caulkin) on our list of heroes.

Kevin personifies the American spirit of independence, a kid who can accomplish anything he dreams. He doesn't need his parents, or help from the outside. From within he has everything needed to thwart Harry and Marv. I do believe this movie resonates deeply with us because it echoes the most significant claim in Western Culture, the claim of rugged individualism. This longing is actually rooted in something beautiful given to us by God, the realization that our lives have value and we should live them to count. But individualism turns that longing inward and makes the highest good the discovery of one's identity, the achievement of any goals, and the resiliency to make all your dreams come true. "Look within and you will find everything you need in life, and be true to yourself." This is the anthem of rugged individualism, and this ethos is baked into everything in American life. We really don't even realize it is there, it's just the water we swim in.

Our goal for this series has been to show how the Christmas story speaks into the longings of our hearts. One of the beautiful things about the first *Home Alone* is that Kevin does end up in a church and sees the transcendence of the Christmas story, even giving the old man Marley a word about the importance of family relationship. One of the interesting threads in the Christmas story that ties to an image throughout the Bible is the presence of shepherds. Angels appear to shepherds in Bethlehem. A thousand years earlier the would-be king David was at first a shepherd in this village. In fact, Bethlehem itself is a shepherding village, with its primary purpose to produce sheep for Temple sacrifices and worship. David pens what is probably the most famous Psalm extolling God as his shepherd and the shepherd of Israel. Furthermore, the image of God as the shepherd of Israel is echoed in the prophets throughout the Old Testament. So Jesus is born in this village, and shepherds are the first outside of Jesus' parents to see and worship Him at His birth. During His ministry, as Jesus is teaching Israel about His own identity He declares, "I am the Good Shepherd," a name echoing David's Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd." the beauty here is that Jesus is giving us a beautiful alternative to the American Gospel of individualism. In John 10:10 Jesus declares, "The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." Individualism tells us that fulfillment and happiness come through self-actualization and pursuing your inner voice. Jesus actually reminds us that this is the voice of the enemy, the thief. That's the same declaration Satan made to Adam and Eve in the garden. Instead, Jesus tells us that full, joyful, abundant life comes not by pursuing your dreams, rather in the submitting to the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd loves His sheep, calls out to them, leads them into His blessing and rescues them. He gives them a flock, a community where they find this abundant life together. It is funny that Jesus compares us to sheep. In the herd with the shepherd sheep are safe. Yet, sheep tend to wander, and when they go out on their own, when they get alone they are always in danger.

Sheep will walk off cliffs, fall into caves, or get stuck in one place and eat themselves to death. And lonely sheep are bait for wolves. While we love the fictional stories of self-made heroes, the truth is that the American dream and our pursuit of self has left us lonely, depressed, and wanting.

We need a Good Shepherd, a rescuer who laid down His life for us. Later in John 10 Jesus tells these people that His sheep will hear His voice and follow. It's a vivid picture of the call of the Gospel, the voice of Jesus coming to us and the response of laying aside my life goals and dreams and following Christ as the true shepherd. Truth is that He has much bigger dreams and purposes for our lives, and He is the one who leads us to full pastures, living water, and safe rest.

For Kevin McAllister, the truth is that his self resiliency would have actually gotten him killed (or at least his fingers bitten off) by the wet bandits. In both Home Alone movies Kevin's ingenuity does end up with him getting caught by Harry & Marv who are ready to off him. He needed a savior to rescue him from the bandits and from himself. We do too.

### **Bible Reading for the Week**

#### **Daily Bible Readings**

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Jeremiah 10	Jeremiah 11	Jeremiah 12	Jeremiah 13	Jeremiah 14	Jeremiah 15	Jeremiah 16

Reading from this past week's sermon: John 10:9-16

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Psalm 1

### **Family Worship**

Song - *Tell me the Story of Jesus*

<https://youtu.be/yuzKFHLYjpg?si=HrVzHSf0Pn2LO8wo>

#### **Gospel Project**

Unit: Hope for the Captives

Story: Daniel's Prophecies

Big Picture Question: How can we glorify God?

Answer: We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.

Scripture: Daniel 7-12

#### **New City Catechism**

Question 52: What hope does everlasting life hold for us?

Answer: That we will live with and enjoy God forever in the new heaven and the new earth, where we will be forever freed from all sin in a renewed, restored creation.

Verse: Revelation 21:1-4

John 10:9-16

- What are some ways the American Gospel of individuality is "baked in" to our culture without us even knowing it? How does Kevin represent this?
- What does Jesus intend to communicate about Himself and us in the name the Good Shepherd?
- How is following Jesus as our shepherd better than living for your own dreams and goals?

#### **Prayer**

\*Pray that we would realize our search for significance is fulfilled in trusting in the Good Shepherd rather than looking within.

\*Pray for our teens at Xtreme Winter and our college students and young adults headed to CrossCon.