

Lesson 7**THE GOOD SHEPHERD****(John Chapter 10)**

In our study through the Gospel of John we have been learning *WHO* Jesus Christ really is. God wants people to understand *WHO* Jesus really is so that they might believe (see John 20:31), and God wants people to believe so that they might have _____ through His Name (John 20:31 and compare John 10:10).

We have already studied some of the great "I AM" verses found in John's Gospel. In John Chapter 10 we discover four more "I AM" verses which help us to better understand *WHO* Jesus Christ is:

I AM _____ of the sheep (John 10:7).

I AM _____ (John 10:9).

I AM _____ (John 10:11).

I AM _____ (John 10:14).

Long ago David wrote what has come to be one of the most well known verses in the Bible. It is found in Psalm 23:1: "The _____ is my _____ I shall not want (lack, be in need)." Who is this GREAT SHEPHERD who will take care of His sheep? Who is this LORD (Jehovah) that David wrote about? The answer is found in John Chapter 10. In this chapter Jesus claims to be the very One that David wrote about. Let's compare these verses:

Psalm 23:1

**The LORD is
my Shepherd**

John 10:11,14

**Jesus said, "I am the
good Shepherd"**

This Shepherd is none other than the LORD Jesus Christ (Jehovah Jesus)! He is "that great _____ of the _____" (Hebrews 13:20). In John Chapter 10 we will learn about this great Shepherd and how He cares for His sheep and meets their every need.

Outline of John Chapter 10

- 1A. The Shepherd and the Sheep (John 10:1-10).**
- 2A. The Shepherd Dies For the Sheep (John 10:11-18).**
- 3A. The Shepherd's Words Cause A Division (John 10:19-21).**
- 4A. The Shepherd Protects His Sheep (John 10:22-29).**
- 5A. The Shepherd Claims to be One With God (John 10:30-42).**

THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP

To understand the first part of John Chapter 10 we need to understand what a "sheepfold" is (see John 10:1). A sheepfold was a walled enclosure where the sheep would stay during the night. The walls were made of rough stones and there was no roof. When the sheep were inside this enclosure they would be protected from the weather (strong winds, etc.) and from robbers and wild beasts. The sheepfold had only one door. Often a sheepfold would house more than one flock. For example, two or three shepherds might each bring their flock into the same sheepfold.

Throughout this chapter the SHEEP represent those people who truly believe in Jesus and follow Him. What about people who do *not* believe? Are they His sheep (John 10:26)? _____ Jesus said, "My sheep _____ my voice and I know them and they _____ me" (John 10:27).

In John Chapter 9 we learned about a blind man that Jesus healed. Did this man follow Jesus? Was he a true believer (John 9:35-38)? _____ Therefore, was he a true sheep? _____ Some of the religious leaders did whatever they could to try to keep this man and others from following Jesus (see John 9:22,34). These men were like thieves or robbers. They wanted to keep this sheep away from the Shepherd, but the good Shepherd F_____ him (John 9:35). Jesus spoke about the person who is a thief and a robber in John 10:1. How does the robber get into the sheepfold (John 10:1)?

_____ How does the true Shepherd get into the sheepfold (John 10:2)? _____ The same is true today. If you see someone entering a house through the front door, then he probably lives there! If you see someone breaking and climbing through a window, then you should become a little suspicious!

The word "porter" in verse 3 means "DOORKEEPER." Verses 3-5 refer to what happens in the morning as the Shepherd brings His sheep out of the sheepfold. The Shepherd and the sheep have a wonderful relationship. The sheep know the Shepherd and the Shepherd knows the sheep.

The Sheep Know the Shepherd

When the Shepherd calls do the sheep hear Him or do they ignore Him (John 10:3)?

_____ They can recognize the voice of their Shepherd. Even if there are three flocks of sheep in the sheepfold and even if all three shepherds start calling the sheep at the same time, the sheep will follow their own shepherd, "for they _____ His voice" (John 10:4). Will they follow someone who is not their shepherd (John 10:5)? _____ When the true Shepherd speaks, the sheep hear and respond and follow! When Jesus Christ speaks, His believers hear and respond and follow Him (compare John 10:27).

The Shepherd Knows the Sheep

If you were to see a flock of sheep you might think that they all looked alike. They may look alike to you, but not to the Shepherd. A good shepherd can recognize each individual sheep and he even has a N_____ for each one (John 10:3). In the same way the Lord knows each individual believer: "The Lord _____ them that are His" (2 Timothy 2:19). Every single believer is important to Jesus Christ! We already have seen His wonderful concern for the man who was cast out of the synagogue (John 9:34-35). The good Shepherd knows all about you! He knows you better than you know yourself!

In John 10:3 we learn that the Shepherd " _____ them out" and in John 10:4 we learn that the Shepherd "goeth _____ them" and the sheep _____ Him. There are two ways to get sheep to move in the right direction. You can go before them and have them follow you or you can walk behind them and drive them. Jesus, the good Shepherd, *leads*; He does not *drive* (*Note*: The same should be true for the Pastor or Shepherd of the local church. He should lead and not drive. See 1 Peter 5:3).

The Door

Did the Jews understand about the Shepherd and the sheep (John 10:6)? _____ Jesus helps them to understand by giving them another great "I AM" verse: "I am the _____ of the sheep" (John 10:7). Jesus was saying, "If you want protection and nourishment and life, you must come through Me. I am the only door! I am the only Person who can give you these things."

In John 10:9 we find another great "I AM" verse: "I am the _____: by Me (through Me) if any man enter in, he shall be _____ and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Jesus Christ is the door of salvation and He is the ONLY DOOR! In the morning when the sheep went out through the door of the sheepfold they found *pasture* (food and nourishment). In the evening when the sheep went in through the door of the sheepfold they found *protection*. Jesus Christ is the only One who can give a person PASTURE (nourishment) and PROTECTION. And when the sheep are well fed and well protected, they are able to live! Jesus Christ is the only One who can give people LIFE: "I am come that they might have _____ and that they might have it more _____" (John 10:10). Abundant life is found in Jesus Christ! Jesus makes it possible for us to have LIFE TO THE FULL--the kind of life that is abundant and rich and overflowing!

If a person does not go through THE DOOR then he will not find PASTURE and he will have no PROTECTION and he will not have LIFE! Does the thief want people to have these three things (John 10:10)? _____ Jesus came to give LIFE, but the thief wants only to steal, kill and _____ (John 10:10).

Have you gone through Christ the door? Is there any other hope of salvation apart from Him (Acts 4:12)? _____

THE SHEPHERD DIES FOR THE SHEEP

Not only is Jesus Christ THE DOOR, but He is also the _____ (John 10:11). What did the good Shepherd say that He would do for the sheep (John 10:11)? _____

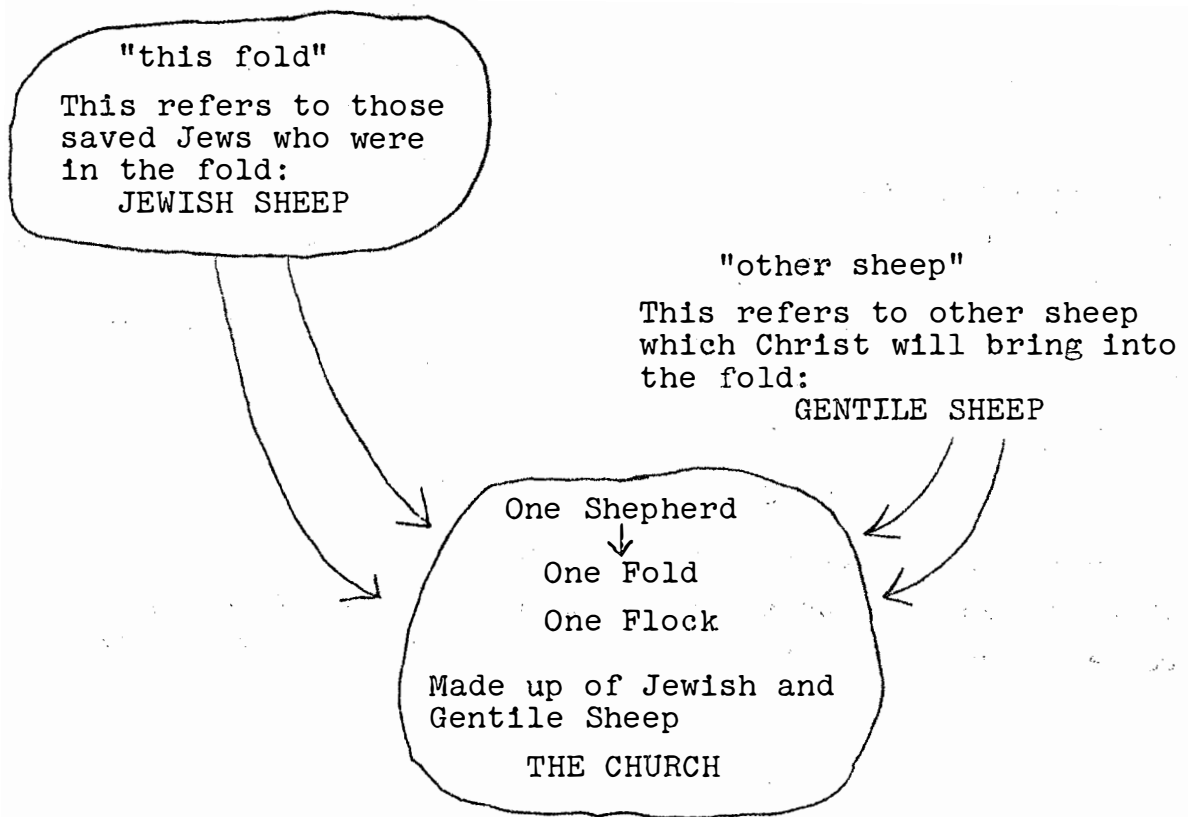
There have been times when shepherds actually have given their lives for their sheep. Some shepherds have had to face the knives and clubs of robbers. Others have had to face the attacks of wild animals. David had to defend his flock against a lion and a bear (1 Samuel 17:34-36). He risked his life even though God delivered him. The Lord Jesus Christ knew that the sheep were in great danger (see Isaiah 53:6). He knew that the sheep would perish unless He would give His life for them. Jesus voluntarily died in order to save His sheep from destruction. His death is proof of how much He cares for His sheep!

In John 10:13 we learn about someone who does not really care about the sheep. He is called an "hireling." This word refers to a person who is a hired hand. He has been hired to help take care of the sheep and he is paid for his services. We are told that he "careth _____ for the sheep" (John 10:13). He watches the sheep not because he is concerned for the sheep but because of the money he will make! The hired man cannot say, "Those are my sheep!" Only the true shepherd can say that. Today there are many religious leaders and religious teachers who are not really concerned about bringing people into a real and right relationship with God. Instead they often care only about making money or *servicing themselves or their own interests*. Do such people serve Jesus Christ or do they serve SELF (compare Romans 16:18)? _____

The true Shepherd has a wonderful relationship with His sheep! Does the Shepherd know the sheep (John 10:14)? _____ Do the sheep know the Shepherd (John 10:14)? _____

One Flock

In John 10:16 Jesus told these Jews about something that He would do in the future. In this verse Jesus mentions two kinds of sheep:



Today all those who come to Jesus Christ become members of this **one flock** with **one Shepherd!** It does not matter if a person is a Jew or a Gentile. Whenever a Jew or a Gentile believes on Christ he becomes a member of the CHURCH and Jesus Christ is the HEAD of the Church. The TWO (Jews and Gentiles) have become ONE (one flock, one body, one church)--see Ephesians 2:11-18. Whether Jew or Gentile, the Bible says, "for ye are all _____ in _____" (Galatians 3:28). Today there are only 3 groups of people in the world (see **1 Corinthians 10:32**):

1. There are Jews (these are unsaved Jews).
2. There are Gentiles (these are unsaved Gentiles).
3. There are those who are part of the CHURCH (a body of believers made up of saved Jews and saved Gentiles).

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25)! He loved the sheep and gave Himself for them! We learn about this in John 10:17. What words in John 10:17 refer to Jesus dying on the cross for us? _____ What words in John 10:17

speak of Jesus rising again from the dead? _____ We see these same two ideas in John 10:18.

Why did Jesus Christ die? Was it because sinful men took His life or was it because He voluntarily laid down His life (John 10:18)?

_____ He freely gave His life for the sheep! The only reason men arrested Jesus and mistreated Him and nailed Him to a cross is because He ALLOWED them to do this! Prior to this men had *tried* to take Jesus, but were they able to do this (John 10:39)? _____ What happened when the people tried to throw Him off the edge of the hill (Luke 4:28-30)? _____

Read Matthew 26:47-54. We learn in verse 53 that Jesus could have prayed and the Father would have given Him more than twelve legions of _____ to rescue Him from those men who were seeking to kill Him. A LEGION was part of an army that comprised between 3,000 and 6,000 men. Did Jesus pray this prayer? _____ Jesus freely and willingly went to the cross so that He could lay down His life for the sheep!

THE SHEPHERD'S WORDS CAUSE A DIVISION

Jesus Christ is the great divider of men (John 10:19). We learned about this when we studied John chapter 7. When Jesus spoke His listeners had to decide whether they were FOR HIM or AGAINST HIM.

What did many of the Jews say about Jesus (John 10:20)?

_____ Were these Jews FOR HIM or AGAINST HIM? _____ They accused Him of being a demon-possessed MADMAN! There were others who did not believe that Jesus was demon-possessed (John 10:21--the word "devil" in verses 20 and 21 should be translated as "demon"). What great miracle were these people aware of (John 10:21)? _____ This is the miracle we learned about in John Chapter 9.

There are people living even today who think that Jesus was some kind of madman or lunatic. Their eyes are blinded. Some day they will realize who He really is and they will bow their knees before Him and with their tongue they will confess that He is not a **LUNATIC** and not a **LIAR** but that He is _____ (Philippians 2:10-11). Have you ever confessed this with your mouth (see Romans 10:9)? _____

THE SHEPHERD PROTECTS HIS SHEEP

As we come to John 10:22 we learn that it was W _____, the time of the feast of the dedication. This feast occurred a few months after the feast of Tabernacles (compare John 7:2). The feast of the dedication was also called the Feast of Lights. Today the Jews call it Hanukkah (it is a Jewish holiday remembering the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem after its defilement by Antiochus of Syria--see the apocryphal books of 1 and 2 Maccabees which tell of this amazing period of history).

As the Jewish people came around Jesus they wanted Him to give them a straight answer. "If thou be the _____ (the Messiah), tell us plainly" (John 10:24). Their real problem was not that they needed to be told but that they needed to B _____ (John 10:25). Jesus had already clearly revealed WHO HE WAS by **His words** and by **His works** (John 10:25). But did they believe (John 10:26)? _____ Were they His sheep (John 10:26)? _____ The Lord was **not** their Shepherd.

Jesus then describes His true sheep. What two things are true about those who are really HIS SHEEP (John 10:27)?

- 1) they _____ His voice
- 2) they _____ Him

If a person refuses to listen to what Jesus says (in the Bible) and if a person does not follow Jesus, is this person acting like a true sheep? _____

What does Jesus give to His true sheep (John 10:28)? _____
Eternal Life is a GIFT (compare Romans 6:23 and Ephesians 2:8-9). Christ's true sheep will never _____. This means they will never be lost! They will never LOSE their salvation! The good Shepherd keeps His sheep safe forever! He protects His sheep from eternal harm. They will be SAFE and SECURE forever!

According to John 10:28 true believers are in whose hand (remember, Jesus is speaking these words)? _____ Can anyone pluck them out of His hand (John 10:28)? _____

According to John 10:29 true believers are in whose hand? _____
Can anyone pluck them out of His hand? _____ If you are a true believer, are you in good hands? _____ Are you safe in these hands? _____ Is God going to let go of you? _____ Is God going to let you fall out of His hand and perish? _____

Note: The teacher can illustrate John 10:28-30 by using a coin. The believer is represented by the coin. Hold the coin tightly in one hand to illustrate John 10:28 (Christ has you!). Hold this coin tightly in the other hand to illustrate John 10:29 (the Father has you!). Then join both hands holding the coin tightly to illustrate John 10:30 (they **both** have you!).

THE SHEPHERD CLAIMS TO BE ONE WITH GOD

In John 10:30 Jesus made this amazing claim: "I and my Father are _____." No ordinary man could ever say this! No ordinary man could ever say, "God and I are one!" But Jesus could say this because He was not an ordinary man. He was the GOD-MAN (perfect God and perfect Man). Only He could claim to be ONE WITH GOD.

The Lord's enemies knew exactly what Jesus was saying, and what did they want to do to Jesus (John 10:31)? _____ They wanted to put Him to death! They considered it to be BLASPHEMY for a man to claim to be ONE WITH GOD. They knew that Jesus was claiming to be EQUAL WITH GOD (compare John 5:18). But Jesus was not guilty of blasphemy because WHAT HE SAID WAS TRUE!

Jesus asked these Jews to tell Him what He had done to deserve being stoned to death (John 10:32). The only kind of works Jesus had done were _____ works (John 10:32), and a person should not be put to death for doing good! Jesus had not done one "bad work" in His entire life!

The Jews wanted to stone Jesus for _____ (John 10:33), "because that thou, being a _____, makest thyself _____ (John 10:33). These Jews knew that when Jesus said, "I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE" He was claiming TO BE GOD! They believed that Jesus was committing a terrible SIN by trying to make others believe that He was God.

Psalm Twenty-Three

The 23rd Psalm has been a source of comfort to myriads of people in life and in death. Consider the following outline, and allow the Psalm to become a source of life and comfort to you, regardless of your circumstances and surroundings.

The Lord is my Shepherd — Perfect Salvation. I shall not want — Perfect Satisfaction. He maketh me to lie in green pastures — Perfect Rest. He leadeth me beside the still waters — Perfect Refreshment. He restoreth my soul — Perfect Restoration. He leadeth me in paths of righteousness — Perfect Guidance. I will fear no evil — Perfect Protection. Thou art with me — Perfect Company. Thy rod and Thy staff — Perfect Comfort. Thou preparest a table — Perfect Provision. Thou anointest my head — Perfect Consecration. My cup runneth over — Perfect Joy. Goodness and mercy shall follow me — Perfect Care. I will dwell . . . for ever — Perfect Destiny.

NOTE: The argument that Jesus uses in John 10:34-36 is somewhat difficult to understand. It can be explained as follows: The first point that Jesus makes is that in the Old Testament men are called "gods" (John 10:34-35). The passage Jesus is referring to is Psalm 82:6 where sinful, human judges are called "gods." Judges have a very important responsibility. They are responsible before God to judge in the right way. When judging their fellow men they must judge just like God would if He were in their place. So in a very real way these judges were taking God's place and doing the work that God has given them to do. So in this sense they are called "gods." These judges were to act on God's behalf.

Jesus then made His second point in John 10:35-36. He was saying something like this: "If the Scripture calls mere sinful men 'gods' (and the Scripture cannot be broken), then how can I be wrong to call Myself 'God'? If men are called 'gods' in Psalm 82:6, then how can it be blasphemy for the SON OF GOD to be called 'God'?" Notice what Jesus says about Himself in John 10:36:

1. He is the One that God the Father has *sanctified* (set apart in a very special way). Jesus Christ is the Unique One. There is no One like Him!
2. He is the One whom God has sent into the world. He came from God!
3. He claimed to be the _____ of _____ (John 10:36). And the Jews knew that when a person claimed to be the Son of God He was claiming to be _____ with God (John 5:18).

The Jews wanted a straight and plain answer (John 10:24) and this is exactly what Jesus gave them!

The Lord's enemies did not want to believe His words (*what He said*) and they did not want to believe His works (*what He did*)--see John 10:38. They did not like what Jesus was telling them and once again they tried to take Him. Were they successful (John 10:39)? _____ But not everyone rejected His words and works. We are told that "many _____ on Him there." (John 10:42)

Are you a true believer in Jesus Christ? Are you one of His sheep? Are you safe in His hands? Are you able to say what David said long ago: "The Lord is _____ Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1)?

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Thought Questions:

We have now studied the first 10 Chapters of the Gospel of John. Considering what you have learned so far, how would you answer these questions:

1. Who is Jesus Christ?
2. What are some of the amazing claims that He made?
3. What are some of the remarkable miracles that He performed?
4. How can a person be born again?
5. How can a person have the gift of eternal life?
6. Can a person lose the gift of eternal life once he has it?
7. What are some of the great "I AM" verses that we have studied in the first 10 Chapters?

With God's help we are now ready to study the final 11 Chapters of this Gospel. Let us proceed *carefully* and *prayerfully*!

The Son of God

He was of lowly birth
Yet of a Royal line;
From heaven down to earth
For souls like mine.

He lived a perfect life —
The sinless Man was He;
My life with sin was rife —
Cruel slavery!

He died, the Holy One,
That I with Him might be.
He's risen now and gone —
Yet lives in me.

He said He'd come again —
Upon His Word I trust.
My soul He'll come to claim;
He's God—He must!

—R. H. Sambrook