

## John - Lesson 10

John Chapter 10

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Memory verse for this week: *Prov 17:17 A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*

**Introduction:** In the last two weeks, we saw Jesus give sight to a blind man. You would have thought those Pharisees, the leading religious group, would have been rejoicing to see a man blind from birth receive his sight. But because it was done on the sabbath, all they did was find fault. But Jesus taught that it was lawful to do good on every day, including the sabbath. When they brought the blind man in and said Jesus was a great sinner, and asked them who healed his eyes, his response was great.

*John 9:24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. John 9:25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.*

This man knew that Jesus was the one who healed him. We who know Jesus as Savior now have spiritual eyesight and are no longer blind to the tricks of Satan.

**Overview of John 10:** The first half of John 10 is Jesus' discourse on the good shepherd. Whether the teaching took place immediately after the events in chapters 8 and 9 (in the fall) or just prior to verse 22 (in the winter) is not clear. However, sheep typically spent the nights in the fields in mild weather, but in the fold when winter arrived. Therefore, the winter season might be inferred here. Moreover, the shepherd and sheep motif is used again later in the chapter, implying the latter. In the latter half of the chapter, Jesus, in returning to the Temple, is once again accosted by the Jews whence He again sets forth His Deity. The Jews threaten to stone Him. He, in return, presents forceful logic from the Scripture maintaining His claim of Deity, yet avoiding a climatic showdown. His hour still was not come.

### I. Christ the Good Shepherd, the Door of the Sheep

*John 10:1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*

*John 10:2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.*

*John 10:3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he*

*callesh his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.*

The important thing in these first three verses is to understand that Jesus came to lead the Jews out of Judaism, and they refused to hear him. The porter that openeth has a twofold meaning. The first being John the Baptist who came proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah sent from God. The second, larger meaning of the porter that openeth is the Holy Ghost.

No one will be saved unless the Holy Spirit opens his or her eye of understanding and draws them to God. Christ is clearly the door of the sheep. Many want to come to God on their own terms or come a different way than the way God set up for salvation. But if we don't come through Jesus, we will never enter heaven. It says that anyone who tries to come up another way is a thief and a robber. Jesus first entered into heaven, and we now come to God through him. He is the true door.

*Heb 4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*

*Heb 4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.*

*Heb 4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

*Heb 10:11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:*

*Heb 10:12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;*

*Heb 10:13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.*

*Heb 10:14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

*Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,*

*Heb 13:21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

*John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

*Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

*1 Pet 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

Once again, a message of great importance is verbally highlighted by our Lord's use of "verily, verily, I say unto you." It was Jesus' way of foretelling His disciples, something of importance was impending. Jesus developed a precise allegory of the details of middle- eastern shepherding. He defines not only His personal love and concern as the Chief Shepherd (I Peter 5:4), but also for all spiritual shepherds who will follow after Him. In the first century A.D. in Judea, those who would shepherd sheep, often would build a fold adjacent to their house.

It frequently was a part of the courtyard of the home. A wall or fence, forming the outer court of the house, also served as the sheepfold, particularly during the winter. At that time of year, the shepherd would lead his flock into the fold (the courtyard of his house) at night. The gate (or door) was locked and all settled down for the night. Then in the morning, he would lead them out again to find pasture. As in the old American West with its cattle rustlers, sheep stealers were not unknown in biblical times. Their motive was simple—to steal sheep to be sold for butchering or resale. Such rustlers typically operated at night and came over the wall to steal sheep.

Obvious truth is stated. The shepherd came and went by the door. A porter was a servant of the household who was charged with making sure the door was closed or open as the occasion required. He would take orders from the master of the house who also was the shepherd. Some have likened the porter to the ministry of the Holy Spirit who prepares and even opens hearts.

Jewish shepherds of the day often would give names to their sheep. The sheep knew not only their name, but they also knew the very voice of their shepherd. Pastors to this day know the phenomenon of their people instantly knowing their voice over the telephone. Notice also how a shepherd leads his flock. Because the sheep know, love, and trust their shepherd; they will willingly follow him.

## **II. The Leader of the Sheep**

*John 10:4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.*

*John 10:5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.*

J. Vernon McGee said that when he was in Bethlehem, he spent some time looking over a sheepfold. A sheepfold is an enclosure where shepherds put their sheep for the night. The porter has charge of it. Then the shepherd spends the night in his own bed. When he comes to the sheepfold in the morning, his sheep are all mixed up with somebody

else's sheep—there are no brands or markings on sheep. How does he get the sheep that are his? He calls them by name. The sheep don't know their name, but they know the shepherd's voice. Same is with us. We who know Christ are kept by the porter, the Spirit of God. If the porter opens, the sheep hear.

We see that Jesus is the door way to heaven to His sheep, and that his own sheep follow Him. We that know Christ as Savior are led by the Holy Spirit of God who has come inside and dwells inside the believer. We are temples of the Holy Ghost today. And when we are spoken to by the Lord, it may be a quiet inner voice, but God talks to us. And He, Jesus, will lead us to go wherever he beckons. You can watch even a normal herd of sheep, and when the shepherd, the master of the sheep calls, they will come to that one voice.

Even raising cattle on the farm taught me how the animals come to know their masters voices. If my dad was sick, or for some reason the feeding of the cattle fell to me in the winter time, I had a very difficult time getting the cows and calves to come to my voice. But if they were hungry enough, they normally would eventually come. The scripture says in verse 5 that the Christians will not follow the voice of a stranger. Are you following that inner voice, the leadership of the Holy Spirit today? Or has Satan blinded your eyes and you follow that false voice and do the works of the deceiver. God help us to be spirit led people. Notice that the true shepherd does not drive the flock, but walks before them and leads them. If God is not leading in our lives, we are getting ahead of God. But if we will go slowly, at God's speed, He will direct our every path.

*Psa 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*

Shepherds who have built rapport, trust, and confidence in their flock rather lead and the sheep follow willingly. At times, more than one flock was placed into a fold at night. However, in the morning when the shepherds would take their flocks out to pasture, each flock followed their own shepherd. They knew him and recognized his voice. The *stranger* referenced here well may have been that of another shepherd. But the flock did not know him. Therefore, they fled from him because they did not know his voice.

*John 10:6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.*

*John 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.*

*John 10:8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.*

*John 10:9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*

In verse 6, the allegory of sheep and shepherding is an accurate picture of the greater spiritual truths of our Lord's relationship to us as well as those whom He has called as under-shepherds for His people. Unfortunately, His audience, certainly Jews, perhaps in the Temple, and no doubt His disciples, did not understand the allegory.

Jesus was the true door. In Isaiah 11 it said that He was a rod out of the stem of Jesse. By the time Jesus came, the royal line of David had dropped back to the level of the peasant. There was no more royalty. Jesse had been a farmer down in Bethlehem. He raised sheep for a living. His son, David, had the anointing oil poured on him, and that line became the kingly line. But when the Lord Jesus was born, He was just a branch out of the stem of Jesse, the peasant. Jesus came as a servant, a humble carpenter in a carpenter's robe. How accurately the prophecy was fulfilled.

When we are walking in God's Will, we are being led by Jesus. God is clear that only those who come in by the door, and Jesus is that door, will be saved and go in and out and find pasture. God wants us to have a full and complete life. He will provide for us if we will look to him.

*Psa 23:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*Psa 23:2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*Psa 23:3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

*Psa 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

Jesus repeated the allegory, but this time with specific application. Once again, He highlighted the importance of what He was about to say with His introduction, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." The simple but profound truth is uttered, "I am the door of the sheep." Another one of our Lord's metaphors beginning with 'I am' is presented (recall "I am the bread of life" John 6:48; "I am the light of the world" John 8:12).

The metaphor of the door to the sheepfold clearly is an implication to the ultimate fold of heaven. Jesus is the door to that fold. He is the only legitimate entrance thereto. With simple understanding, our Lord rules out all religious rite, ritual, works and sacraments as the entrance to heaven's fold.

Any religious leader or preacher who presents any other way into the fold than through the Door are "thieves and robbers." As pointed out in verse 8.

This is strong language. Yet our Lord so described all who prescribe any other way than through Him.

*Joh 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

His sheep will not hear them because they do not recognize their voices. Christians who have been carefully taught His voice will immediately detect the voice of a false prophet. They may not be able to specifically articulate what is wrong, but they know such an one is not of the Chief Shepherd.

In verse 9, Jesus further emphasized and expanded His point. Not only is He the door, but by Him “if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” The key truth is that Jesus is the door to the fold. He is the door to salvation. There is no other way. Moreover, upon accepting Him as the door and way, He then becomes the entrance to not only the fold of heaven, but also to God’s green pastures.

### **III. Christ is the Safety of the Sheep**

*John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*  
*John 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*

The fellow who seeks entrance to the fold other than through the door is called a *thief*. His purposes are dishonest and he may resort to violence, destruction, and even death. (Sheep rustlers came to steal sheep to butcher or sell them. Jesus so likens religious leaders who advocate any other way than the Door.)

Jesus, the Good Shepherd is come “that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.” Not only does our Lord offer eternal life in heaven’s fold, He offers a fullness of life in the meantime. The word translated as more abundantly (perisso *perissos*) has the sense of superior, extraordinary, surpassing, extreme, and over abundant. In regard to life, it presents a quality of life which surpasses anything the world can offer. It is the ultimate of fulfillment, the ultimate of peace, the ultimate of happiness. It is found only in Christ!

In verse 11, Jesus now presented an even deeper truth concerning Himself. He advanced another metaphor beginning with ‘I am.’ “I am the good shepherd.” In the New Testament, the word good (here, kalos *kalos*) reflects the epitome of virtue, integrity, decency, and love. There are few if any adjectives which describe a higher level of godly character than the simple word *good*. Jesus is not only our shepherd, He is the *Good* Shepherd. Moreover, He adds a new dimension. This Good Shepherd will give His life for His sheep. In the real world of sheep and shepherds, even the finest of shepherds would not forfeit his life for a sheep. He might fight off a wild animal to protect the sheep. But in the final analysis, few if any would actually die for one of their sheep.

The spiritual superiority of our Lord here shines through with brilliance. He would so die, and did. When Jesus instructed Peter to “feed my sheep” in John 21:17, it literally meant to ‘shepherd my sheep.’ Likewise in I Peter 5:2 wherein we read, “Feed the flock of God which is among you,” the thought literally is ‘pastor the flock of God.’ In each of these cases, the words translated as feed derive from the word (poimainw) *poimano* which is the verb form of the noun *poimen*. *Poimano* simply means to ‘pastor’ or to ‘shepherd.’

Who is the thief? It is Satan. He doesn’t want us to experience all the blessings of God that He has in store for those who love Him. Jesus said that Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy. Jesus came as the Great Shepherd to love and restore. He says he came to give us life, and to have it more abundantly. I was reading one of John Wesley’s sermons last week, and he said each of us can choose which life we want in the Lord. We can go the low road, and only know Jesus as Savior and never experience the abundant life that only He can give.

Sure, we may know Him as Savior, but if you never read the Word, you don’t grow in the Word, you become spiritually a dwarf. But if you’ll go the high road in Wesley’s term, you can experience a life that is full and abundant. What a great blessing to not have just salvation, but a life overflowing with blessings down here. And that all begins by submission to God’s Will, and giving of ourselves. Not just our money, but our time and our talents. God can take a little and make it go a long, long way.

*Mal 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

*John Gill said this about verse 11.*

#### **John 10:11**

**I am the good shepherd**,.... A shepherd of his Father's appointing, calling, and sending, to whom the care of all his sheep, or chosen ones, was committed; who was set up as a shepherd over them by him, and was entrusted with them; and who being called, undertook to feed them; and being promised, was sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and under the character of a shepherd, died for them, and rose again, and is accountable to his Father for everyone of them; the shepherd, the great and chief shepherd, the famous one, so often spoken and prophesied of, Gen 49:24. And discharging his office aright, he is the good shepherd; as appears in his providing good pasture, and a good fold for his sheep; in protecting them from their enemies; in healing all their diseases; in restoring their souls when strayed from him; in watching over them in the night seasons, lest any hurt them; in searching for them, when they have been driven, or scattered in the dark and cloudy day; in caring for them, so that he lose none of them; and in nothing more than in what follows.

*John 10:12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.*

*John 10:13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*

In verse 12, the reference to an *hireling* in American vernacular would be 'a hired hand.' When he sees a wolf approaching, his instinct is to clear out of there and let the wolf take his pick. His problem is that he doesn't care about the sheep. What clearly is implied is that the Good Shepherd will not leave His sheep in the lurch.

*Isa 40:11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*

***Eze 34:1*** *And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

*Eze 34:2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?*

*Eze 34:3 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.*

*Eze 34:4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.*

*Eze 34:5 And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.*

*Eze 34:6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.*

*Eze 34:7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;*

*Eze 34:8 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;*

*Eze 34:9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;*

*Eze 34:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.*

*Eze 34:11 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.*

*Eze 34:12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.*

*Eze 34:13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.*

*Eze 34:14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of*



*Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.*  
*Eze 34:15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD.*  
*Eze 34:16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.*

*John 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.*

Jesus is the Good shepherd. He knows the true sheep, and the true Christians know Him.

So what have we learned so far in these verses. Let's review.

1. "Door into the sheepfold" in verse 1. The sheepfold is the nation of Israel Jesus came to lead His sheep out of Judaism, out from the legalistic system. (But they would not hear)
2. "Door of the sheep" in verse 7. Jesus is the Door for those coming out of Judaism and to all who will come to God for salvation.
3. "The Door" in verse 9. Jesus Christ is the Door for both Jew and Gentile. He is the Door of salvation. Freedom to go in and out and find pasture is the liberty of the sons of God in Christ Jesus.
4. Jesus is the Good Shepherd.

#### **IV. Jesus Lays Down His Life for the Sheep**

*John 10:15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.*

This verse speaks of the deity of Jesus. Both He and God and the Holy Spirit make up the trinity, the perfect God-Head. But they are distinct in name and part. But the three always have the same mindset. Like God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost have all the same mind of God, we as Christians are commanded to be like-minded, and that is to have the mind of Christ. Christ was separate in that he was the one who came in the flesh and gave his life a sacrifice for our sins.

Jesus as the Good Shepherd is the exact opposite to 'hired-hand' shepherds. He knows His own, and they know Him. Jesus added further insight. Just as His Father knows Him and Christ knows the Father, so Christ would lay down His life for the sheep. Further repetition of this prophecy only serves to emphasize it.

Matthew Henry had this to say about verse 15.

"I lay down my life for the sheep" Jesus declares his purpose of dying for his flock. He

not only ventured his life for them (in such a case, the hope of saving it might balance the fear of losing it), but he actually deposited it, and submitted to a necessity of dying for our redemption; I put it as a pawn or pledge; as purchase-money paid down. Sheep appointed for the slaughter, ready to be sacrificed, were ransomed with the blood of the shepherd. He laid down his life, not only for the good of the sheep, but in their stead. Thousands of sheep had been offered in sacrifice for their shepherds, as sin-offerings, but here, by a surprising reverse, the shepherd is sacrificed for the sheep. When David, the shepherd of Israel, was himself guilty, and the destroying angel drew his sword against the flock for his sake, with good reason did he plead, "These sheep, what evil have they done? Let their hand be against me. But the Son of David was sinless and spotless; and his sheep, what evil have they not done? Yet he saith, "Let thine hand be against me." What love Jesus showed to you and me.

*John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

*John 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.*

*John 10:18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*

What other sheep did Jesus have here that he speaks of that are not of this fold? Most likely, according to John Calvin, Jesus spoke of the Gentiles. We know that the vast majority of the Jews rejected Christ as Messiah. We know Jesus came to do the very Will of God, and that Will was for him to live the sinless life, and then come and die on the Cross. Remember what John said when Jesus came on the scene.

*John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

Some rather bizarre ideas have come from Jesus comment, "other sheep I have which are not of this fold." Some have even tried to build a case for alien civilizations in some distant galaxy to which Jesus supposedly referred. Rather, the simple explanation no doubt is that the gospel would go not only to the house of Israel, but also to the gentile world. Indeed, in contrast to the historical resistance of most Jews, the gentile world proved to be a fertile field for the gospel to this day.

In Ephesians 2:12-18, the Apostle Paul later expanded how in Christ, both Jew and gentile would be one in Christ. This no doubt is what Jesus alludes to in His comment that "there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

In Revelation, it says he was a lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Our sins did not catch God by surprise. Even before we were created, God the Father and the Son set up the way of salvation for fallen man.

*Rev 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

Jesus proceeded to further foretell not only His death but also His resurrection. Of interest is that He in part equates His Father's intense love for Him because "I lay down my life, that I might take it again." Jesus made it clear that His death would be voluntary on His part. He would willingly give His life for His sheep. The word translated as power (*exousia exousia*) though having the sense of 'authority,' also has the more basic idea of 'power of choice.'

Jesus made it clear that His Father had granted Him ("This commandment have I received of my Father") the authority to voluntarily lay down His life as well as the authority to raise again. The New Testament sets forth a dual authority concerning the resurrection. On the one hand, God the Father clearly "raised him" (Romans 10:9), yet Jesus Himself said, He would raise up His own temple in John 2:19. Both, in fact, were operative.

*John 10:19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.*

*John 10:20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?*

*John 10:21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?*

Once again, there was division among his listeners. Indeed, truth at times divides. Those who genuinely desire the truth are divided against those who, for ulterior motives, wish the truth to be obscured. No doubt both were in view here. As in John 7:20 and 8:48, Jesus again was accused of having a *devil*, literally a 'demon.' They may have intended to imply He was demon possessed. Others defended Him in that one being possessed by a demon would not and could not open the eyes of the blind.

There were many who simply could not believe. But some were wise and asked a good question.

"Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" I know Satan has great powers to deceive, but I doubt even if he could that he would. He is the ultimate liar and deceiver, and does not want to help anyone, but to bring all who he can to the pit of hell.

*2 Cor 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:*

*2 Cor 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

## **V. The Discourse at the Feast of Dedication**

*John 10:22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.*

*John 10:23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.*

*John 10:24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.*

*John 10:25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.*

Several months had passed since Jesus attended the Feast of Tabernacles and His discourse on

the sheep and the good shepherd. It was now winter (December). He returned to Jerusalem and the Temple for the Feast of Dedication. This festival historically was the predecessor to the modern observance of Hanukkah.

The vast majority of the Jews never truly believed that Jesus was the true Christ. Even today, there is a veil over their eye of understanding, and few have found Jesus as Savior that are Jews. Here, they question Christ as to His Deity. Christ had told them who he was before, and they believed him not.

*John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.*

*John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.*

*John 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.*

*John 5:20 For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.*

*John 5:21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.*

*John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:*

*John 5:23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.*

*John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

*John 5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.*

*John 5:26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;*

*John 5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*

Not only had Jesus told them who He was, (God in the flesh), but He did many great works in God's name, yet they rejected Him.

*John 6:36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.*

*John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

*John 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

*John 6:39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

*John 6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

*John 6:41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.*

*John 6:42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother*

*we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?*

*John 6:43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.*

*John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

*John 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

*John 6:46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.*

The Jewish leadership again accosted Jesus, seeking to ensnare Him, thus giving them a pretense to arrest Him. The phrase, "How long dost thou make us to doubt?" was an idiomatic way of saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense?" "If thou be the Christ tell us plainly?" The idea here is not that they were actually contemplating if Jesus were the Messiah. Rather, they wanted Him to openly declare that. Then they would have occasion to accuse Him of insurrection which they later did before Pilate. Jesus avoided so describing Himself because He was well aware of the political implications of the term.

He, no doubt, remembered that the common people of Galilee wanted Him as Messiah to lead an uprising against Rome (John 6:14). Later at His trial before the Sanhedrin when Jesus did so admit before Caiaphas, they immediately declared Him guilty of blasphemy. Whereupon they took Him to Pilate with the charge of seeking to overthrow Caesar (Matthew 26:63). Jesus knew too well their strategy and would not play into it.

In verse 25, Jesus replied, "I told you, and ye believed not." In His previous visits to the Temple and in debating with them, He had shown He was the Son of the Father (John 7:14-10:18) as well as in John 5:17-47. He therefore said, "the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me."

Jesus in effect said, 'If you don't believe what I say, believe the works which I have *done* in my Father's name. You cannot dispute them. They bear witness to who I am.' Notwithstanding, the Jewish leadership would ignore both.

*John 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.*

Jesus tells them that the reason that they believed not is because they were not his sheep. And if we are the true sheep of the Lord, we will show it in our lives. Our lives will be patterned after Jesus Christ, and there will be fruits.

*Mat 7:18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

*Mat 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

*Mat 7:20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

*John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*

Last week we talked about how the shepherds would leave their sheep in the sheepfold overnight

with the other various flocks, and then the next morning that shepherd would call out his sheep. Only his sheep came out, because they knew their master's voice. When we know the Lord as our Savior, we hear His voice and follow his call.

His thought continues, you won't believe "because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." Jesus recounted back several months earlier when He then made the point in 10:1-18 that they were not His sheep. Therefore, they did not know or recognize Him.

They presented themselves as pious religious leaders when in fact they were wolves in sheep's clothing. Once again, Jesus reiterated as He did in 10:4, 14 that *His* sheep heard His voice and followed Him. What is obvious is that these professional religionists did neither. What is further of comfort is that Jesus knows His sheep. The word translated as know (ginwskw *ginosko*) has the sense of 'personal knowledge' or 'experiential knowledge.' What is implied is that our Lord knows more than just about us. He knows us (personally). There is personal intimacy of fellowship implied.

John Calvin in his commentary on John said this about verse 27. "Christ uses two contrasting arguments to show that they are not his "sheep" because they do not obey the gospel. For God effectually calls those whom He has elected, so that Christ's "sheep" are proved by their faith. Indeed, believers are called "sheep" because they surrender themselves to God to be ruled by the hand of the head Shepherd and putting away their original fierceness, becomes meek and teachable. It is a great comfort to godly teachers that although most people in the world do not listen to Christ, he has his "sheep" whom He knows and by whom He is also known."

- We need to remember that the believer is Christ's sheep, not his own or someone else's sheep.
- The believer hears Christ's voice, not another's.
- The believer is under Christ's knowledge, not his own thinking about the matter or some other's.
- The believer has been given eternal life, Christ's gift to all who will believe.
- The believer has been given Christ's Promise that he will never perish, and his promises are always true.

*John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

*John 10:29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

*John 10:30 I and my Father are one.*

Here is the blessed assurance for the believer.

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, has given us "eternal life." By its very nature, eternal life is forever. It does not last only until some sin, doubt, or moment of weakness causes us to 'fall away.' For if that

were the case, the life given would not be eternal. The tense is present in distinction to future. Jesus did *not* say, 'I *will* give them eternal life (someday).' The sheep already have it. If it therefore is eternal, and if they presently have it, how can it be abrogated?

Furthermore, He added, "and they shall never perish!" Those who claim the doctrine of eternal security is satanic can only argue with God's Word. He said, we who believe shall *never* perish. The security of the believer is clear, forceful and unmistakable.

Those disposed to thinking a believer can lose his salvation like to turn to the latter portion of this verse and claim that though no one else can pluck them out of His hand, the believer himself can so extricate himself from God's hand. The idea is of a wild animal (such as a wolf or a bear) attempting to snatch the helpless sheep from the Good Shepherd's hand. His omnipotence precludes that. Moreover, the powerful hand of the shepherd which keeps the wolf from the sheep also keeps the sheep from the wolf. The argument of a sheep extricating himself from the shepherd to go off into sin with the wolf is folly.

The Good Shepherd has not only a vested interest but also a personal interest in His sheep. He will protect the sheep not only from predators, but also from their own folly. Over and above that, His Father which gave the sheep to Him "is greater than all." Not only is the protective power and authority of the Good Shepherd in view, but that also of His heavenly Father. Praise God, there is nothing able to remove us from our Father's hand, be it "death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

To presume otherwise is to call into question the protective power, authority, and supremacy of God! He is greater than all, including our own sin.

How can anyone doubt the security of our souls if they read verse 28. Jesus never did anything part of the way. I see no record of someone coming to him blind in two eyes and getting partial sight in his eyes or only getting one eye healed. When Jesus did something, He did it totally, and He needed no one else to help Him. If Jesus promises eternal life to all those who will believe in Him as Savior, who are we to think we can change that.

It is not in our works that we are saved, but in the shed blood of our Savior. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith, and we are sealed unto the day of redemption of the Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord for verse 29... NO MAN is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. That means no one, not even ourselves. We may be unfaithful to Jesus, but He, who can not lie, will never forsake one of his true sheep.

*Heb 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*Eph 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

I really enjoyed what J. Vernon McGee said about the security of the believer.

He said "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Friend, when He gives to them eternal life, that means they don't earn it and they don't work for it. He gives it to them. Note that it is eternal life... it is forever. If it plays out in a week or in a year or until they sin, life does not last forever. The sheep may be in danger, but the Shepherd will protect them. They may be scattered, but He will gather them up again. They shall never perish. May they backslide? Yes. Will they perish? No. The sheep may get into a pigpen, but there has never yet been a sheep in a pigpen that stayed in a pigpen. Sheep and pigs do not live together. The sheep is always a sheep. No man can pluck that sheep out of the Savior's hand. This is wonderful. No created thing can take the sheep out of His hand. " We should realize as a saved child of the Lord that we are in Christ's hand, and there is no one or any power that can remove us from His hand. We are a Gift to Christ from the all-powerful Father. We didn't give ourselves to Christ, God selected and gave us to the Son.

*John 10:31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.*

*John 10:32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?*

*John 10:33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*

We see that Christ makes it clear that He is the Son of God. He and the Father are one, and the Jews refuse to accept this. They take up stones to stone him. Jesus' works were undeniable. His miracles were seen by literally thousands of people. And he asks, of which of these good works do ye stone me? They came back and said it was not for the good works, but because he blasphemed God in making Himself equal to God. But His Words were true.

In continuing the debate with His antagonists, Jesus added, "I and my Father are one." What clearly is implied is that He and the Father are of one unity, one essence, one purpose and one character. Jesus in effect equated Himself with God. Once again, His Deity is clearly in view. That point was not missed by His enemies. They took up stones to stone Him (again). The *again* refers to John 8:59 as well as 5:18.

*Joh 8:59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.*

*Joh 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.*

This is not the first time they sought to stone Him for equating Himself with God. What is further implied is how they, with missiles in hand, had their arms cocked, ready to rain stones upon Him. Jesus' reply was that He had done many good works before them (e.g., the healing of the impotent man in John 5, and of the blind man in John 9). He asked, "for which of those good works do ye stone me?" He made it difficult for them to proceed. They quickly regrouped and replied, "for



blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.” They clearly understood His claim in verse 30 when Jesus presented His Deity. They rejected it. They resorted to Leviticus 24:16 as their justification. Yet, His hour was not yet come. Jesus therefore with perfect polemic turned their charge on its head.

*John 10:34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?*

*John 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;*

*John 10:36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?*

*John 10:37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.*

*John 10:38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.*

Jesus tells them the scriptures cannot be broken, and that is so true. And the Word of God does not contradict itself either. Jesus tried to make them know that He was doing the Works of God, and because of that, had to be from the Father. Looking back, it is hard to believe that they could not see the truth. But most likely, had we have been there, and ingrained with the law the way they were, neither would we have believed.

Jesus quoted from Psalm 82:6 wherein Jehovah God had impugned the leadership of ancient Israel calling them derisively ‘gods.’ They, as the representatives of God, had abused their position and God in Psalm 82 took them to task. Jesus now applied this condemnation to the rabbis snarling around Him. His logic was powerful in answering the charge of blasphemy.

Its condensed essence is: ‘If God called them gods, are you therefore saying, He whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world blasphemes because He said, “I am the Son of God?” If I don’t do the works of my Father, don’t believe me. But if I do His works, even though you don’t believe me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him.’ To further summarize, Jesus said, why do you accuse me of blasphemy if God called your forefathers gods. If for no other reason believe on me because of the works I have done.

The phrase, “the scripture cannot be broken,” literally means the Scripture cannot be abrogated or disannulled. In applying Psalm 82:6 to them, Jesus reminded them they could not ignore it. Therefore, they could not ignore Him.

Finally, Jesus once again equated Himself with His Father in verse 38, further reinforcing His claim of Deity. He would later expand and build upon this very statement—“the Father is in me, and I in him”—in John 14:10 as well as 17:22,23.

*John 10:39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,*

*John 10:40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.*

As had been the case so many other times, they intended to stop him, to put him to death, but he escaped. And why was that? Because His time was not yet come. Remember when they were going to take hold on the Lord earlier, and he walked right past them. God had a perfect time for

Jesus to be born, and he had a time to die on Calvary. No one would stay those appointed times.

Once again, the Jewish authorities sought to arrest Him, but still His time was not at hand. The word translated as escape (*exercomai exerchomai*) has a sense of simply departing. Jesus just got up and disappeared into the crowd. He then went “beyond Jordan” to the place where John had initially baptized. This is identical language with John 1:28. The place is likely was Bethabara (the house of the ford) and is known more recently as the fords of Abarah. This may correspond to Luke 13:22 as the starting point whence Jesus made His final journey to Jerusalem.

*John 10:41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.*

*John 10:42 And many believed on him there.*

Meanwhile, “many resorted unto him.” They noted that John did no miracles; nevertheless, all which John spoke of Jesus was true. John’s earlier ministry had prepared receptive soil for the seed of the gospel. It now sprang forth and bore much fruit. “many believed on him there.”

It is interesting to see Jesus return to the place where John the Baptist first preached and baptized. It says that many resorted to him, and John did no miracle. Think it is important to realize that John came preaching the Gospel, but did no miracles.

In the book, “Exploring the Gospels” by John Phillips, he notes

“People remembered how John had identified with Jesus. “John” they said “Did no miracle.” That was part of the greatness of John. God never places much premium on miracles. In only a few transitional periods are miracles evident in Scripture. There were miracles to get Israel out of Egypt, through the wilderness, and into Canaan; then they stopped. There were miracles in the days of Elijah and Elisha, as protest against the apostasy that would lay both Israel and Judah in the dust; then they stopped. There was a brief flurry of miracles in the days of Daniel, marking the transition of Judah from a monarchy into a dependency; then they stopped. There were miracles during the days of Christ and his apostles, to accredit both him and the church; then they stopped. The greater part of time has been marked by lack of miracles. For, when all is said and done, miracles are a sign to unbelief. “John did no miracle.”

People simply took him at his word. It is worth noting that after each of the above brief periods when miracles were in evidence, they were always replaced by God’s written word. The miracles of Moses and Joshua gave way to the Pentateuch, the early histories, the psalms of David, the wisdom books of Solomon. The miracles of Elijah and Elisha gave way to the writing prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and their colleagues. The miracles performed in Babylon were replaced by the writings of the postexilic prophets. The miracles of Jesus and the apostles were replaced by the gospels and epistles. How powerful and effective has been the world of Christ. God’s ideal is to bring people to faith rests not on miracles but on his word. “John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.” John, being dead, yet spoke.

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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