

# The Word

*one to one*

---

*A guided read through  
John's Gospel  
Chapters 9–10*

Unless otherwise stated,  
Scripture quotations taken from  
The Holy Bible, New International  
Version® NIV® Copyright ©  
1973 1978 1984 2011 by Biblica,  
Inc.™ Used by permission.  
All rights reserved worldwide.

Copyright © 2013 by William  
Taylor, Richard Borgonon,  
10Publishing

First published in Great Britain  
in 2013

This edition 2021

All rights reserved. No part of this  
publication may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system or  
transmitted in any form or by any  
means, electronic, mechanical,  
photocopying, recording or  
otherwise, without the prior  
permission of the publisher or  
the Copyright Licensing Agency.

Designed and typeset by  
Something More Creative®

10Publishing, a division of  
10ofthose.com  
Unit C, Tomlinson Road, Leyland,  
PR25 2DY, England  
Email: [info@10ofthose.com](mailto:info@10ofthose.com)  
Website: [www.10ofthose.com](http://www.10ofthose.com)

ISBN: 978-1-913896-81-2  
Printed in the United Kingdom

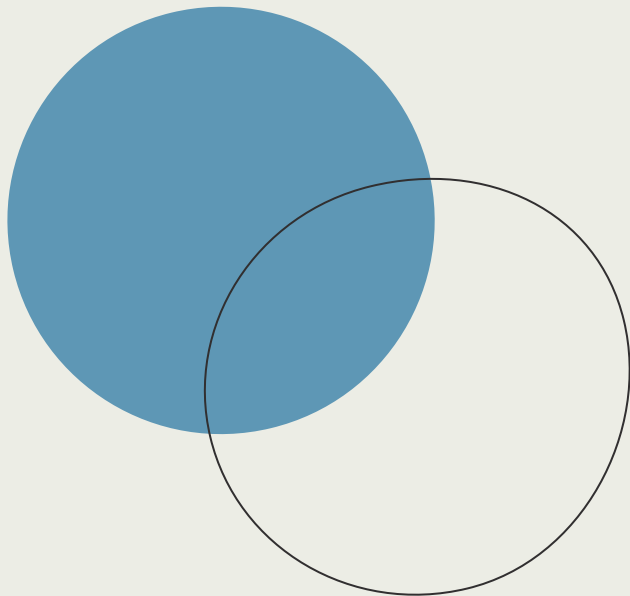
1 3 5 7 10 8 6 4 2

# The Word

*one to one*

**10** Publishing  
a division of **10** of those.com

# Episode 18



# Let there be light!

JOHN 9:1-41

---

*In the previous episode:  
Jesus points out a  
shocking family likeness.*

*In this episode:  
What does it mean for  
Jesus to be called the  
light of the world?*

<sup>1</sup> As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth.

<sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?'

<sup>3</sup> 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned,' said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.'

<sup>4</sup> As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

<sup>5</sup> While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.'

## Seeing is believing

Like chapters 2 - 4, chapters 5 - 10 are organised around 'signs' (miracles) of Jesus.

Chapter 5 gave us the paralysed man healed on the Sabbath, followed by Jesus' discussion with His Jewish opponents. We're now coming towards the end of chapters 5 - 10 and we're about to see something very similar: an amazing healing on the Sabbath, followed by Jesus' explanation of what it means.

Why the Sabbath? The Sabbath remembered God enjoying His perfect world after creation - His rest. Being healed on the Sabbath, with your sins forgiven, was a picture of being made right with God, at rest with Him. Jesus is showing that He is the one who brings true Sabbath rest and a new creation.

As we go through this chapter, there are two very different spiritual responses to look out for as Jesus acts.

What question does the man's blindness raise?

- Jesus' disciples ask if the man's blindness was a result of his sin, or the sin of his parents. (v. 2)
- Jesus says neither. (v. 3)
- In fact, Jesus says that this man is about to see the work of God in his life. (v. 3)

*Jesus does the work of God; He brings light into the darkness.*

<sup>6</sup> After saying this, he spat on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes.

<sup>7</sup> 'Go,' he told him, 'wash in the Pool of Siloam' (this word means 'Sent'). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

What does Jesus' meeting with the man born blind lead to?

- The man's blindness is healed. With some spit, some mud and a quick wash, the man who has been blind all his life is able to see. **(v. 7)**
- Instantly, miraculously, Jesus brings light into this man's darkness.

<sup>8</sup> His neighbours and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, 'Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?'

<sup>9</sup> Some claimed that he was.

Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.'

But he himself insisted, 'I am the man.'

<sup>10</sup> 'How then were your eyes opened?' they asked.

<sup>11</sup> He replied, 'The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.'

<sup>12</sup> 'Where is this man?' they asked him.

'I don't know,' he said.

The miracle is so spectacular that some of the man's neighbours aren't even sure it's him.

He has to keep explaining that he is the same man! (v. 8)

How does the man explain what happened to him?

- He simply knows that it was Jesus who healed him. (v. 11)

Notice that at this point, he describes Jesus as just a man. (v. 11)

We're about to see, there is more than one kind of blindness in this episode.

<sup>13</sup> They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind.

<sup>14</sup> Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath.

<sup>15</sup> Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. 'He put mud on my eyes,' the man replied, 'and I washed, and now I see.'

<sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.'

But others asked, 'How can a sinner perform such signs?' So they were divided.

<sup>17</sup> Then they turned again to the blind man, 'What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.'

The man replied, 'He is a prophet.'

## Two responses

This is the start of two very different responses to Jesus' miracle.

How do the religious experts (Pharisees) respond?

- They immediately criticise Jesus because He did the miracle on the Sabbath. (v. 16)
- They're divided. Some condemn Jesus and say that He is not from God, but others are convinced He must be. (v. 16)

Remember that Jesus has already shown us that the Sabbath is all about ultimate rest, being at peace with God, not about the details of religious rules.

What does the man born blind think?

- Back in verse 11 Jesus was just *'the man they call Jesus'*. Now the once-blind man says that Jesus is a prophet. (v. 17)

<sup>18</sup> They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents.

<sup>19</sup> 'Is this your son?' they asked. 'Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?'

<sup>20</sup> 'We know he is our son,' the parents answered, 'and we know he was born blind.'

<sup>21</sup> But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself.'

<sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.

<sup>23</sup> That was why his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

The Pharisees now put the man's mum and dad on trial.

How do the blind man's parents respond?

- They confirm that the man is their son and was blind all his life. There is no doubting the miracle. (v. 20)
- They aren't going to say more because they are afraid of the religious leaders. (v. 22)

Being put out of the synagogue was a serious matter. It cut you off from your community and, according to the religious leaders, from God Himself.

*The Pharisees are not interested in this new evidence. They have already decided to reject Jesus as the Messiah.*

Not only that, but they are also going to make real trouble for anyone who follows Him.



<sup>24</sup> A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. 'Give glory to God by telling the truth,' they said. 'We know this man is a sinner.'

<sup>25</sup> He replied, 'Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!'

<sup>26</sup> Then they asked him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?'

<sup>27</sup> He answered, 'I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?'

<sup>28</sup> Then they hurled insults at him and said, 'You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses!'

<sup>29</sup> We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from.'

The man is back in front of the religious leaders and the pressure is on.

How does the man respond?

- He won't be bullied. He speaks the truth: he was once blind but now he can see because of Jesus. (v. 25)
- The Pharisees will not accept his answer. They keep interrogating him. So he cheekily suggests that perhaps it's because they want to follow Jesus too! (v. 27)

The Pharisees' desperate attempt to enforce their authority means they utterly ignore the evidence and attack the man with insults. Hardly the godly behaviour of so-called religious leaders!

<sup>30</sup> The man answered, 'Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes.'

<sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will.

<sup>32</sup> Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind.

<sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.'

<sup>34</sup> To this they replied, 'You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!' And they threw him out.

## True sight, true blindness

How does the man argue for Jesus?

- He knows the reality of what has happened and can't deny that Jesus has healed him. (v. 30)
- He reasons that God listens to the godly not sinners. (v. 31)
- No one can give sight to a man born blind except God. (v. 32)
- So if Jesus wasn't from God He simply wouldn't have been able to do the miracle. (v. 33)

The blindness of the Pharisees is on full display. Unlike Jesus, they insist that man's blindness was the result of his sin. They further insult him and kick him out of the synagogue.

They would rather bury the evidence by intimidation and abuse.

*As they reject Jesus, the light of the world, the Pharisees are a picture of deliberate blindness.*

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?'

<sup>36</sup> 'Who is he, sir?' the man asked. 'Tell me so that I may believe in him.'

<sup>37</sup> Jesus said, 'You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.'

<sup>38</sup> Then the man said, 'Lord, I believe,' and he worshipped him.

<sup>39</sup> Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.'

<sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, 'What? Are we blind too?'

<sup>41</sup> Jesus said, 'If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.'

What does the once-blind man come to see?

- More than just seeing physically, he can now see spiritually that Jesus is the Son of Man ...and he worships Him. (vv. 35, 38)

The man born blind is a picture of growing faith:

- He hears Jesus' word.
- He follows Jesus and stands out from the crowd, despite the religious leaders' bullying threats.
- He believes Jesus to be his Saviour and Lord and turns to worship Him.

This healing is an amazing physical picture of what Jesus is doing spiritually.

*Jesus gives sight to those who are 'blind' as they put their trust in Him and come into the light.*

By contrast, Jesus acts in judgement to blind those like the Pharisees who are full of self-confidence in their religious good works. It's a sobering thought.

## Summary

---

Sight and blindness; light and darkness.

Look at how the blind man has his sight restored, both physically and spiritually:

- Jesus heals him, totally and immediately. (v. 7)
- He doesn't know much about Jesus but assumes He must be a prophet (v. 17)
- He can't deny what Jesus has done for him. He concludes that Jesus has come from God. (v. 33)
- He realises Jesus is the Son of Man and worships Him. (v. 38)

By contrast, the Pharisees are increasingly intimidating and abusive as they choose to ignore the evidence in front of them:

- They are immediately hostile, interrogating the man and his parents. (v. 19)
- They've already made up their mind to reject Jesus and all who follow Him. (v. 22)
- They hurl insults at the man and kick him out of the synagogue. (v. 34)
- In rejecting Jesus the Pharisees have grown increasingly blind. This will end in judgement. (v. 39)

By the end, the blind man can see, spiritually as well as physically, but the Pharisees, the religious experts, are blinded by their rejection of Jesus, the light of the world. (v. 39)

<sup>7</sup> So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

<sup>17</sup> The man replied, 'He is a prophet.'

<sup>33</sup> 'If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.'

<sup>38</sup> Then the man said, 'Lord, I believe,' and he worshipped him.

---

<sup>19</sup> 'Is this the one you say was born blind?'

<sup>22</sup> ...anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.

<sup>34</sup> And they threw him out.

<sup>39</sup> 'For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.'

Why not take a moment to re-read what we've looked at in this episode?

## John 9:1–41

<sup>1</sup> As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?'

<sup>3</sup> 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned,' said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. <sup>4</sup> As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.'

<sup>6</sup> After saying this, he spat on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. <sup>7</sup> 'Go,' he told him, 'wash in the Pool of Siloam' (this word means 'Sent').

So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

<sup>8</sup> His neighbours and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, 'Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?' <sup>9</sup> Some claimed that he was.

Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.'

But he himself insisted, 'I am the man.'

<sup>10</sup> 'How then were your eyes opened?' they asked.

<sup>11</sup> He replied, 'The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.'

<sup>12</sup> 'Where is this man?' they asked him.

'I don't know,' he said.

<sup>13</sup> They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind.

<sup>14</sup> Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath.

<sup>15</sup> Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. 'He put mud on my eyes,' the man replied, 'and I washed, and now I see.'

<sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.'

But others asked, 'How can a sinner perform such signs?' So they were divided.

<sup>17</sup> Then they turned again to the blind man, 'What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.'

The man replied, 'He is a prophet.'

<sup>18</sup> They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. <sup>19</sup> 'Is this your son?' they asked. 'Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?'

<sup>20</sup> 'We know he is our son,' the parents answered, 'and we know he was born blind.'

<sup>21</sup> But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself.'

<sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.

<sup>23</sup> That was why his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

<sup>24</sup> A second time they summoned the man who had been blind.

'Give glory to God by telling the truth,' they said. 'We know this man is a sinner.'

<sup>25</sup> He replied, 'Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!'

<sup>26</sup> Then they asked him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?'

<sup>27</sup> He answered, 'I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?'

<sup>28</sup> Then they hurled insults at him and said, 'You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses!'

<sup>29</sup> We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from.'

<sup>30</sup> The man answered, 'Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will.'

<sup>32</sup> Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.'

<sup>34</sup> To this they replied, 'You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!' And they threw him out.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?'

<sup>36</sup> 'Who is he, sir?' the man asked. 'Tell me so that I may believe in him.'

<sup>37</sup> Jesus said, 'You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.'

<sup>38</sup> Then the man said, 'Lord, I believe,' and he worshipped him.

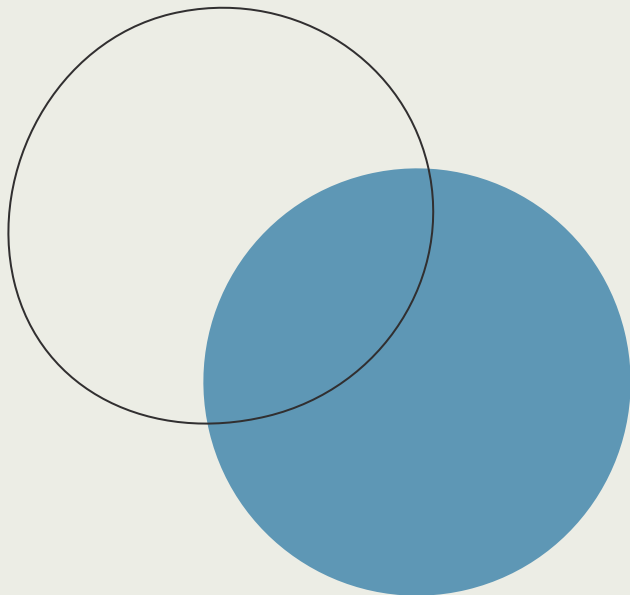
<sup>39</sup> Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.'

<sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, 'What? Are we blind too?'

<sup>41</sup> Jesus said, 'If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.'

*What comes next?  
Jesus, the Good Shepherd*

# Episode 19



## A leader we can trust

JOHN 10:1-21

---

*In the previous episode:  
Real sight and  
real blindness.*

*In this episode:  
Good and  
bad shepherds.*

Let's flash back  
to Ezekiel

→ Ezekiel 34:2b, 4

<sup>2b</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says: woe to you shepherds of Israel who only take care of yourselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock?

<sup>4</sup> You have not strengthened the weak or healed those who are ill or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally.

## God and His flock

In John 10 there is lots of talk about shepherds and sheep:

- Sheep are used throughout the Bible as a picture of God's people.
- Shepherds are a picture of their leaders, who should rule over and care for the sheep.
- There are also descriptions of 'false shepherds' who care only for themselves.

Looking back at the Old Testament book of Ezekiel, written just after 600 BC, will help us see how Jesus' teaching fits with what His listeners already knew.

What is God's problem with the leadership of Ezekiel's day?

- They are fleecing the sheep! They are serving just their own interests. **(v. 2b)**
- They neglect the weak and lost. **(v. 4)**
- They are harsh and brutal. **(v. 4)**



Ezekiel 34:15, 16, 22a

<sup>15</sup> I myself will tend my sheep and make them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD.

<sup>16</sup> I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

<sup>22</sup> I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered.

What does Ezekiel say God is going to do about it?

- God Himself will be their shepherd. **(v. 15)**
- He will look after the weak, the injured, the lost. **(v. 16)**
- He will bring justice to all. **(v. 16)**
- He will save His flock. **(v. 22a)**

<sup>1</sup> ‘Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.

<sup>2</sup> The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.

<sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

<sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

<sup>5</sup> But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognise a stranger’s voice.’

<sup>6</sup> Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

## The shepherd and his sheep

We’re still in the temple. The targets of Jesus’ teaching about false shepherds are standing right in front of Him.

Jesus introduces four characters in His story:

- The thief, robber or stranger. (vv. 1, 5)
- The shepherd. (v. 2)
- The gatekeeper. (vv. 3, 4)
- The sheep. (vv. 3–5)

What does Jesus tell us about the shepherd and the sheep?

He says the shepherd:

- Enters by the gate. (v. 2)
- Calls his sheep by name. (v. 3)
- And leads them out with his voice. (v. 4)

And of the sheep, He says they:

- Listen to the shepherd’s voice. (v. 3)
- Follow him. (v. 4)
- And will never follow a stranger (false shepherd). (v. 5)

<sup>7</sup> Therefore Jesus said again,  
‘Very truly I tell you, I am  
the gate for the sheep.

<sup>8</sup> All who have come before  
me are thieves and robbers,  
but the sheep have not  
listened to them.

<sup>9</sup> I am the gate; whoever  
enters through me will be  
saved. They will come in  
and go out, and find pasture.

<sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to  
steal and kill and destroy;  
I have come that they may  
have life, and have it to  
the full.

<sup>11</sup> ‘I am the good shepherd.  
The good shepherd lays  
down his life for the sheep.

## Shepherds: true and false

Jesus now explains His illustration.

What’s the difference between the true  
shepherd and the false?

The true shepherd:

- Is the way into God’s kingdom. (v. 7)
- Saves and sustains His sheep. (v. 9)
- Gives life to the full. (v. 10)
- Sacrifices His life for His sheep. (v. 11)

The false shepherds not only steal from  
people but rob them of eternal life. (v. 10)

*Jesus is the Good Shepherd.  
He brings life to His people  
by laying down His own.*

<sup>12</sup> The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.

<sup>13</sup> The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

Unlike Jesus, the false shepherds:

- Do not own the sheep. (v. 12)
- Run away when they see danger. (v. 12)
- Care nothing for the sheep. (v. 13)

How have we seen the Pharisees behave like this?

- They couldn't care less for the man born blind.
- They were only concerned with protecting their position and status.

Jesus says that false shepherds only bring death as they lead us down the wrong path.

*What a contrast they are to Jesus, the Good Shepherd.*

## Let's stop and think

---

Many people claim to have the answers for life.

Jesus makes the staggering claim that He alone can bring fullness of life and an eternity with God.

So how can we know if we should follow someone's teaching on religion or philosophy?

The test here is simple. Are they pointing us to Jesus as our Saviour for eternity?

*This test is needed even for so-called Christian teachers. It's a reminder to be careful who we listen to.*

<sup>14</sup> 'I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep.

<sup>16</sup> I have other sheep that are not of this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

<sup>17</sup> The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life – only to take it up again.

<sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.'

## The Good Shepherd and His flock

What are the qualities of the Good Shepherd?

- He knows His sheep and they know Him. (v. 14)
- He knows His Father and the Father knows Him. (v. 15)
- He lays down His life for His sheep. (v. 15)
- He is loved by the Father. (v. 17)
- He gives His life freely and only He has authority to 'take up' His life again. (v. 18)
- He carries out the Father's command. (v. 18)

*Jesus is the only one with the power and authority to defeat death and offer life to His flock.*

What does this mean for His followers?

- Jesus' sheep know Him personally. (vv. 14, 15)
- He brings in people from every nation on earth (sheep from other sheepfolds). What is happening in Jerusalem is just the beginning. (v. 16)
- He will unite all those under His rule. (v. 16)

<sup>19</sup> The Jews who heard these words were again divided.

<sup>20</sup> Many of them said, 'He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?'

<sup>21</sup> But others said, 'These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?'

## Division

How do the people listening respond to what Jesus says?

- Some say, 'He's possessed and crazy – you can't take Him seriously!' (v. 20)
- Others are amazed, both at what Jesus says and how He was able to give sight to a blind man. (v. 21)

People's responses today are very similar.

Some will always think that following Jesus is ridiculous. But others listen to what Jesus says and believe He is who He claims to be.

Jesus is clearly different from any other leader who has ever lived.

*So the key question is, who will we listen to?*

## Summary

Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

With the Pharisees standing in front of Him, Jesus is talking about shepherds and sheep, or rather leaders and people.

- Jesus says that He is the only way to enter into relationship with God. (v. 7)
- He says that other leaders are like thieves, who come to destroy the sheep. (v. 8)
- Unlike the thieves, He has come to give life in all its fullness. (v. 10)
- How is that possible? Jesus says that He is the Good Shepherd, who is willing to die for His sheep. (v. 11)
- His sheep won't just be Jewish people, they will be from all over the world. (v. 16)
- And Jesus says that He won't just give His life, He'll also take it back again. (v. 18)
- Once again, Jesus' words divide opinion. Some are convinced that He's a demon-possessed madman; others can't square that with what they've heard Him say and seen Him do. (v. 21)

<sup>7</sup> 'Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.'

<sup>8</sup> 'All who have come before me are thieves and robbers...'

<sup>10</sup> '...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.'

<sup>11</sup> 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.'

<sup>16</sup> 'I have other sheep that are not of this sheepfold.'

<sup>18</sup> 'I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again.'

<sup>21</sup> 'These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?'



Why not find a moment to re-read what we've looked at in this episode?

## John 10:1–21

<sup>1</sup> ‘Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognise a stranger’s voice.’ <sup>6</sup> Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore Jesus said again, ‘Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

<sup>11</sup> ‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.

<sup>13</sup> The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

<sup>14</sup> ‘I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep that are not of this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. <sup>17</sup> The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life – only to take it up again.

<sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.’

<sup>19</sup> The Jews who heard these words were again divided.

<sup>20</sup> Many of them said, ‘He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?’

<sup>21</sup> But others said, ‘These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’

*What comes next?  
Is it worth being one of Jesus’ sheep?*



# Being part of Jesus' flock

JOHN 10:22-42

*In the previous episode:  
Who are we listening to?*

*In this episode:  
What does it mean to  
be a follower of Jesus?*

<sup>22</sup> Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon's Colonnade.

<sup>24</sup> The Jews who were there gathered round him, saying, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.'

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, 'I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not my sheep.'

## The true Shepherd

Jesus is still in the temple grounds, in a walkway reserved only for Jews.

They gather round Jesus and insist that He answers their question: is He the Messiah?

How does Jesus respond?  
It's as if He says:

- 'I've already told you...' (v. 25)
- 'I've already given you all the evidence you need...' (v. 25)
- '...but you do not believe me because you will not follow me!' (v. 26)

**The Feast of Dedication:** an eight-day Jewish festival celebrating the rededication of the temple in Jerusalem in 165 BC after it had been destroyed in 168 BC by the Greek king Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

<sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

<sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.

<sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

<sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.'

So what identifies those who are Jesus' sheep?

- They listen to the Shepherd's voice. He knows them, and they follow Him. (v. 27)

The benefits for the sheep are wonderful:

- Eternal life – never perishing. (v. 28)
- Absolute security – no one can take them from Him. (vv. 28, 29)

How is this possible? Jesus explains His answer to the original question back in verse 24.

- He is God Himself. He is the Son, at one with the Father. (v. 30)

*Those who listen and accept Jesus' words can have total assurance. No one can take them away from God. They are eternally safe with Jesus.*

<sup>31</sup> Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him,  
<sup>32</sup> but Jesus said to them, 'I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?'

<sup>33</sup> 'We are not stoning you for any good work,' they replied, 'but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.'

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your Law, "I have said you are 'gods'"?'

<sup>35</sup> If he called them "gods", to whom the word of God came – and Scripture cannot be set aside – <sup>36</sup> what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, "I am God's Son"?

## The false sheep

Jesus' listeners understand exactly who He is claiming to be, and hate it. In their eyes, Jesus is insulting God (committing blasphemy) but He shows their mistake in three steps.

Step 1: Look at what I do - my works are the works of the Father. **(v. 32)**

They reply that it's not His works that are the problem, but His words.

Step 2: If I was sent by my Father, then I have every right to say that I am God's Son. **(v. 36)**

It's another reminder for them from the Old Testament. Psalm 82:6 says that kings and rulers sometimes had exalted titles: "You are 'gods'... sons of the Most High", yet they still died.

How much more does Jesus, sent by God the Father, have the right to use the title Son of God. Only He is King for ever.

<sup>37</sup> Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father.

<sup>38</sup> But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.'

<sup>39</sup> Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

Step 3: Again, look at what I do. Are they the works of God the Father? If they are, then believe I am God's Son! (v. 37)

What Jesus says and does always fit together. His miracles are a visible demonstration of the Father's work. And in each case, Jesus explains their significance through His words.

*We can be confident in the words of Jesus. They were always backed up by the things He did.*

*So if our friends start teasing us about reading the Bible we can say, 'Have you ever looked at what Jesus did and the clarity of what He said? They fit together perfectly.'*

<sup>40</sup> Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptising in the early days. There he stayed, <sup>41</sup> and many people came to him. They said, 'Though John never performed a sign, all that John said about this man was true.'

<sup>42</sup> And in that place many believed in Jesus.

As the first half of John's Gospel comes to an end, Jesus goes back to where it all started, where He first met John the Baptist. (v. 40)

How do people respond?

- Many people come to Jesus. (v. 41)
- Many people believe in Him. (v. 42)

This is a big moment. John the Baptist's job to 'witness to the light' 'so that through him all might believe' (John 1:7, 8) is complete. People are believing in Jesus as He fulfils everything John said about Him.

*People are flocking to Jesus. Despite hatred from His enemies, the Shepherd is calling His sheep.*

We've come full circle and we're now ready for the second half of John's Gospel, and the run up to Jesus' death and resurrection.

## Summary

In the face of rising hostility, the Good Shepherd is gathering His sheep.

- Jesus is back in the temple and facing questions. (v. 24)
- Jesus challenges His opponents over their unbelief. (v. 25)
- He also says that He is gathering His sheep, who listen to Him. (v. 27)
- They have eternal life and eternal security, because He and God the Father are one. (vv. 29, 30)
- Jesus' opponents are outraged. They want to kill Him for claiming to be God. (v. 33)
- Jesus shows that their thinking is all wrong: if they don't accept His words, they should at least look at what He does. (v. 37)
- We end where we began in chapter 1, at the river Jordan, where Jesus first met John the Baptist... (v. 40)
- ...and His flock continues to grow. (v. 42)

<sup>24</sup> 'If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.'

<sup>25</sup> 'I did tell you, but you do not believe.'

<sup>27</sup> 'My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.'

<sup>29</sup> '...no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

<sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.'

<sup>33</sup> '...you, a mere man, claim to be God.'

<sup>37</sup> 'Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father.'

<sup>40</sup> Then Jesus went back across the Jordan...

<sup>42</sup> And in that place many believed in Jesus.



Why not take a moment to re-read what we've looked at in this episode?

## John 10:22–42

<sup>22</sup> Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon's Colonnade. <sup>24</sup> The Jews who were there gathered round him, saying, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.'

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, 'I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.'

<sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.'

<sup>31</sup> Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, <sup>32</sup> but Jesus said to them, 'I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?'

<sup>33</sup> 'We are not stoning you for any good work,' they replied, 'but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.'

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your Law, "I have said you are 'gods'"? <sup>35</sup> If he called them "gods", to whom the word of God came – and Scripture cannot be set aside – <sup>36</sup> what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world?

Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, "I am God's Son"? <sup>37</sup> Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. <sup>38</sup> But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.'

<sup>39</sup> Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

<sup>40</sup> Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptising in the early days. There he stayed, <sup>41</sup> and many people came to him. They said, 'Though John never performed a sign, all that John said about this man was true.' <sup>42</sup> And in that place many believed in Jesus.

## Chapters 5 – 10: recap

We're now at the end of the first half of John's Gospel.

Let's step back and think about what we've seen in chapters 5 – 10.

### The identity of Jesus: God's Son

- This section begins and ends with two miracles (signs). Both point to Jesus as God's Son, doing God's work: restoring a man paralysed for thirty-eight years and opening the eyes of a man born blind.
- The way we respond to Jesus determines our relationship with God. *'Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent him!'* (John 5:23)
- As Jesus Himself says: *'I and the Father are one.'* (John 10:30)

### The work of Jesus: bringing eternal life and judgement

- Jesus brings lasting Sabbath rest, eternal life. *'Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life!'* (John 5:24)
- But Jesus also brings judgement on those who continue to reject Him: *'For judgement I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind!'* (John 9:39)

### Belief in Jesus: divided opinions

- Opposition to Jesus is increasing. There is hatred from the religious leaders and some of the crowd, even from those who claimed they believed in Jesus. Many think He is *'demon-possessed and raving mad'* and some try to stone Him. (John 10:20, 31)

- But we also meet people who hear Jesus' words and come to Him, becoming part of His flock. The man born blind sees that Jesus really is the Son of Man and worships Him. (John 9:38) This is what it looks like to accept Jesus as God's Son.

### The shadow of the cross

- We hear throughout that Jesus' 'hour' (the cross) has not yet come.
- Yet Jesus keeps pointing us to the time when He will lay down His life for His sheep.

*What comes next?  
The second half of John's Gospel starts, with matters of life and death as Jesus' hour draws near.*

Now might be a good moment to think about what you think of Jesus: who He is and what He came to do.

At the end of Book 3 we shared a simple prayer as a way of understanding how to respond to Jesus. You might find it useful to read through it again; you may even feel ready to pray it.

Lord Jesus Christ, I present myself to you now. I know I have sinned in my thoughts, words and actions. I know I need your forgiveness and I am truly sorry.

Thank you that you came from heaven to save me by dying on the cross for me. Thank you that you rose from the dead for eternity.

I know that I cannot do anything to earn your forgiveness – you have done it all at the cross. As best as I understand, I gratefully give my life back to you, asking for your forgiveness and your acceptance. I turn from my sin.

Now I ask you to please come into my life as I trust you alone to save me.

Come in as my Saviour to cleanse me.

Come in as my Lord and be in charge of my life.

Come in as my Friend to be with me.

Please send the Holy Spirit to live inside me and make me a child in your family.

I pray this in your name,

Amen.

*If you have prayed this prayer, do tell the friend who is sharing John with you and ask how to best connect with a local gathering of God's family (a church).*





[theword121.com](http://theword121.com)