

John 10

- This chapter is a direct continuation of the scene we left at the end of chapter 9
 - Jesus is addressing the Pharisees, who were eavesdropping on Jesus' conversation with the blind man
 - They are still in Jerusalem
 - This is still the day after the end of the Feast of Tabernacles
 - And we're still looking at division within Israel
 - So without further introduction, let's move into the discourse
 - This is a conversation commonly called the Good Shepherd discourse
 - It follows from the conversation in chapter 9
 - And once again, it adds more to our building understanding of the nature of saving faith

[John 10:1](#) "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.

[John 10:2](#) "But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.

[John 10:3](#) "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

- At the end of chapter 9, the Pharisees had heard Jesus declaring that those who claim to see, that is to have knowledge of God, are actually blind in that regard
 - To which they exclaimed, "Surely we are not blind [in that way]."
 - To which Jesus replied this is exactly as it is
 - It's because you say you are spiritually wise that you remain spiritually blind
 - For until a person humbles himself to recognize his spiritual poverty, that person can never know God
 - For He will not chose to reveal Himself to such a person

- Now in chapter 10, Jesus continues speaking by explaining the impossibility of finding God by our own means
 - And as John explains in v.6, Jesus teaches this principle in the form of a figure of speech
 - A figure of speech is different than a parable
 - A parable tells a story telling to explain a single concept, while a figure of speech uses a single metaphor explains a series of points
 - In a sense, one is the opposite of the other
 - As we said in the first lesson, John never records a single parable
- So Jesus' topic is the impossibility of a person finding God by their own means, and the metaphor Jesus uses to explain this idea is that of shepherding a flock
 - Obviously, the Shepherd represents the Messiah of Israel
 - This metaphor would have been easily appreciated by Jesus' Jewish audience
 - Multiple Old Testament prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Zechariah used the same metaphor to describe the coming Messiah
 - And the sheep reference those who know and following the Messiah
 - The remnant within the nation of Israel are one fold
 - While the Gentiles are to become another
- First, Jesus explains how the sheep become a part of the fold
 - The word fold refers to the pen that contained a particular collection of sheep belonging to a certain shepherd
 - Each shepherd had a certain fold of sheep
 - And even though to you or I all sheep look basically alike, to a shepherd each sheep is unique
 - A shepherd knew his fold well, so he could tell when any were missing or when a sheep that wasn't of his fold might join his flock

- This level of scrutiny was necessary because shepherds were held financially responsible under the Law for the disposition of their master's sheep
- Jesus begins His metaphor emphasizing the entry point or door to the fold
 - There was a proper entry into the fold, one that was usually guarded by the shepherd
 - If you were not a sheep he recognized, you weren't coming into the pen
 - And if you were not a recognized member of the family or their servants, you wouldn't be allowed access to the sheep
 - Of course, if you were a thief, you wouldn't let that stop you
 - You would climb over the fence and find your way in anyway
 - But climbing over a fence is an improper way to enter a fold
 - More than that, it reveals you to be someone with dishonest intentions, like a thief
 - By contrast, the shepherd would never enter in any way other than by the door
 - As the shepherd approaches the pen, the doorkeeper recognizes the shepherd, and opens the door for him
 - The shepherd has a legitimate reason to enter the fold
- The first part of the metaphor is straightforward
 - The shepherd is the Messiah and the sheep are the saints, true believers saved by faith
 - The fold is the congregation of believers, both Jew and Gentile in the Church
 - And the door represents gaining access to lead God's people
 - Throughout history, God has appointed shepherds to lead His people
 - This representatives are commonly called shepherds, even today
 - And these leaders operate according to God's call and purpose

- Ultimately, the final Shepherd is the Messiah, who leads all God's people in the Kingdom
- Meanwhile, there are also false leaders, unbelievers, who portray themselves as men of God in an attempt to gain control over God's flock
 - Jesus says to these imposters they may try to gain access to God's fold, but they will never enter through the door
 - They can only gain access through illegitimate means, posing as men representing a God they don't know
 - Clearly, Jesus is speaking about the Pharisees and other religious rulers of Israel, who were spiritually blind
 - They were the thieves and robbers holding authority over God's flock
- These thieves come to destroy what God is building, yet Jesus says there is a doorkeeper that guards the flock
 - The doorkeeper is a picture of the Holy Spirit and all those God uses to guard the hearts of God's people
 - For example, John the Baptist could be called a gatekeeper for his day
- Moving ahead in the metaphor, Jesus addresses how the people of God respond to each type of leader

[John 10:4](#) "When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

[John 10:5](#) "A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."

[John 10:6](#) This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them.

- A shepherd always goes before a flock of sheep
 - Here in Texas, we're more familiar with cattle ranching
 - Cattle have to be driven from behind to a move them to a place
 - Occasionally, a shepherd might drive his flock from behind, but often sheep were led from the front

- The shepherd sets out in a direction with his staff and calls for the sheep to follow him, which they will
- Sheep may not be the brightest barnyard animal, but they have at least one thing going for them
 - They can distinguish between the voice of their shepherd and the voice of strangers
 - A stranger can't simply call for sheep to follow and expect the sheep to do so
 - They only follow a voice that is familiar and reassuring
- Here again, the metaphor is easy to understand, at least for those who have the Spirit
 - The true and proper shepherd of God's people leads from the front
 - He sets an example, one that God's people will follow willingly
 - He doesn't drive the people from behind with burdens and guilt and abuse
 - Once again, the Shepherd primarily in view is the Messiah, Jesus Himself
 - Jesus goes before God's people in every way
 - He lived before we were created
 - He gave Himself for sin so we don't have to
 - He was the first fruits of the resurrection paving the way into glory
- Then Jesus says that when the Messiah comes and declares Himself to the world, those who are the sheep will find Him
 - The Lord's voice (in His word) is heard by God's sheep, and they follow because they recognize the voice
 - But what are we to make of Jesus' other statement concerning a stranger's voice?
 - Is Jesus suggesting that the true saint never follows after false teachers or false messiahs?
 - To understand Jesus' point, we need to remember that every metaphor and even parable has a limited application

- Metaphors are intended to make a point, but it's inappropriate to apply a metaphor beyond it's intended use
- In this case, let's recognize Jesus is speaking in broad terms about how God's people respond as a group to the Messiah or to His enemies
- In the case of the Messiah, God's people will receive Him, for God by His grace ensures this outcome
 - Remember, Jesus was explaining to the Pharisees why so many Jews were following Jesus even as the Pharisees worked hard to stop it
 - The Pharisees called Jesus a fraud and took every opportunity to discredit Him in the eyes of the people
 - Nevertheless, many in Israel responded positively to Jesus, because they are the sheep and He is the Shepherd
- But is Jesus saying believers incapable of being misled by false teachers or leaders?
 - No. Some sheep (i.e., believers) can be misled, since many New Testament letters warn us of this very possibility
 - Here again, the purpose of a metaphor is to teach broad principles, but principles usually come with exceptions to the rule
 - While the people of God will not be fooled en masse by a false messiah, false leaders will deceive a few believers
- Notice in v.6 John says that the Pharisees couldn't follow Jesus' teaching, which is proof in itself that they were not of His flock
 - Our ability to hear the word of God and make sense of it is a key indicator that we are in God's flock
 - The Bible says that the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing
- Now Jesus shifts the focus of the metaphor slightly to emphasize the sheep entering rather than the shepherd

[John 10:7](#) So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

[John 10:8](#) “All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

[John 10:9](#) “I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

[John 10:10](#) “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

- Now Jesus turns the metaphor around to compare Himself to the door to the fold
 - Sheep joined the flock in the fold by entering through the door of the pen
 - Likewise, a person joins the congregation of God’s people only by entering through Jesus
 - Meaning, there is no way to Heaven except by faith in Jesus Christ
 - A person who dies without confessing faith in Jesus Christ will not be counted among God’s people
 - Because they never walked through the “Door”
 - This statement (among others in the Bible) absolutely precludes the possibility of “many ways to Heaven”
 - A few years ago, a well-known pastor declared in a talk show interview that he felt someone could enter Heaven even if they didn’t confess Jesus
 - The pope has been quoted saying similar things recently
 - But Jesus’ words directly contradict and refute such thinking
 - If you believe there are many ways to Heaven besides faith in Jesus Christ, then you have no reason to follow Jesus Christ at all
 - Since He clearly believed otherwise!
- Jesus says many others had come (and continue to come) declaring themselves to be the way to Heaven, but they were illegitimate thieves

- Only Jesus is that door which leads a person into the fold, that is to become part of God's people
 - Jesus gives another of the "I am" statements found in John's Gospel
 - Jesus is the door by which one must enter
 - And in case we weren't clear on Jesus' meaning, He clarifies that entering means to be saved eternally
- Then Jesus adds that once someone has gone in, then they go in and out to find pasture
 - The idea in this metaphor is very simple yet profound
 - Once you enter through faith in Jesus, you join God's fold, and from that point forward, you go where the flock goes
 - In other words, you are forever a part of the family of God
 - You will find good pasture, so to speak, but you will not need to worry about earning or retaining your identity
 - You will be forever in God's flock
- This is a stark contrast to the thieves and robbers
 - They lay burdens on people and make demands
 - They set expectations that are always changing and can never be satisfied
 - They offer no security, no joy, no assurance
 - Because they have nothing to offer except destruction, like their father the devil
- Notice how Jesus ends this section, saying that unlike the false leaders, the Jesus came to give His sheep life, and that abundantly
 - This is a verse I've seen adopted by various churches or ministries from time to time as a slogan or calling card verse
 - They celebrate the idea that affiliation with Jesus means abundant life, which is true

- But at least in some cases, they insinuate that our abundant life will be found on this earth, particularly in the form of wealth and health
- Let's see this verse clearly, based on the context of Jesus' discourse
 - The conversation is clearly centered on salvation and the eternal
 - And in that context, Jesus is describing the abundant life to be found in the Kingdom
 - To a very limited degree, a Christian may know that abundance now as they live in the joy of knowing Christ and the blessing of walking by the Spirit
 - But the promise of abundant life is not a promise to make our lives on Earth easier or richer
- Finally, Jesus turns the metaphor around once more, this time to focus on the the Shepherd's love for the sheep

[John 10:11](#) "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

[John 10:12](#) "He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

[John 10:13](#) "He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep.

[John 10:14](#) "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me,

[John 10:15](#) even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

[John 10:16](#) "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

[John 10:17](#) "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.

[John 10:18](#) "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

- Jesus declares He is the Good Shepherd Who lays down His life for the sheep
 - A shepherd in the field had many duties and responsibilities, but none were more important than his duty to protect the sheep from enemies
 - Shepherds took turns keeping watch by night

- And during the day, a shepherd drove off wild animals that might try to steal sheep from the flock
- In every case, the Shepherd was placing himself at risk for the sake of the flock
- And he did so because he served a master who demanded that he not lose a single sheep
 - Earlier we in chapter 6, declared that He would not lose a single sheep given to Him by the Father
 - Now Jesus says He loses none because He is willing to lay down His life to save the sheep from the enemy who wishes to kill and destroy
- From there, Jesus extends the figure of speech once more adding the figure of a hired hand
 - A hired hand is a temporary caretaker, one who works for the money and not for any other reason
 - If a master was short on sons to serve as shepherds, he would be forced to hire men to care for his flocks
 - While a hired man may be very responsible and conscientious, still he's only going to go so far in fulfilling his duties to his employer
 - If in the course of his work the hired man encounters mortal danger, he's quickly going to conclude that no amount of money is worth his life
 - And so, he will run away
 - In doing so, he leaves the sheep defenseless facing certain destruction
 - The hired hand has no vested interest in the security of the sheep, and his lack of loyalty is revealed clearly under pressure
- So who is the hired hand? How do we apply this metaphor?
 - Once again, it's a reference to the religious leaders ruling over the flock of God, that is in Israel
 - The Pharisees approached their role as if they were hired hands
 - That is they were in it for the money

- Elsewhere, Jesus said this about the Pharisees

Luke 16:14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him.

- And therefore, they had no true interest in the welfare of God's people
 - They lived to serve their own interests
 - And as soon as it was no longer in their best interests to care for the people's needs, they abandoned their post
- But Jesus says He approached His role as Shepherd in an entirely different manner
 - First, He knows His sheep and they know Him
 - In other words, there exists an intimate relationship between Jesus and the believer
 - If you've heard someone say you need a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, this is what we're talking about
 - We must become one of His fold
 - We must come to know Him through a relationship founded on His word and formed by His Spirit living in us
- Secondly, that relationship is made possible because our Good Shepherd lays His life down for us
 - In contrast to those whose only concern is saving their own hide, Jesus' concern is saving His flock
 - And He accomplishes this by laying down His life
 - He dies in our place, like a shepherd facing danger to save his flock from the wolves
 - Obviously, Jesus is referring to His death on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins
 - This is one of many times Jesus foretold His own death as a purposeful action on His part to save His sheep
- Who exactly is Jesus dying to save? The whole world? No, but rather the sheep appointed to His fold by the Father, as He explained in chapter 6

- Notice in v.16 Jesus says He has sheep not in this fold...which fold?
 - Jesus is speaking of two distinct folds: Israel and the Gentiles
 - The sheep of Israel are those Jesus was speaking about when He said "this fold"
 - And the other sheep are those Gentiles who join Israel into one fold
- The Father loves the Son because the Son takes upon Himself this task of dying for the sins of mankind
 - But His death is not the end of the work
 - Jesus says He lays His life down so that He may take it up again
 - In other words, Jesus is revealing not only the necessity of His death but also His coming resurrection
- It was Christ's death that saved us from our sins
 - But it was His resurrection that made possible our glorification into a new body
 - Because He was raised from death, we have proof He will do the same for us
 - For as the Shepherd goes, so goes the flock He leads
 - That's what He meant when Jesus said He is a shepherd that goes before us
- Finally, Jesus' act of sacrificial death on our behalf did not make Him a victim nor does it mean Jesus was less powerful than His enemies
 - On the contrary, Jesus says He lays it down of His own initiative
 - The word initiative is important to understanding what Jesus is saying about His death
 - The word in Greek is emautou, which is a compound word meaning "of myself"
 - So Jesus said He lays down His life of Himself
 - In other words, everything about that event came from Jesus

- He decided it would happen from before the foundations of the world
- He decided the way it would happen
- He decided the time it would happen
- He decided who would accuse Him, who would condemn Him, and how He would die
 - Remember His words to Pontius Pilate

[John 19:10](#) So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"

[John 19:11](#) Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

- Jesus placed Himself on that cross

[Acts 2:22](#) "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know –

[Acts 2:23](#) this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

- And when the right moment came, Jesus took His own life

[John 19:30](#) Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

- In the moment Jesus died, He wasn't being killed
 - Jesus was choosing to lay His life down for the sheep
 - His act was conscious, intentional and planned
 - This was the plan because there is no other way
 - There are not many ways to Heaven...only one
- Now of course, Jesus' elaborate use of this figure of speech, thoroughly confused the crowd and particularly the leaders
 - And once again, John emphasizes the division of the crowd

[John 10:19](#) A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words.

[John 10:20](#) Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?"

[John 10:21](#) Others were saying, "These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"

- John offers us these words as a footnote to the entire Feast of Tabernacles week
- Just as we've seen throughout this week, Jesus is a cause of division in Israel
- As John began his Gospel, the Messiah's arrival into the world divides the nation rather than uniting it
- Because some are of Jesus' flock, while others are not
- And once again, the explanation offered for how Jesus could do such marvelous things while speaking in such strange ways is that a demon is at work in Him
 - Some accept this excuse, to their own destruction
 - And to the destruction of Israel in that generation
 - While others reject the explanation, because they see something others don't
 - They recognize that the works of Jesus align with the miracles promised of the Messiah
 - So they are saying, in effect, everything tells us this guy is the Messiah
- At this point, there is a break in the narrative
 - The events of the Feast of Tabernacles has ended
 - This feast takes place in between late September to mid October
 - And after it concluded, we assume Jesus returned to the Galilee
 - Later, Jesus returns to Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication, often called Hanukkah
 - The Feast of Hanukkah is not prescribed in the Bible, but it was instituted in Israel following the Maccabean Revolt

- The revolt happened in 164 BC against the Syrian army that conquered Israel in the years after the death of Alexander the Great
 - The revolt was the result of terrible oppression and apostasy in Israel
 - Under Greek rule, the nation had been severely corrupted into joining Hellenistic culture
- A Greek stadium was built next to the temple
 - The games played in this stadium were conducted in the nude
 - It was said that even priest serving in the temple, when they heard the trumpet call to start the games, would leave the temple, disrobe, and join in the games
 - Before returning to continue making sacrifices in the temple
- Later, a Syrian named Antiochus Epiphanes came to power and used Israel as a base of operations in attacking Egypt
 - When his campaigns against Egypt failed, he responded in anger by persecuting Jews in Israel
 - He slaughtered Jews wholesale, forbid the practice of Judaism, desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig on the altar and much more
 - If a mother circumcised her son, he killed the child and made the mother wear the dead baby around her neck
 - Later she was killed as well
- Against this kind of treatment, a rebellion eventually rose up in a small town northwest of Jerusalem, begun by a man named Mattathias and his five sons
 - They succeeded in taking over the land of Israel from the Syrians
 - And they purified the temple and rededicated it to the Lord
 - The rededication took place on the same day three years after the temple had been desecrated by Antiochus: 25th of Kislev
 - At the rededication, a new 8-day feast was inaugurated in Israel
 - It was 8 days because it was patterned on the Feast of Tabernacles, which looks forward to the temple in the Kingdom

- The Jews used tabernacles as the pattern for this new feast, because they had been prevented from observing the feast of tabernacles three months earlier by the Syrians
- Now that the Syrians were gone, the Jews saw this feast as an opportunity to enjoy a tabernacles feast a few months late
- Also, this dedication feast was patterned off of Solomon's dedication ceremony for the first temple, which was also 8 days
- So just as the feat of tabernacles includes a lighting of lamps, the Jews instituted a lighting of lamps into this feast as well
 - It wasn't until much later that rabbis invented the myth of the oil lasting 8 days, which some of you may have heard
 - That myth is still retold today in Jewish homes as they celebrate the feast each December
 - But there is no historical record of such a miracle ever happening, so it is simply myth and storytelling
- So the Feast of Dedication has a celebratory quality similar to the feast of tabernacles, and according to John, it's one Jesus participated in
 - The historical origins of this celebration might cause us to ponder whether this feast was truly intended by God or was it merely man made
 - If it was intended by God, shouldn't we expect to see it mentioned in OT scripture?
 - And if it wasn't prescribed by God, why does Jesus honor it?
 - Well, the answer is some of both
 - The OT doesn't mention the feast, but Daniel did prophecy the events of Antiochus leading up to the feast
 - So we see that scripture anticipated the events surrounding the feast
 - Secondly, the fact that Jesus did join in in His day is proof in itself that the Lord was in favor of the feast
 - Therefore, we must also assume that the feast has some purpose in pointing to Christ in some way

- With that background, it makes better sense why John chose to knit together these two scenes into a single narrative
 - While at the feast of tabernacles, Jesus declared Himself to be the Light of the world and as the Good Shepherd of the sheep
 - Now at this feast of dedication, the Lord picks up on those same themes, probably because the feast also centered on light
 - So when Jesus re-entered the temple in December, it had only been three months since His earlier, dramatic confrontation of the Jewish leaders
 - No doubt the people remembered what Jesus said, so it's as if the conversation picks right back up where it left off
 - While walking in the portico of Solomon, a large covered area adjoining the temple courtyard, Jesus is again teaching a crowd

[John 10:22](#) At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem;

[John 10:23](#) it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.

[John 10:24](#) The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

[John 10:25](#) Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me.

[John 10:26](#) "But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.

[John 10:27](#) "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

[John 10:28](#) and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

[John 10:29](#) "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

[John 10:30](#) "I and the Father are one."

- And at some point, the crowd demands that Jesus come clean concerning His identity
- They want Him to declare plainly that He is the Messiah
- It's interesting that they would ask Him to make such a statement
- The fact that they knew to make this suggestion tells us they already understood plainly what He had been saying
- What they wanted was for Jesus to advocate on His own behalf

- This wasn't a case where they people couldn't figure out Jesus' perspective
- They knew He was speaking as the Messiah, but they just weren't willing to accept it
- What they wanted was for Jesus to begin making His case
 - To argue His point
 - To state plainly, meaning to try to persuade them concerning His identity
- But Jesus refused at all times to work in this way
- Why wasn't Jesus willing to make effort to persuade men of His identity? Because it wouldn't make any difference if He tried
 - Jesus knew that faith was the product of persuasion or analysis or reasoning
 - Saving faith is a supernatural change in the heart done by God alone
 - And when the Lord gives the gift of faith, it always results in acceptance of the Gospel and salvation
 - When the Father isn't working by His Spirit to save a man, then no amount of persuasion will work
 - So Jesus could speak softly and in subtle ways without concern that He might miss one of His sheep
 - So Jesus responds I told you already, but you do not believe
 - You have seen my works
 - And these miraculous works were done in the Father's name, meaning by His authority
 - And therefore, these works are a testimony that Jesus is the One the Father promised to send
- Nevertheless, these people do not understand this truth, because Jesus says they are not of His sheep
 - Notice Jesus doesn't say you do not believe, *therefore* you are not one of My sheep

- Instead, Jesus uses the word “because” to indicate that they haven’t believed in Jesus BECAUSE they were not elected by the Father to be one of His sheep
- Remember, Jesus said in chapter that no one can come to the Son unless it is permitted by the Father
- So even though they had heard Jesus speaking plainly about His identity, nevertheless they couldn’t accept it because they weren’t one of His sheep
- This is the consistent testimony of scripture
 - We are only able to believe and receive the Gospel because we are already predestined to be His sheep
 - The Lord counted us His sheep even before we knew Him
 - And these receive eternal life
 - They will know the Lord intimately
 - And they will follow Him
- Remember in the parable of the 99 sheep and the 1 lost sheep
 - In the parable, the lost sheep is a picture of an unbeliever whom Jesus finds and brings back to the fold
 - Yet notice that it’s not a parable of 99 sheep and 1 goat that turns into a sheep
 - It’s a story of 100 sheep, though one is lost
 - There is a finite number of God’s sheep, and Jesus is in the process of collecting them by His Spirit
 - Therefore, the ignorance of this crowd can only mean they are not among Christ’s sheep
- Lastly, Jesus repeats some of His teaching from John 6 when He explains that nothing can snatch the sheep from His hand
 - The word snatch is harpazo, which means to take by carry off
 - No sheep can be stolen or removed from Jesus hand
 - Once we have been given the gift of faith by the Spirit, we are placed in Christ’s power and held there by the Son’s authority

- In other words, once a sheep, always a sheep
- And in case you're in doubt about this guarantee, Jesus reminds us that the Father is greater than all
 - So if the Father has given someone to Jesus, then there is literally nothing in the universe powerful enough to change that decree
 - The devil doesn't have more power than the Father
 - The demons don't have more power than the Father
 - Not even *you* have more power than the Father
 - So nothing - not even the believer himself - can remove the sheep from Christ's hand
- Then, to prove His point, Jesus gives them the answer they requested
 - He says He and the Father are one
 - There is no more provocative statement someone could make to a Jew than to compare oneself to God
 - Yet here is Jesus declaring Himself to be equal to God
 - This is an offense punishable by stoning in Israel
 - Yet this is exactly what the crowd asked Jesus to say, to state plainly whether He was the Messiah
 - And Jesus just finished telling the crowd that making such a claim was pointless since they were not His sheep
 - So why satisfy their request? So He can demonstrate the truth of His words
 - Notice the reaction of the crowd

[John 10:31](#) The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.

[John 10:32](#) Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?"

[John 10:33](#) The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."

[John 10:34](#) Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I SAID, YOU ARE GODS'?"

[John 10:35](#) "If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken),

[John 10:36](#) do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

[John 10:37](#) "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;

[John 10:38](#) but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

[John 10:39](#) Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

- Jesus states plainly He is the Messiah, to which the crowd picks up stones to kill Him
 - Is it any mystery why Jesus wasn't willing to speak in plain language much of the time?
 - He knew that those intended to understand his words would do so regardless of how clearly He spoke
 - Meanwhile, those who were not His sheep couldn't understand His words no matter how clearly He spoke
 - So by speaking in parables and veiled references, Jesus avoided inciting the crowd to riot while still reaching His intended audience
 - At this point, Jesus engages them in a discussion to highlight their hypocrisy and ignorance
 - He asks them for which of His good works is He being stoned?
 - It's a sarcastic statement, one spoken by a man who clearly is not in fear of His life
 - As the author of His own death, Jesus is not concerned that He might die in this moment
 - He knows that isn't possible
 - Still, He uses the crowd's anger to test their hearts by asking them to justify their actions against Him
 - They respond that they aren't stoning Him for any work but for His words
 - And notice specifically, they understand that Jesus is calling Himself God

- Once more, if someone tells you that Jesus never declared Himself to be God, here's a clear moment when He did so
- This is a verse that directly contradicts the Jehovah's Witnesses claims
- When they raise the charge of blaspheme against Jesus, He counters with a question of His own
 - He asks how it can be then that Psalm 82:6 declares that the judges of Israel are "gods"
 - The Psalmist was speaking by way of euphemism
 - As God's representatives, the judges of Israel were acting like gods in that sense
 - They brought God's counsel and judgments to the people
 - They enforced God's law
 - They did the very works of God as His representatives
 - So the Lord Himself declared these men to be *elohim* or gods (plural)
 - Jesus' point was that if it was appropriate for the psalmist to use the term *elohim* to describe those who were merely judges in Israel
 - Then how is Jesus committing blaspheme for the Messiah to call Himself the same thing?
 - Jesus was clearly sent by the Father, as evidenced by His works
 - And if Jesus is sent by the Father, then He comes to represent the Father in the same way that the judges did
 - Only Jesus is infinitely greater than the judges, so if the term gods could be used to describe them, how much more should it be used to describe the Messiah?
- Jesus then proposes a test for Himself
 - He says if He is not performing the work of the Father, then do not believe Him
 - Let His works decide the matter

- If someone claims to come from God but cannot produce works that prove His claims, then we are right to dismiss such a person
- But if that person comes with the necessary works, we must be prepared to accept His claims as well
- So Jesus says if you will not believe my words, then why not believe my works?
 - If you see the miracles I do, then sure you must acknowledge I am working with the power of God
 - But of course, given all the Jesus has said, it's clear that they are incapable of grasping the fact that Jesus is the Messiah
 - And they are incapable because the Father had not granted them that capability