

JOHN 10

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to John chapter 10 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study, we concluded with Jesus telling the Jewish religious leaders, “. . . **‘If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, “We see.” Therefore your sin remains.**” John 9:41.

As you read that and then move on into John chapter 10, it doesn't seem to fit. These two chapters don't seem to go together, but they truly do! Remember, in John chapter 9 Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders of Israel and because of their rejection of Him, they were in spiritual blindness to the things of God. They were the ones who were to represent God to the people. Thus, these religious leaders were false shepherds.

Now, as we will see tonight in John chapter 10, Jesus is going to speak of the Good Shepherd, the True Shepherd compared to those false shepherds. So, you see, these two chapters fit very nicely together.

I think perspective is very important. We need to have a right understanding of the situation we are in or we are going to be in trouble. And I think this picture of the Good Shepherd and the sheep is important for us to understand.

The reason I say that is we, as sheep, love to lead the Shepherd and that never works. I think that we, as city people for the most part, miss out on what a shepherd is all about and what sheep are all about.

Phillip Keller, in his book, *“A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23”* gives us a good picture of what sheep are like. In this section of his book he speaks of sheep that are “cast down” and the idea here is that sheep sometimes can't get up on their feet. He writes,

. . . even the largest, fattest, strongest and sometimes healthiest sheep can become “cast” and be a casualty. The way it happens is this. A heavy, fat, or long-fleeced sheep will lie down comfortably in some little hollow or depression in the ground. It may roll on its side slightly to stretch out or relax. Suddenly the center of gravity in the body shifts so that it turns on its back far enough that the feet no longer touch the ground. It may feel a sense of panic and start to paw frantically. Frequently this only makes things worse. It rolls over even further. Now it is quite impossible for it to regain its feet.

- Phillip Keller, A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23, p. 61

You see, unless the shepherd comes and puts them on their feet, they will die! And the overall thrust of the book is that sheep are utterly helpless! They need a shepherd!

And as helpless as actual sheep are, so are we! We need our Good Shepherd to guide us, lead us, protect us, set us back on our feet again! And we see this picture of us being like sheep in the Scriptures.

In Psalm 100:3 we are told, “**Know that the Lord, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.**” There is that perspective we need to have; the Lord is God and we are not God but sheep, the sheep of His pasture!

So, with that as our background, let’s begin reading in John chapter 10 starting in verse 1 and let’s see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word!

JOHN 10**VERSES 1-6**

Here in these verses we see that there is the true Shepherd of the sheep as opposed to the false shepherds that Jesus spoke of in John chapter 9. So, as we expound on these verses, keep that in mind.

First of all, the sheepfold area was a stone-walled enclosure about 6 or 7 feet high, without a roof or door and it was located just outside the city.

Within this enclosure several different flocks would be kept and one person would serve as the door, sleeping there to protect the sheep from thieves and robbers.

These thieves and robbers, working with at least two people, would hoist one person up over the wall, and then this person who was in the sheepfold would then slit the throat of several sheep and toss them over the wall to their partner below, and then they would make their escape.

The point that Jesus is making here is simple. The only way into the sheepfold is through the door, and there is no other way.

Thus, these false shepherds were leading people not into the sheepfold, but away, and it was deadly for them!

But here we see the true shepherds of God who will enter by the door, the only way to get in, not climbing over the walls of false religious systems!

And the picture here is that the shepherd is Jesus Christ, and opposed to the way the Jewish religious leaders were leading people to God, Jesus lead them the correct way, the only way!

Clarke gave us this perspective in regard to ministry. He wrote, “Whoever, therefore, enters not by Jesus Christ into the pastoral office, is no other than a thief and a robber in the sheepfold. And he enters not by Jesus Christ who *enters* with a prospect of any other interest besides that of Christ and his people. Ambition, avarice [greed], love of ease, a desire to enjoy the conveniences of life, to be distinguished from the crowd, to promote the interests of one’s family, and even the sole design of providing against want—these are all ways by which *thieves and robbers enter into the Church*. And whoever enters by any of these ways, or by simony [the buying or selling of ecclesiastical privileges], craft, solicitation, . . . deserves no better name.”

May the love of Christ constrain us in all that we do for Him and for His people. It is not about us. Don’t lose sight of that as you serve Him!

Now this is something that is important and I have seen this abuse many times. I am speaking of leaders or so-called leaders trying to drive the sheep. That is not Scriptural!

You see, shepherds never drove the sheep, never beat the sheep, never pushed the sheep. They led the sheep.

If you go to Israel today you will see shepherds just walking along with a stream of sheep following right behind them. I like the way one writer summed this up for us. He wrote,

Americans tend to drive themselves and others. Not so a Middle-Eastern shepherd. So, too, Jesus, the Good Shepherd, doesn’t drive me. He *leads* me. In other words, He goes first through the valley of the shadow of death before He ever asks me to go through it. Scripture declares that Jesus, our Shepherd, our Leader, was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Consequently, there is nothing you will ever face He hasn’t felt . . . Gang, Jesus doesn’t send you into battle or drive you into any given trial. He doesn’t pontificate or preach. He *leads*.

As you serve in ministry don't drive people to do things, lead them, let them see your example and follow after you because you are following the Lord!

Now in verse 4 we see Jesus speaking of the shepherd calling for his sheep. We might miss what is going on here but back then the shepherds would come for their sheep in the morning and the doorkeeper would allow them to come and call their sheep.

And as each shepherd called, the sheep recognized the voice of their shepherd and followed him. In fact, he knew them by name, and he not only leads them but as he goes before them he encounters beforehand what his sheep will encounter.

Now this last point here is important because many are being taken in by false shepherds. You see, Jesus tells us that the sheep will not follow a stranger's voice, but will move away from it, flee from it, just as a child does when he does not recognize the person who is calling him.

Make no mistake about it, this is a beautiful picture of Christ, the Shepherd, and His sheep, you and me! As He calls us we hear His voice and follow Him.

In fact, He calls us by name; He doesn't forget who we are. That is our God! So, we know His voice and He doesn't drive us, but He leads us. Cattle are driven and sheep are lead! Also, He doesn't ask us to go places or do things that He has not done.

Hebrews 4:15 tells us, **“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.”**

Folk's, when false prophets try to sway you to their side, don't follow them but flee from them. Listen to the voice of Jesus as He speaks to you through His Word! Today, this is a big problem in the church as the world has infiltrated the church with its philosophies and wisdom and it is weakening believers and keeping unbelievers from the faith!

Now you may not see this because we are not shepherds but let me give you this true story that will drive home the point of listening to our Shepherds voice. We are told,

During World War I, some Turkish soldiers tried to steal a flock of sheep from a hillside near Jerusalem. The shepherd, who had been sleeping, awoke to find his flock being driven off. He couldn't recapture them by force, so he called out to his flock with his distinctive call. The sheep listened, and returned to their rightful owner. The soldiers couldn't stop the sheep from returning to their shepherd's voice.

- David Guzik

May we heed the call from our Shepherd, Jesus Christ and follow Him!

Now as Jesus finished this part of his discussion, we are told in John 10:6 that the religious leaders did not understand what He was saying.

Why couldn't the religious leaders understand this very simple illustration?

Because they were not only blind to the things of God, but they were also deaf! They didn't want to hear anything or see anything that went against what they believed even if they were wrong!

So here in John 10:1-6 we see the Good Shepherd spoken of, the True Shepherd of the sheep!

VERSES 7-10

In these verses, we see that Jesus is the only door that we can enter in through. Let's look at this a little closer.

Keep in mind that Jewish shepherds had two kinds of sheepfolds. If they were in town the area the sheep were kept in was much larger, as we talked about already.

But, if they were out in the country, the sheepfold was a low-walled corral made of stone with a narrow opening in the front.

So, here in these verses Jesus is speaking of another sheepfold. You see, the weather is getting warmer and the shepherds are moving their flocks farther out and thus, they would stay out all night in the wilderness.

To protect the sheep, they once again had a walled off area for protection and the difference this time, instead of professional gatekeeper at the door, as we saw when they were in town, now the shepherd himself would keep only his sheep in this sheepfold and he would be the door, sleeping across the entrance so no one could get in or out.

What I want you to notice is that Jesus doesn't say "I am **a** door" or "I am **one of many** doors" but He says, "I am **the** door" of the sheep. Over and over we have seen in the Gospels and especially here in John that Jesus is the only way. To say that all roads lead to God you have to deny what the Scriptures say and guess who is wrong, and I will give you a clue, it is not God!

Remember what Jesus said in John 14:6, "**. . . 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'**" *PERIOD!* You can accept that or reject it, but it does not change the facts that Jesus is the only way to the Father, there is no other door for you to go through!

G. Campbell Morgan speaks of one of the greatest Old Testament scholars, Sir George Adam Smith. And one of the stories he told was this, as Morgan re-tells it,

He was one day traveling with a guide, and came across a shepherd and his sheep. He fell into conversation with him. The man showed him the fold into which the sheep were led at night. It consisted of four walls, with a way in. Sir George said to him, "That is where they go at night?" "Yes," said the shepherd, "and when they are in there, they are perfectly safe." "But there is no door," said Sir George. "I am the door," said the shepherd. He was not a Christian man, he was not speaking in the language of the New Testament. He was speaking from the Arab shepherd's standpoint. Sir George looked at him and said, "What do you mean by the door?" Said the shepherd, "When the light has gone, and all the sheep are inside, I lie in the open space, and no sheep ever goes out but across my body, and no wolf comes in unless he crosses my body; I am the door."

- G. Campbell Morgan, *The Gospel According to John*, p. 177

That is exactly what Jesus is saying here. That we can't get in unless we go through Him, the Door! And, He is our protection and our way to pasture, to life! He protects and provides for us! What a beautiful picture that is being painted for us of what our Lord has done for us!

Now as we look at verse 8 we see Jesus speak of "**thieves and robbers**" and the idea here is that those religious leaders were nothing more than tools in Satan's hand! It is as Tasker wrote, "Because the Pharisees are blind leaders, they are also bogus shepherds, and come under the category of those designated in John 10:8 *thieves and robbers*."

And think about this for a minute. A thief uses deception, trickery to get what he wants.

A robber uses violence to get what he wants.

Therefore, they didn't add to life but they did take it away. That is what John 10:10 says,

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. . . .”

But, on the other hand, Jesus Christ, the true shepherd, gives us abundant life if we enter by Him!

That is what Jesus said in the last part of John 10:10, **“ . . . I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”**

Now, in John 10:9, when Jesus says that we **“will go in and out and find pasture”** the idea is the liberty we have in Christ. Clarke puts it like this, “This phrase, in the style of the Hebrews, points out all the actions of a man's life, and the liberty he has of acting, or not acting.” And Dods wrote, “To ‘go out and in’ is the common O. T. expression to denote the free activity of daily life. Jeremiah 37:4, Psalm 121:8, Deuteronomy 28:6.”

There is that liberty that we have in Christ, that freedom we have in Christ, we are not weighed down by the law or rules and regulations but we can come and go!

You see, our relationship with Him is based on love and like my marriage relationship or any marriage relationship should be; I am free to do whatever I want. Now that may shock some of you, it may scare some of you, but my wife does not worry. Why? Because even though I am free to do whatever I want, I don't because I love my wife. It is not because she has a list at home of all the things I can and can't do, because that is not what our marriage is based upon! The same is true with the Lord!

Now let me also say this. If you go and sin, and sin; and sin is just the way you live, it is a habitual sin, you are not saved. Sorry, but you should, as a child of God, be convicted of your sin and if you just do whatever you want, there is no relationship there, just empty words by you.

Jesus gives to us life, He protects us, watches over us and for pastors, we are to do the same with the people God has entrusted to us. But it seems like today that many pastors allow anyone and everyone to come into their church and bring in all kinds of false teaching as well as the pastor's teaching it themselves. They are wolves who come in and devour the sheep, they do not give them life!

So, as we have seen in John 10:7-10, Jesus is the door to the sheepfold, the door to life!

VERSES 11-16

What we see here in these verses is the Shepherd's concern for His sheep. We see that He was willing to die for His sheep. He loves His sheep. And He unites His sheep. Let's look at little closer at these verses.

Jesus is going to compare the True Shepherd to the false shepherds or the hireling, a hired man. And one of the ways you can tell a false shepherd is that he takes from others instead of giving His life for the sheep.

Jesus, being God, could have taken anything He wanted but instead He gave His life so we can have that abundant life in Him. But the false shepherds steal life away, they destroy life!

And we think today or hear today how we should not come against the false teaching in the church, we are being much too hard on them. That is foolishness. Of course we are to deal with it because by ignoring it you are endorsing it!

And listen to what we are told in I Timothy 5:20, "**Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.**" They are to be rebuked, exposed. Many today feel that they don't want to name names of those who are teaching false doctrine, but that is not Scriptural. If you are teaching false doctrine it is a sin and it does need to be exposed!

Listen to what Spurgeon had to say, over 125 years ago and how many have ignored those words today. He wrote, “How many there are of whom we have reason to fear that they must be hirelings, because, when they see false doctrine and error abroad, they do not oppose it! They are willing to put up with anything for the sake of peace and quietness.”

There was the warning and many have not heeded this warning and they are embracing the false teaching that is flooding into the church.

And as pastors, we are accountable. You see, the title of “*pastor*” translates from the same Greek word as “*shepherd*.”

And let me be clear on this. There is only one Good Shepherd, that is Jesus Christ, but as pastor, I am what you might say an under-shepherd.

Too often today someone feels that if they can teach God’s Word they are a pastor. That is not true! You see, a pastor is not a position you are granted or assume it is a position you earn.

What do I mean? Are you willing to display the same characteristics as the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ towards your flock? Will you sacrifice for them, know them, and will they know your voice? That has not only been my prayer since we moved up here but also my wife’s, that the sheep here at Calvary would hear my voice as I represent to them the things of God, share with them the Word of God and they would grow.

And I do have a long way to go, a lifetime! But my heart’s desire has always been to sacrifice my life for the sheep that God has entrusted to me. And I guess one of the greatest compliments that I have had, even though this person was putting me down, was said to me after I was released from the hospital and this person said, and I am paraphrasing, “You are just a martyr, wearing yourself out, making yourself so sick that you end up in the hospital!”

I love the sheep that God has entrusted to me and I thank Him for them and I will watch over them, protect them, and feed them like I have been doing for the past 22 years!

And that statement from this person was some 14 years ago or so and make no mistake about it, when this person said that to me I do have to admit that I was a little down.

But the Lord gave me these verses regarding the life of Epaphroditus, who almost died in his service to the Lord and Paul said this of him, **“Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.”**

Philippians 2:29-30. And all I can say each and every day is, “Thank you Lord!”

And listen to what these hirelings do, **“But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.”** John 10:12-13.

For the hireling, this is a paid position and there is no attachment to these sheep. If they are injured, if they die, if they go hungry, it is not their concern. They are interested only in ***THEMSELVES!***

If there is a better position, more money, more people, more benefits, or whatever, they will move on to other sheep because they are only interested in ***THEMSELVES.***

So, when danger comes, when times get tough, when things don't go their own way, they leave!

And listen to what the Lord said to the shepherds of Israel because I believe He is speaking to shepherds today as well. In Jeremiah 23:1-2 we are told, **“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!’ says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: ‘You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,’ says the LORD.”**

You see, that is not the heart of a shepherd and tragically many sheep have been hurt by these hirelings who are only interested in themselves and not the sheep that God has entrusted to them.

Peter put it this way in I Peter 5:2-4 when he said, **“Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”**

So, we have seen that the Shepherd has so much concern for His sheep that He is willing to die for them.

Not only that, but in John 10:14-15 we see the love that the Shepherd has for His sheep!

You see, not only do we know God, but He knows us intimately! In fact, God knows the numbers of hairs on our head which sounds so insignificant to us but that is how detailed God is in knowing us.

We think we know ourselves, and unless we are bald, we have no idea how many hairs there are on our heads, but God does! You see, God not only knows us by name, but every detail of our lives, and I guess that could be good or bad depending on what you are doing!

There is that intimacy between the Shepherd and His sheep. He loves them and thus, they love Him!

And then, in John 10:16 we see that the Shepherd unites His sheep!

Now, who is Jesus speaking of? First of all, the Jews were His flock and then the other sheep who “**are not of this fold**” speaks of the Gentiles, you and me!

I had someone tell me once that they didn’t like one of the songs we sang, “*Let the Walls Fall Down*” because it was so ecumenical. Besides this person being a little paranoid, we must be careful that we don’t go to such extremes that we negate what God says in His Word.

The Jews tried to do this when the Gentiles came to saving faith and they were wrong. I am not saying we don’t expose false doctrine and if someone is speaking of another Jesus, another Gospel, they are not saved and thus, they are not part of His flock.

A few years back I had to deal with this issue as I was asked to do a Bible study at someone’s house who was helping guys who were released from jail get work, and he housed them in his home.

And the Lord brought me to the book of Romans to teach and the section I taught on that first night dealt with the humanity of Jesus and the deity of Jesus.

After the study, the gentlemen whose home I was invited into said something like this. “I hope this is not a problem but I don’t believe that Jesus is God! We are still brothers, right?”

And I was amazed on how the Lord brought me to the issue that needed to be dealt with that night, the deity of Jesus. And I said to Him, out of John 8:24, what Jesus said, “**Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am, you will die in your sins.**”

And he rejected what I said and I did tell him that we are not brothers in Christ because you are worshipping a different Jesus. Which he did not want to hear. And I went through many Scriptures with him, mostly for the other guys who were listening to this so that they understood that Jesus is Almighty God, because he already made up his mind that Jesus is not God. But that was the first and last time I taught there.

Paul, in Ephesians 2:14-18 speaks of these walls coming down that kept Jew and Gentile apart and I think it is important we apply that to our lives today. He wrote, **“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”**

I like the way that Barclay put it. He wrote, “The unity comes from the fact, not that all the sheep are forced into one-fold, but that they all hear, answer and obey one shepherd. It is not ecclesiastical unity; it is a unity of loyalty to Jesus Christ.”

So, we see the concern that our Shepherd has for His sheep in that He died for them, loves them and unites them!

VERSES 17-18

I don't think we realize the love that Jesus has for us. And there is no greater demonstration of His love for us than His sacrifice on the cross of Calvary for our sins!

You see, when people see what happened to Jesus they love to try and figure out who did this to Him. Some say it was the Jews who did this. Others say it was Pilate who did this to Jesus. And still others say it was the Romans, they nailed Him to the cross and crucified Him!

Others would say that we all did because of our sins. I guess that is partially true, that is the reason He went to the cross, but Jesus freely gave His life for us so that we could live with Him!

It was not the nails that held Him to the cross, it was His love for us. And if you think about it, Jesus could have come down off that cross. He could have called twelve legions of angels to come to His side, (Matthew 26:53). But He freely gave His life to give us life! He had the power to lay down His life, and He had the power to take it up again.

VERSES 19-21

As I have said before, Jesus does cause division among people and like back then, we see the same today. Humanity divides between accepting or rejecting Jesus.

Here we see that some said He had a demon, He was a madman. And there were the others who said He was of God because He opened the eyes of someone born blind.

But let me say this, it doesn't matter what you think or what any other person thinks. All that matters is what God has to say and we are accountable to Him because He has revealed Himself to us.

The problem today is that we have deviated so far from the truths of God in the church because, like the Jews back then, we have added to the Word of God and have negated what God has said because we don't like it.

It really doesn't change what God has said if you agree with it or not, but like I have said, you are accountable!

Now we are going to move some 2 months down the road beginning in verse 22. (Was the Feast of Tabernacles – John 7:2, 10, 37)

VERSES 22-23

Now this feast was not a feast that the Lord instructed them in the Old Testament to follow, this Feast of Dedication. In fact, all the feasts were in spring, summer and fall. Then what is this feast all about that took place in the winter?

The Feast of Dedication or the Feast of Lights we call today Hanukkah and this feast began on December 25th and it commemorated the rededication of the Temple by the Maccabees in 165 B. C. after the Temple was desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes several years earlier.

Let me give you a little insight into what Antiochus did.

He stole millions in gold and silver from the Temple treasury. Not only that but any person possessing a copy of the Law of God would be put to death. If you circumcised your child you would be put to death. The Temple was turned into a house of prostitution. The altar of burnt offering was turned into an altar unto the Greek god Zeus. Pigs were sacrificed upon the great altar. And 80,000 Jews were killed and an equal number were sold as slaves!

The rise of the Maccabees ended these horrors.

Barclay puts it like this as he wrote, “It was told that when the Temple had been purified and the great seven branched candlestick re-lit, only one little cruse of unpolluted oil could be found. That cruse was still intact, and still sealed with the impress of the ring of the High Priest. By all normal measures, there was only oil enough in that cruse to light the lamps for one single day. But by a miracle it lasted for eight days, until new oil had been prepared according to the correct formula and had been consecrated for its sacred use.”

That is what they were celebrating here in John 10:22.

What I also want you to see is that it was winter. Yes, winter outside, winter on the calendar but also winter in the hearts of these religious people! Their hearts were cold and hard to the things of God as we are going to see as Jesus is going to speak in the area of Solomon’s porch on the Temple Mount.

Regarding this area known as Solomon’s porch, Bruce tells us, “Solomon’s colonnade was the name given to the portico which ran along the east side of the outer court of Herod’s temple. It is mentioned in Acts as the place where Peter addressed the crowd the congregated to see the man who had been cured of his lifelong lameness at the Beautiful Gate, and again as the place where the Jerusalem believers regularly gathered for their public witness to Jesus as the Christ (Acts 3:11; 5:12).”

And keep in mind that we are only some 4 months or so from the cross of Calvary!

VERSES 24

You may read this and think that this is an honest question regarding these Jewish religious leaders and what they were asking Jesus. But it was not, not at all!

You see, the word “**surrounded**” in the Greek speaks of being closed in on all sides, being pinned down you might say.

And they do speak of wanting to know the truth. Their question to Jesus is really very simple. They ask Him, “**How long do you keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ tell us plainly?**”

Now think about that for a minute. For some three years He was teaching and showing them who He is. I’m not sure how much more plainly Jesus could speak. His life showed that He was the Messiah and the evidence was before them, they just rejected it.

You see, He healed the sick, raised the dead, comforted the broken hearted, and much more. His actions were the fulfillment of what the Old Testament prophets spoke regarding the Messiah!

Clarke makes it very clear of what they wanted from Jesus. He wrote, “The Jews asked this question through extreme perfidiousness [deliberately faithless; treacherous; deceitful]: they wished to get him to declare himself king of the Jews, that they might accuse him to the Roman governor; and by it they insolently insinuated that all the proofs he had hitherto given them of his Divine mission were good for nothing.”

Listen to what Jesus says in response to their question.

VERSES 25-26

Like I have said, if they would only examine the things they saw Jesus do they would see that He is the Messiah. The works He did should have answered their question!

We are told in Isaiah 35:5-6 regarding the Messiah, **“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.”** His works are the evidence of who He is!

You see, the problem wasn't that Jesus was unclear about who He was and where He came from. The problem was that the religious leaders had hearts of unbelief that they wanted to blame on Jesus.

Now you may be wondering why they couldn't see that Jesus is the Messiah and Jesus tells us in verse 26, **“... because you are not My sheep ...”**

Now you may be thinking that is not fair, it is not right. Well, they could become His sheep if they receive Him but since their unbelief has closed their hearts, their eyes, their minds to the fact that Jesus is the Messiah, they are not His sheep and that goes for all who reject Jesus!

VERSES 27-29

I know that some struggle with this idea of eternal security, but these verses are wonderful promises of God to us regarding eternal life. Did you hear me on that one?

ETERNAL LIFE, it is a life that will never end as we are with the Lord!

It is not eternal life until you blow it, you will! It is eternal life.

You see, our Good Shepherd will not allow anyone to come and take us away from Him. Not only that, but the Father has us in His hand also, and no one can snatch us out of His hand.

Thus, in saying that, do you really believe the Devil or anyone else can come and snatch us away, that we can lose our salvation, our eternal life? No way!

Think of it like this. Place one hand out, then your other hand on top of it. This is the hand of Jesus and the hand of the Father brought down around our lives and we are in the middle.

You see, no one can snatch us out of their hands! This to me is one of the clearest passages on the security of our salvation, eternal security!

Another great passage for me is found in Romans 8:31-39, which says, **“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

The creator of heaven and earth is on our side, so who can fight and win against Him? No one! Who can separate us from God’s love? No one! Nothing, no created thing can separate us from the love of God. I love that! We are safe and secure in the hands of God!

Just one more regarding eternal security and that is what Paul said in Philippians 1:6, **“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”**

The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“And I am convinced and sure of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the time of His return], developing [that good work] and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you.”**

God started the work and the work He started He will *FINISH!* Praise God for this security we have in Christ because it is based upon His finished work and not yours or mine!

VERSE 30

For all those who continue to try to deny the deity of Jesus, this verse just blows you out of the water!

The word that Jesus used here for **“one”** (HEN in the Greek) does not suggest that the Father and the Son are the same identical person. It speaks of them being one in essence.

You see, the Father is God, the Son is God, but don't make the mistake as some do and say that then the Father is the Son and the Son is the Father as the Jesus Only people do. That is not what is being said here.

One writer put it like this regarding this relationship between the Father and the Son as he wrote,

Opponents of the deity of Jesus say that the oneness Jesus had with the Father was nothing more than a unity of *purpose* and *mission* – even as a husband and wife or father and son may have a unity of purpose of mission, yet still they are not the same person. This however misses the point. First, we never argue that the Bible teaches that the Father and the Son are the same Person – they are one God, but distinct in their Persons. Second, it misses the most obvious point: that even true unity of purpose and mission between a husband and wife or father and son exist only because they are each equally and totally *human*. The Father and the Son have this unique unity because they are equally and totally *God* – that is, Divine Being.

- David Guzik

Also, Spiros Zodhiates put it this way in his book *The Complete Word Study New Testament*: “Heis means one numerically while hen means one in essence, as in John 10:30; “I and my Father are one (hen)” (i.e., one in essence although two different personalities). Had it said heis, it would have meant one person.”

You see, He is speaking of unity not identity! To me, you don't even have to understand Greek to get this one. Just read the next verse and you will see the Jews knew exactly what He was saying and they were ready to respond appropriately, at least in their own minds!

VERSES 31-33

As Jesus said, “**I and My Father are one**” the Jewish religious leaders picked-up stones to stone Jesus. Why did they pick-up stones to stone Him? “**. . . Because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.**”

You see, as Morris tells us, “It was laid down in the Law that blasphemy was to be punished by stoning (Leviticus 24:16). But these men were not allowing the due processes of law to take their course.” That was the problem, they were not allowed to just stone Him, He needed to go before the religious court system, but they were not going to win this one and just took the matter in their own hands, or as Spurgeon wrote, “If they cannot answer holy arguments with fair reasonings, they can give hard answers with stones. If you cannot destroy the reasoning, you may, perhaps, destroy the reasoner.”

Make no mistake about it, they understood what Jesus said. Not like the Jehovah Witnesses and other cults do today, who try to deny the deity of Jesus. He claimed to be God, one in essence with the Father!

And I love what Jesus says to them as they are picking up stones to stone Him, “**Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?**”

What good works? He healed the lame, opened the eyes of the blind, and did many good works, so why are they picking up stones to stone Him. If you didn't get it yet, here it is! We read this already, “**. . . Because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.**”

Why were they going to stone Him? Because Jesus, being just a man in their minds, also claimed to be God, equal in essence to the Father, and He is! It doesn't get any clearer than that!

VERSES 34-38

Now as you read this it can be very confusing. So, let me see if I can help clear these verses up for you. And this is important for us to understand.

You see, the Mormons pick up on this and go to Psalm 82 and use it as a proof text that they can be god's and one day have their own planet to populate and rule over. That is not at all what these verses are saying.

The reason I can say that is simple, the Scriptures testify to the fact that we are not God! In fact, in Psalm 82, the Psalm that Jesus is expounding on here, we are told, **“I said, ‘You are gods, And all of you are children of the Most High. But you shall die like men, And fall like one of the princes.’ Arise, O God, judge the earth; For You shall inherit all nations.”** Psalm 82:6-8.

God will not share His glory with anyone and there is only One God, who is manifested in three distinct persons; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit!

Now, in regard to what Jesus is saying here, first of all, we must go to the **“law”** because that is what Jesus tells us here, not the Psalms, the law is where He is speaking from.

In Exodus 21:22 we read, **“If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman’s husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges [Elohim] determine.”**

The word **“judges”** in the Hebrew is Elohim, gods.

Also, in Exodus 22:8 we read, **“If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges [Elohim] to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbor’s goods.”**

So, what does this all mean? First of all, the judges in Israel represented God before the people, they had the power over life and death depending upon the sentence. They were handing out, you might say, God's punishment to the people for their actions, and thus they were called god's, Elohim. Not literally God, but acting in His place, representing Him before the people. They were human judges.

What Jesus is doing here is arguing from the lesser, the earthly judges, to the greater, the Judge over all the earth, Himself.

Thus, if they called these earthly men gods, how much more it is to call Jesus God! You see, look at the testimony that He has left for them; there is no denying He is God! I hope that clears things up for you that Jesus is God, and we are not!

I like the way that Ryle has paraphrased verse 38. He said, ***“If I do the works of my Father, then, though ye may not be convinced by what I say, be convinced by what I do. Though ye resist the evidence of my words, yield to the evidence of my works. In this way learn to know and believe that I and my Father are indeed one, He in me and I in Him, and that in claiming to be His Son, I speak no blasphemy.”***

Now, notice how these Jewish religious leaders responded to what Jesus just said and when you do, you will see that He claimed to be God once again!

VERSE 39

We don't know how Jesus kept getting away but we do know it was not His time yet! One writer put it like this, “He went forth out of that closing circle – the power that emanated from Him preventing their laying hands on Him: it was the same power that he allowed to issue from Him on the night of His arrest.” (Trench)

VERSES 40-42

I guess you can say things were heating up in Jerusalem, they were getting hostile towards Jesus. So, He heads to the area of Perea, beyond the Jordan, and He will remain there until the time of the Passover, when He would be the sacrificial lamb slain for the sins of the world.

One writer gives to us this insight to what this area of Perea was like. He wrote, “Perea was the domain of Herod Antipas, where the rulers in Jerusalem had no authority. Jesus would be safe from harassment there – at least temporarily.” (Tenney)

Also note that John the Baptist did no miracles, he came preaching the Word of God, to repent and get right with God and many came to him.

Never forget that! God’s Word is living and it is powerful and it can and will transform lives just like His Word did back then, it is still working today.

It is as Isaiah 55:11 says, “**So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.**”

Many people are drawn to signs and wonders today and they are missing the Savior!

Now as this chapter closes we see that the hearts of the Jews, especially the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem were cold and hard, but they were open here in Perea where many came to Him and they believed.

Make no mistake about it, I don’t care how intense the opposition is, God’s work will go on, it will be done!

Jesus still faced great opposition from the religious leaders in Jerusalem, and their greatest act of opposition was just about to begin. Yet many people still came to Jesus. God's work went on, despite the opposition of man. Do not be discouraged but continue on in the faith, as Paul said, "**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**" I Corinthians 15:58.