

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

RISING OPPOSITION TO JESUS' MINISTRY, JOHN 5:1-12:50

JESUS' MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM, JOHN 7:10-10:42

INTRODUCTION

A. Outline of the *Gospel of John* (1:1-4:42)

1. Prologue (1:1-18)
2. Preparation for Jesus' ministry (1:19-51)
3. Jesus' early ministry (2:1-4:54)
4. Rising opposition to Jesus' ministry (5:1-12:50)
 - a. Jesus' second visit to Jerusalem (5:1-47)
 - b. Jesus' ministry in Galilee (6:1-7:9)
 - c. Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem (7:10-10:42)
 - 1) Jesus' interaction with His brothers (7:1-9)
 - 2) Jesus' teaching in the Temple (10-24)
 - 3) Reaction to Jesus' teaching on His origin and destiny (25-36)
 - 4) Reaction to Jesus' teaching on the Holy Spirit (37-52)
 - 5) The woman caught in adultery (7:53-8:11)
 - 6) Jesus' proclamation that He is the Light of the world (12-20)
 - 7) Confusion concerning who Jesus is (21-30)
 - 8) Jesus instructs those who believe (31-47)
 - 9) Jesus proclaims His deity (48-59)
 - 10) Jesus healed a man born blind (9:1-41)
 - 11) The Good Shepherd discourse (10:1-21)
 - 12) The final confrontation at the Feast of Dedication (10:22-42)

B. Comments on John 10:1-21

- Darrell Bock, *In a sense, the chapter break here is unfortunate. This event really is a commentary on the conflict of John 9 (10:19–21).*
- Thomas Constable, *Evidently this teaching followed what John recorded in chapter 9 (v. 21), but exactly when between the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2, 14, 37) and the Feast of Dedication (v. 22) it happened is unclear. The place where Jesus gave it appears to have been Jerusalem (v. 21) ... The formerly blind beggar had just been put out of the fold of his synagogue (9:34), so Jesus spoke of His fold, which the beggar had now entered (cf. 9:35–38).*
- C. K. Barrett, *A signal instance of the failure of hireling shepherds has been given; instead of properly caring for the blind man, the Pharisees have cast him out (9.34). Jesus, on the other hand, as the good shepherd, found him (9.35, heuron auton) and so brought him into the true fold.*
- Matthew Henry, *The Pharisees supported themselves in their opposition to Christ with this principle, that they were the pastors of the church, and that Jesus was an intruder and an imposter, and therefore the people were bound in duty to stick to them, against him. In opposition to this, Christ here describes who were the false shepherds, and who the true, leaving them to infer what they were.*
- Edwin Blum, *Comparing people to a shepherd and his sheep was common in the Middle East. Kings and priests called themselves shepherds and their subjects sheep. The Bible makes frequent use of this analogy. Many of the great men of the Old Testament were shepherds (e.g., Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David). As national leaders, Moses and David were both "shepherds" over Israel.*
- Leon Morris, *In this, the last public address of Jesus that John records, a further aspect of his ministry is unfolded in an allegory of great power. Jesus uses the figure of the Good Shepherd to differentiate his ministry from that of false shepherds and to stress the voluntary nature of his sacrifice for his people. This chapter should be read in the light of Old Testament passages that castigate shepherds who have failed in their duty (see Jer. 23:1–4; 25:32–38; Zech. 11; and especially Isa. 56:9–12 and Ezek. 34).*

- Louis Barbieri, Chapter 10 comprises an extended metaphor comparing Jesus and His followers to a shepherd and his sheep.
- Grant Osborne, *This is technically an illustration or extended metaphor rather than a parable, for there is no plot but rather the development of a particular metaphor surrounding the image of a shepherd.*
- Charles Swindoll, *John's account is unique among the Gospels in that he doesn't recount any of the Lord's parables; he does, however, recall His use of figurative language and extended metaphors. This self-portrait as "the good shepherd" draws on a familiar image painted in Old Testament prophecy (Jer. 23; Ezek. 34; Zech. 11), in which the Lord warns Israel's unfaithful spiritual leaders that He will come to do the job of shepherding Himself. Jesus claimed to be the fulfillment of that long-standing promise.*

THE GOOD SHEPHERD DISCOURSE, JOHN 10:1-21

- A. The allegory (an imaginative comparison) of the true shepherd and the sheepfold (1-6)
1. Identifying the true shepherd (1-2)
 - a. A thief does not enter by the door (1), ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.***
 - 1) Thomas Constable, *Jesus described a flock of sheep in a fold or pen that had solid walls and only one door or gate. Evidently the fold in view was a large enclosure some distance from any human dwelling place. Customarily, several families who owned sheep would feed their sheep in nearby pastures and hire a watchman to guard the gate to such an exposed enclosure. The watchman would admit authorized individuals but would exclude the unauthorized ones who might want to steal or kill some of the sheep ... In verse 1, the thieves and robbers clearly refer to the religious leaders who were unfaithful to God and were seeking to harm His sheep for personal gain (cf. 9:41). Their rejection of Jesus, as the Shepherd whom God had sent, identified them for what they were. Satan, the ultimate enemy, was working through them.*
 - 2) Warren Wiersbe, *The thieves and robbers could never enter through the door, so they have to climb over the wall and enter the fold through deception. But even if they did get in, they would never get the sheep to follow them, for the sheep follow only the voice of their own shepherd. The false shepherds can never lead the sheep, so they must steal them away.*
 - 3) Kenneth Gangel, *... the thief and robber probably refers to the Pharisees against whom he had battled for several chapters.*
 - 4) Louis Barbieri, *The sheepfold represents Israel (cf. v. 16).*
 - 5) William Hendriksen, *A thief (one who is determined to deprive another of his property) and robber (one who uses violence in order to obtain the coveted goods) would not choose to enter by the door, for a. it was locked, had to be opened; and b. it was guarded by a door-keeper. Hence, such a man, in order to get in, would climb over from another place. Thus also the religious leaders, hostile to Jesus, were trying illegitimately to gain the mastery over the people of Israel (see verse 16). They tried to gain the people through intimidation (see 9:22).*
 - 6) F. F. Bruce, *Who are the shepherds of God's flock? The religious leaders in Israel would no doubt have claimed the title. But it was they who were the most determined opponents of Jesus and his message. The man cured of his blindness looked in vain to them for the care that shepherds should give. In fact, they expelled him from the flock for which they were responsible. But, having been expelled by them, he found a true shepherd in Jesus. In this context, it is difficult to avoid identifying them with the thieves and robbers, the false shepherds, who sought by some unauthorized means to "creep and intrude and climb into the fold."*
 - b. A true shepherd enters the sheepfold by the door (2), ***But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.***
 - 1) Thomas Constable, *In contrast to thieves and robbers, an approved shepherd would enter the pen through its gate rather than over its wall. The door represented the lawful way of entrance into Judaism for the shepherd ... Jesus was saying figuratively that He came to Israel as God's authorized representative: the Messiah. The religious leaders, on the other hand, did not have divine sanction for their dealings with Israel, which were essentially destructive as well as selfish.*

- 2) Warren Wiersbe, *The shepherd (or a porter) would guard the flock, or flocks, at night by lying across the opening. It was not unusual for several flocks to be sheltered together in the same fold. In the morning, the shepherds would come, call their sheep, and assemble their own flocks. Each sheep recognized his own master's voice.*
 - 3) Leon Morris, *When the shepherd comes in he calls the sheep, who know his voice. The Eastern shepherd often has an individual call for each of his sheep, and it is this that is in mind here. The sheep know their shepherd and recognize the call he gives his own. More, they respond to it, and in this way he leads them out.*
 - 4) William Hendriksen, ... *Jesus, who had been definitely appointed and sent by his heavenly Father, appears here in the quality of legitimate shepherd (see 10:11, 14). That is implied here, but he who enters by the door is shepherd of the sheep, and expressed in 10:11, 14.*
 - 5) Louis Barbieri, *The sheep, those who have believed in the One true God of Israel, recognize the voice of Jesus to be the true Messiah (cf. 5:37–38, 46–47; 8:47). The “leading out” means, within the metaphor, that the shepherd takes them out to find food and water. On the spiritual side of the metaphor, it means Jesus provides spiritual sustenance for His sheep.*
 - 6) William Barclay, *Constant vigilance, fearless courage and patient love for his flock were the necessary characteristics of the shepherd ... The word ‘shepherd’ should paint a picture to us of the unceasing vigilance and patience of the love of God; and it should remind us of our duty towards one another, especially if we hold any kind of office in the Church of Christ.*
2. Proper responses to the true shepherd (3-5)
- a. The gatekeeper opens the door to the shepherd (3a), **To him the gatekeeper opens.**
 - 1) Thomas Constable, *The doorkeeper was the person hired to protect the sheep from their enemies ... Normally there were sheep from several different flocks, belonging to several different owners, that stayed together in these large pens.*
 - 2) Edwin Blum, *The watchman opens the gate, and the shepherd comes in to call his own sheep by name (out from the other flocks).*
 - 3) Leon Morris, *Various attempts have been made to find a meaning for the doorkeeper, but none has won wide acceptance and none, it would seem, should. In an allegory not all details are significant; some are included as necessary parts of the picture even though they have no part to play in the symbolism. So here with the doorkeeper.*
 - b. The sheep respond to the call of the shepherd but not a stranger (3b-5), **The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”**
 - 1) Related verses
 - a) John 10:12-13, *He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.*
 - b) John 9:40, *Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?”*
 - c) Mark 9:32, *But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.*
 - 2) Comments
 - a) Leon Morris, *When the shepherd comes in he calls the sheep, who know his voice. The Eastern shepherd often has an individual call for each of his sheep, and it is this that is in mind here. The sheep know their shepherd and recognize the call he gives his own. More, they respond to it, and in this way he leads them out ... the shepherd leads them to their destination by walking before them.*
 - b) Edwin Blum, *As sheep hear the sound of their owner's familiar voice, they go to him. He leads them out of the pen till his flock is formed. Then he goes out toward the fields with the sheep following him ... If a stranger enters the pen, the sheep run away from him because his voice is not familiar. The point of this figure of speech consists in how a shepherd forms his flock. People come to God because He calls them (cf. vv. 16, 27; Rom. 8:28, 30). Their proper response to His call is to follow Him (cf. John 1:43; 8:12; 12:26; 21:19, 22).*

- c) A. T. Robertson, *Alas and alas, if only our modern pastors had the sheep (old and young) so trained that they would run away from and not run after the strange voices that call them to false philosophy, false psychology, false ethics, false religion, false life.*
 - d) Kenneth Gangel, *The emphasis on leading the sheep reminds us of Numbers 27 and the prayer of Moses for a successor “over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd” (Num. 27:16–17).*
 - e) Louis Barbieri, *The sheep responded only to the voice of their shepherd. They would not follow a stranger’s voice (v. 5), much as the blind man refused to be convinced against Jesus by the Pharisees.*
 - f) William Barclay, *In Palestine, the shepherd went in front and the sheep followed. The shepherd went first to see that the path was safe, and sometimes the sheep had to be encouraged to follow. A traveller tells how he saw a shepherd leading his flock come to a ford across a stream. The sheep were unwilling to cross. The shepherd finally solved the problem by carrying one of the lambs across. When its mother saw her lamb on the other side she crossed too, and soon all the rest of the flock had followed her ... Every detail of the shepherd’s life lights up the picture of the good shepherd whose sheep hear his voice and whose constant care is for his flock.*
 - g) Grant Osborne, *There is a great deal of Old Testament background behind this picture. God is often depicted as Israel’s shepherd (Gen 48:15; Pss 28:9; 80:1; Isa 40:11; Mic 5:4), leading his people to safety and watching over them (Ps 23; Ezek 34:11–16). The leaders who fail are called false shepherds who take the milk and wool for themselves and butcher the flock (Ezek 34:3; Isa 56:11; Jer 23:1–4). We should also note Numbers 27:16–17, where Moses asked God to appoint a new leader so Israel would not be “like sheep without a shepherd.” That person was Joshua, the Hebrew form of the name Jesus.*
 - h) F. F. Bruce, *In the picture here drawn by Jesus it is the personal bond between the shepherd and his sheep that keeps them together as they follow his guidance.*
3. Those listening to Jesus did not understand what He was saying (6), ***This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.***
- a. *This figure of speech*
 - 1) F. F. Bruce, ... *paroimia*, meaning a proverb (as in the Old Testament book of Proverbs) or a cryptic saying.
 - 2) Thomas Constable, *The Greek word paroimia (“figure of speech”) occurs elsewhere in John’s Gospel (16:25, 29) but never in the Synoptics.*
 - 3) B. F. Westcott, *It suggests the notion of a mysterious saying full of compressed thought, rather than that of a simple comparison.*
 - 4) Leon Morris, *“Figure of speech” translates a word not often found in the New Testament and which appears to mean “proverb” in its only non-Johannine occurrence, 2 Peter 2:22. It denotes language of which the meaning is not obvious, but which conveys to those who probe deeply enough spiritual truths of importance.*
 - b. *but they did not understand ...*
 - 1) Warren Wiersbe, *It is clear that the listeners did not understand what Jesus said or why He said it.*
 - 2) Leon Morris, *So here Jesus spoke indeed to his hearers, but they did not understand the spiritual truth that he was conveying.*
 - 3) Thomas Constable, *Many of the Jews who heard these words did not understand what Jesus was talking about. They did not respond to the Shepherd’s voice. They could hardly have failed to understand the relationship between shepherds and sheep, which was so common in their culture. Nevertheless they did not grasp Jesus’ analogy of Himself as Israel’s true Shepherd.*
 - 4) William Hendriksen, *The Jews did not understand the allegory; they did not understand what it meant that he was telling them. Had they known their Old Testament more thoroughly, they would not have experienced this difficulty.*
 - 5) Louis Barbieri, ... *they did not understand because of their blindness (9:40–41). They thought that they were the true sheep of God.*

c. Comments

- 1) F. F. Bruce, *The shepherd is Jesus himself. He is pictured as coming to the Jewish fold and calling his disciples out. One of them, indeed, had just been pushed out; others had come out already and yet others would come out before long. The members of the religious establishment could not communicate with the man who had been blind any more than he could communicate with them; to him their voice was "the voice of strangers." But when the true shepherd of Israel found him and spoke to him, he responded to him at once.*
- 2) Grant Osborne, *In Jesus' day the "strangers" are the Jewish authorities who opposed the work of God, turned against his Son, and tried to steal his flock. In Paul's time and our day these are false teachers who falsify God's truths and force their own versions on the church (1 Tim 1:4). We today must be extra careful in centering on God's word as the basis for all truth and deeply scrutinizing these "new" teachings for falsehoods.*

B. Jesus' personal application of the story (7-18)

1. He contrasts Himself to the thief (7-10)

a. Introductory notes

- 1) Thomas Constable, *The difference between this teaching and Jesus' parables in the Synoptics now becomes clearer. Jesus proceeded to compare Himself to the pen gate as well as to the shepherd. He also described Himself leading His sheep into the fold as well as out of it. Jesus was using the illustration to teach more than one lesson.*
- 2) William Hendriksen, *Because his audience had failed to understand the allegory, Jesus explains it in the present paragraph. Nevertheless, what we have here is more than explanation. Certain details are added, so that we may speak of explanation and amplification.*
- 3) F. F. Bruce, *It appears that we have a short parable, in which Jesus is compared to the door, inserted into the longer parable in which he is compared to the shepherd.*

b. Jesus is the door (7), **So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."**

1) Related verses

- a) John 14:6, *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*
- b) John 14:9, *I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.*
- c) Ephesians 2:18, *For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.*

2) Comments

- a) Thomas Constable, *Jesus introduced another of His "I am" claims. He professed to be "the door" or gate of the sheepfold (cf. 1:51; 14:6). In relation to the fold, Christ is the door, to which He gives admission. In relation to the flock, He is the good shepherd, to which He gives care and guidance.*
- b) Arthur Pink, *The 'door of the sheep' is to be distinguished from the 'door of the sheepfold' in v. 1. The latter was the Divinely-appointed way by which Christ had entered Judaism, in contrast from the false pastors of Israel whose conduct evidenced plainly that they had thrust themselves into office. The 'door of the sheep' was Christ Himself, by which the elect of Israel passed out of Judaism.*
- c) Edwin Blum, *Jesus then developed the shepherd/sheep figure of speech in another way. After a shepherd's flock has been separated from the other sheep, he takes them to pasture. Near the pasture is an enclosure for the sheep. The shepherd takes his place in the doorway or entrance and functions as a door or gate. The sheep can go out to the pasture in front of the enclosure, or if afraid, they can retreat into the security of the enclosure. The spiritual meaning is that Jesus is the only Gate by which people can enter into God's provision for them.*
- d) Warren Wiersbe, *He is the Door of the sheepfold and makes it possible for the sheep to leave the fold (the religion of Judaism) and to enter His flock.*
- e) Leon Morris, *... this is the only passage in which Jesus himself is seen as the door. The thought is not unlike that of 1:51, where Jesus is the ladder connecting heaven and earth, or 14:6, where he is the Way, but here it gets its force from the imagery of the sheepfold. There is but one door to a fold, and sheep and shepherds alike must enter by this door. There is no other way for them.*

- f) William Hendriksen, *For every true sheep he is also the door. For the shepherd he is the door to the sheep. For the sheep he is the door to all the blessings of salvation. The figure is very appropriate: a door leads both in and out: it gives the shepherd access to his sheep that are inside. It gives the sheep access to the fold, and to the pasture which is outside.*
- g) Louis Barbieri, *The sheepfold represents all who have eternal life. Jesus is the only means (“door”) by which one can enter the sheepfold, i.e., have eternal life (vv. 9–10; 14:6).*
- h) William Barclay, *Through him, and through him alone, we find access to God. ‘Through him’, said Paul, we ‘have access to ... the Father’ (Ephesians 2:18). The writer to the Hebrews calls him ‘the new and living way’ (Hebrews 10:20). Jesus opens the way to God. Until Jesus came, people could think of God only as, at best, a stranger and as, at worst, an enemy. But Jesus came to show people what God is like, and to open the way to him. He is the door through whom alone entrance to God becomes possible.*
- c. All others are thieves(8), **All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.**
- 1) Thomas Constable, *Jesus contrasted Himself, as the door, with the thieves and robbers who preceded Him. He provided protection and security for His sheep, whereas the others sought to exploit them. The thieves and robbers in this context refer to the religious leaders of Jesus’ day (cf. v. 1).*
 - 2) Edwin Blum, *When Jesus said, All who ever came before Me were thieves and robbers, He referred to those leaders of the nation who cared not for the spiritual good of the people but only for themselves.*
 - 3) Kenneth Gangel, *Jesus was not criticizing Moses and the prophets and certainly not John the Baptist. But the religious leaders who listened to Jesus’ parables (notably the Pharisees) seem to be the direct target along with false messiahs who tried to entice the sheep.*
 - 4) Warren Wiersbe, *The Pharisees threw the beggar out of the synagogue, but Jesus led him out of Judaism and into the flock of God!*
 - 5) Leon Morris, *He must have in view the whole of the Jewish hierarchy of his day. They were not interested in the well-being of the sheep but in their own advantage. The Sadducees in particular were known to make quite a lot of money out of temple religion, and there are denunciations of the Pharisees (Luke 16:14) and the scribes (Mark 12:40) for covetousness ... The meaning appears to be that if people are to bring other people into God’s fold they must first enter it themselves (cf. 1 Tim. 4:16). And the only way to enter is through the one door. These men declined to come to God through Christ. They therefore stamped themselves as impostors.*
 - 6) William Hendriksen, *Jesus is thinking here of the men who are standing right in front of him as he is speaking, namely, the religious leaders of the people, the members of the Sanhedrin, Sadducees and Pharisees, but especially the latter (see 9:40; 10:19). They were the ones who were trying, by means of intimidation (9:22), to steal the people, and thus to gain honor for themselves in an illegitimate manner. If threats were insufficient, they would use violence. They were, indeed, both thieves and robbers.*
- d. Jesus saves (9), **I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.**
- 1) Related verses
 - a) Psalm 23:2, *He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.*
 - b) Ezekiel 34:14, *I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel.*
 - 2) Comments
 - a) Thomas Constable, *Jesus described Himself as a passageway, which is what a door is (cf. 14:6). His sheep could enter and leave the sheepfold through Him ... It probably represents the security that God provides, and the pasture outside stands for what sustains their spiritual health and growth. Jesus provides for His people’s security needs and for all of their daily needs 24 hours a day.*
 - b) Edwin Blum, *Jesus the Shepherd provides security for His flock from enemies (whoever enters through Me will be saved, or “kept safe”). He also provides for their daily needs (the sheep come in and go out, and find pasture).*

- d) William Hendriksen, *These sheep receive freedom from the guilt, the misery, and the punishment of sin. Abundance—the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, the peace of God that passes all understanding—is their portion, here in principle, by and by in perfection.—There is no good reason to restrict the meaning of the verb in this passage, as if it meant no more than, “he will be safe.”*
- e) Grant Osborne, *Jesus is the true “gate” or door to salvation, the only way people can enter the kingdom and “be saved” (v. 9). One thinks of the gate to heaven (Gen 28:17; Ps 78:23) that God’s people enter at death or the gate into the kingdom of God (Matt 13:13–14) entered at conversion. Jesus pictures them going about freely and finding pasture, with Jesus as the shepherd leading his sheep into lush pasturelands (Ps 23; Rev 7:17).*
- f) Louis Barbieri, *The words if anyone establish that faith in Jesus is available to all. In the simile, he will be saved means delivered from thieves and wild animals, but pictures eternal life (cf. v. 10). Will go in and out (a merism) together with find pasture describes complete provision and security in all of life (cf. 4:14; 6:35). Contrary to the thief, Christ came that believers may have eternal life, both now and in the world to come.*
- g) William Barclay, *He says that through him we can go in and come out. To be able to come and go unmolested was the Jewish way of describing a life that is absolutely secure and safe. When people can go in and out without fear, it means that their country is at peace, that the forces of law and order are supreme, and that they enjoy perfect security ... Once anyone discovers, through Jesus Christ, what God is like, a new sense of safety and of security enters into life. If life is known to be in the hands of a God like that, the worries and the fears are gone.*
- e. The amazing contrast revealed (10), ***The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.***
- 1) Related verses
- a) Jeremiah 23:1, *“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD.*
- b) Ezekiel 34:3, *You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep.*
- 2) Comments
- a) Thomas Constable, *Impostors’ aims are ultimately selfish and destructive, but Jesus came to give life, not to take it.*
- b) Donald Carson, *The world still seeks its humanistic, political saviours—its Hitlers, its Stalins, its Maos, its Pol Pots—and only too late does it learn that they blatantly confiscate personal property (they come ‘only to steal’), ruthlessly trample human life under foot (they come ‘only ... to kill’), and contemptuously savage all that is valuable (they come ‘only ... to destroy’).*
- c) Warren Wiersbe, *... the false shepherds take advantage of the sheep and exploit them ... The thief wants to steal the sheep from the fold, slaughter them, and destroy them.*
- d) Louis Barbieri, *The thief who comes only to steal and kill and destroy is not Satan, as commonly thought, but refers to the false teachers who predated Jesus and who led Israel at this time (v. 8).*
- e) Edwin Blum, *... Christ has come to benefit the sheep. He gives life which is not constricted but overflowing. The thief takes life; Christ gives it to the full.*
- f) Marcus Dods, *The eternal life that Jesus imparts is not just long, but it is also rich. He did not just come to gain sheep, but to enable His sheep to flourish and to enjoy contentment and every other legitimately good thing possible: an “abundance of all that sustains life.*
- g) Leon Morris, *The thought is further developed by a contrast with the thief. His interest is entirely selfish. He steals or kills for food, and even destroys the sheep. He comes only for harm to the flock and with no interest in its welfare. Christ by contrast (“I” is emphatic) came for the benefit of the sheep. He came that they might have life (for this term see on 1:4), and not only life, but a more abundant life (cf. 20:31). There is nothing cramping or restricting about life for those who enter his fold.*

- h) William Hendriksen, *Note the climactic arrangement: steal, kill, destroy. That these religious leaders spiritually killed and destroyed the people whom they had stolen is clear from Matt. 23:15. The exact opposite of killing and destroying is making alive. And the exact opposite of the thief is the good shepherd, Christ ... These passages show that Jesus always provides an overflowing measure, a surplus.*
- I) William Barclay, *The Greek phrase used for having it more abundantly means to have a superabundance of a thing. To be a follower of Jesus, to know who he is and what he means, is to have a superabundance of life ... When we try to live our own lives, life is a dull, dispirited thing. When we walk with Jesus, there comes a new vitality, a superabundance of life. It is only when we live with Christ that life becomes really worth living and we begin to live in the real sense of the word.*
- j) Charles Swindoll, *The abundance Jesus offers is a spiritual abundance that transcends circumstances like income, health, living conditions, and even death ... The abundant life is life that never ends; yet we don't have to wait until the end of our physical life to receive this abundance and to enjoy it. Abundant life includes peace, purpose, destiny, a genuine purpose for living, the joy of facing any adversity—including the grave—without fear, and the ability to endure hardship with confident assurance.*
- k) Grant Osborne, *With him the sheep have an abundance of divine blessings in every area. This embraces not only eternal life with God in heaven but also the daily earthly needs of God's flock.*

2. He is the good shepherd not a hireling (11-15)

- a. He gives Himself for His sheep (11), ***I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.***

1) Related verses

- a) Isaiah 40:11, *He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*
- b) Ezekiel 34:12, *As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.*
- c) Ezekiel 34:23, *And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd.*
- d) Ezekiel 37:24, *“My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.*
- e) Hebrews 13:20, *Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,*
- f) 1 Peter 2:25, *For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*
- g) 1 Peter 5:4, *And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*
- h) Revelation 7:17, *For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.*
- I) John 10:15, *just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.*
- j) John 10:17, *For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.*
- h) 1 John 3:16, *By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.*

2) Comments

- a) Thomas Constable, *Here is another “I am” claim. Jesus is the good shepherd in contrast to the bad shepherds just described (vv. 8, 10a). Rather than killing the sheep so that He might live, as the bad shepherds did, Jesus was willing to sacrifice His life (Gr. psyche, the total self) so the sheep might live. It is this extreme commitment to the welfare of the sheep that qualified Jesus as the good shepherd ... Laying down one's life is a uniquely Johannine expression that describes a voluntary sacrificial death (cf. vv. 17, 18; 13:37–38; 15:13; 1 John 3:16).*

- b) Richard Lenski, *Jesus does not here compare himself with other shepherds; he asserts far more than that he is relatively better than other shepherds, namely that he is a shepherd in a sense in which no other man can ever be a shepherd. ... Unfortunately, the English is unable to reproduce this weight of meaning in translation.*
 - c) John Mitchell, *All through the Old Testament it is the sheep that die for the shepherd. But when we come to this picture, it is the other way around.*
 - d) Edwin Blum, *In the Old Testament, God is called the Shepherd of His people (Pss. 23:1; 80:1–2; Ecc. 12:11; Isa. 40:11; Jer. 31:10). Jesus is this to His people, and He came to give His life for their benefit (cf. John 10:14, 17–18; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2, 25; Heb. 9:14). He is also the “Great Shepherd” (Heb. 13:20–21) and “the Chief Shepherd” (1 Peter 5:4).*
 - e) Warren Wiersbe, *Five times in this sermon, Jesus clearly affirmed the sacrificial nature of His death (John 10:11, 15, 17–18). He did not die as a martyr, killed by men; He died as a substitute, willingly laying down His life for us ... The fact that Jesus said that He died “for the sheep” must not be isolated from the rest of biblical teaching about the Cross. He also died for the nation Israel (John 11:50–52) and for the world (John 6:51). While the blood of Jesus Christ is sufficient for the salvation of the world, it is efficient only for those who will believe.*
 - f) Kenneth Gangel, *The word kalos (good) emphasizes genuineness, value, and truth. This verse shows us how the good shepherd differs from other shepherds. They might risk their lives for the sheep as David did in fighting off lions and bears, but they would never intentionally die for the sheep as the good shepherd will do. This passage describes substitutionary atonement for sin, the supreme sacrifice of Calvary.*
 - g) D. A. Carson, *The shepherd does not die for his sheep to serve as an example, throwing himself off a cliff in a grotesque and futile display while bellowing, “See how much I love you!” No, the assumption is that the sheep are in mortal danger; that in their defense the shepherd loses his life; and by his death they are saved. That, and that alone, is what makes him the good shepherd.*
 - h) Leon Morris, *The great act of care for the sheep that he is impressing on his hearers by this figure is that of laying down his life. Moreover, when the Palestinian shepherd did die in defense of his sheep that was an accident. He planned to live for them, not die for them. With Jesus, however, death for his sheep was his set purpose ... the death of the Palestinian shepherd meant disaster for his sheep. The death of the Good Shepherd means life for his sheep.*
 - I) William Barclay, *Jesus’ point is that those who work only for reward think chiefly of the money; those who work for love think chiefly of the people they are trying to serve. Jesus was the good shepherd who so loved his sheep that for their safety he would risk, and one day give, his life.*
 - j) Charles Swindoll, *What follows is a clear foreshadowing of the persecution He will suffer and a strong affirmation of His substitutionary death on behalf of His believers. Just as important is His acknowledgment that truth always has been a lightning rod for evil; nevertheless, He will not flinch as evil strikes Him with all the power of hell. As the Creator, He cannot be overpowered by anything. Yet He will voluntarily suffer and die to carry out the Father’s redemptive plan.*
 - k) Grant Osborne, *This is connected to the prophecy of Isaiah 53:10, that the Suffering Servant’s life would be “an offering for sin.” Jesus laid down his life “for” or “on behalf of” (Greek: hyper) the sheep, a proposition that in John always connotes vicarious sacrifice (6:51; 11:50–52; 18:14). Shepherds often faced dangerous predators (as David notes in 1 Sam 17:34–37), but few were willing to lose their lives in the process. Only Jesus deliberately gave up his life as part of the divine purpose for the sheep.*
- b. The hireling is only concerned for himself (12-13), **He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.**
- 1) Related verses
 - a) Zechariah 11:17, *“Woe to my worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! Let his arm be wholly withered, his right eye utterly blinded!”*
 - b) Zechariah 13:7, *“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me,” declares the LORD of hosts. “Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones.*

- c) Ezekiel 34:2-6, *Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? 3 You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. 4 The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. 5 So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; 6 they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.*
- d) Jeremiah 23:1-3, *“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD. 2 Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: “You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD. 3 Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply.*

2) Comments

- a) Thomas Constable, *Thieves and robbers are wicked, but hired hands are typically just selfish. They take care of sheep for what they can get out of it, not for the sake of the sheep themselves. While a good shepherd may be willing to sacrifice himself for the safety and welfare of his sheep, a hireling will typically save himself and run away when danger arises (cf. Jer. 10:21–22; 12:10; Zech. 11:4–17) ... Christian leaders behave like hired hands when they put their own needs ahead of those they serve (cf. 1 Pet. 5:2–3). Attitude is the crucial difference between a true shepherd and a hired hand.*
 - b) Edwin Blum, *Israel had many false prophets, selfish kings, and imitation messiahs. The flock of God suffered constantly from their abuse (Jer. 10:21–22; 12:10; Zech. 11:4–17).*
 - c) Kenneth Gangel, *Later in the New Testament Peter warned the elders of the church not to be like hired-hand shepherds who functioned with a mercenary attitude (1 Pet. 5:1–7).*
 - d) Leon Morris, *There is nothing evil about the term, as there is with “thief,” but it points to someone whose interest is in wages, not sheep ... The Mishnah lays down the legal responsibility of the hired shepherd. An interesting provision is that if one wolf attacks the flock he is required to defend the sheep, but “two wolves count as unavoidable accident” (i.e., no blame attaches to the hired man for any damage they may cause). Jesus, however, gives his life for the sheep without condition.*
 - e) Grant Osborne, *In verse 12 Jesus introduces the hired hand, and again he has the leaders of Israel in mind. They have no stake in the sheep, no pride or care of ownership. They care nothing for the sheep and so run away at the sight of a wolf (vv. 12–13) ... In Acts 20:28–29 Paul warns the Ephesian elders of false teachers who like “savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.” It is essential to choose church leaders not on the basis of their charisma or storytelling ability but on their walk with God and the centrality of scriptural truth in their ministry.*
- c. Jesus’ sheep know Him and He lays down His life for them (14-15), ***I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.***

1) Related verses

- a) John 10:11, *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*
- b) John 10:27, *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*
- c) Nahum 1:7, *The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.*
- d) 2 Timothy 2:19, *But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.”*
- e) John 10:4, *When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.*
- f) Matthew 11:27, *All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*

2) Comments

- a) J. I. Packer, *What matters supremely ... is not, in the last analysis, the fact that I know God, but the larger fact which underlies it—the fact that He knows me. I am graven on the palms of His hands. I am never out of His mind All my knowledge of Him depends on His sustained initiative in knowing me.*
- b) Thomas Constable, *The Son must know the Father in order to follow His will, just like the sheep must know the shepherd in order to follow Him faithfully. Jesus taught that the relationship that the sheep enjoy with Himself is unique, just as His relationship with His Father is unique. Yet each person maintains his own identity.*
- c) Edwin Blum, *I know My sheep stresses His ownership and watchful oversight. My sheep know Me stresses their reciprocal knowledge of and intimacy with Him. This intimacy is modeled on the loving and trusting mutual relationship of the Father and the Son. Jesus' care and concern is evidenced by His prediction of His coming death for the flock.*
- d) Warren Wiersbe, *Psalm 23 is a beautiful poetic description of how the Good Shepherd cares for His sheep. In the pastures, by the waters, and even through the valleys, the sheep need not fear, because the shepherd is caring for them and meeting their needs. ... The Good Shepherd knows His sheep and His sheep know Him. They get to know Him better by listening to His voice (the Word) and experiencing His daily care. As the sheep follow the Shepherd, they learn to love and to trust Him. He loves "His own" (John 13:1) and He shows that love in the way He cares for them.*
- e) Kenneth Gangel, *We see in this paragraph that the shepherd relates to the sheep in trust and intimacy. What a comparison! The good shepherd knows his sheep in the same way the Father knows the Son. Not only that, but the sheep know the shepherd in the same way the Son knows the Father. Notice how often the Lord talked about laying down his life for the sheep—five times in eight verses—a phraseology unique to John's Gospel.*
- f) George Beasley-Murray, *... the mutual knowledge of the Shepherd and his "sheep" denotes an intimate relationship which reflects the fellowship of love between the Father and the Son.*
- g) James Boice, *We will never be able to give our lives as Jesus gave His life for us—He died for us as our sin-bearer—nevertheless, there are other ways in which we can give our lives for others. We can give our time in order to help them. We can sacrifice things that we would rather do or rather have in order to serve and give to others. In other words, we must put others ahead of ourselves. Our primary desire must be for their spiritual well-being and comfort.*
- h) William Hendriksen, *Jesus—and he alone—is the good shepherd, for: a. in distinction from the Pharisees viewed as strangers (10:5), he knows his sheep ... b. in distinction from the Pharisees viewed as thieves and robbers (10:1, 8, 10), he owns his sheep ... c. in distinction from the Pharisees viewed as hirelings (10:12, 13), he loves his sheep, even to the point of offering himself as a sacrifice in their behalf and in their stead.*
- I) Charles Swindoll, *This sets Jesus apart from the religious leaders of the people, who supposedly shepherd the people of God. Whereas He is selfless, they are selfish. Whereas He will lay down His life for the sheep, they will abandon all to save themselves. Whereas Jesus lived in complete obedience to the Father, they obeyed their own lusts.*

3. Other sheep will join Jesus' flock(16), ***And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.***

a. Related verses

- 1) Isaiah 56:8, *The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, "I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered."*
- 2) Ezekiel 34:11-13, *"For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country.*
- 3) Matthew 8:11, *I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,*

- 4) Acts 28:28, *Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen.*"
- 5) John 11:52, *and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.*

b. Comments

- 1) Thomas Constable, *The other sheep in view refer to Gentiles outside the fold of Israel who would believe in Jesus (cf. vv. 3–4). This is one of a few intimations in the Gospels that a new body of people would replace Israel as the people of God in the future (cf. 17:20; Eph. 2:11–22; 3:6). These sheep, with those from Israel, would compose one flock, namely, the church (cf. 1 Cor. 10:32).*
- 2) Edwin Blum, *The other sheep ... not of this flock refers to Gentiles who would believe. His coming death would bring them also to the Father. They too will listen to My voice. Jesus continues to save people as they hear His voice in the Scriptures. Acts 18:9–11 illustrates how this works out in the history of the church ... One flock and one Shepherd speaks of the church with believers from Jewish and Gentile "sheep pens" in one body with Christ as Head (cf. Eph. 2:11–22; 3:6).*
- 3) Leon Morris, *The other sheep are not to remain distinct from the existing sheep, as though there were to be a Jewish church and a separate Gentile church. They are to be united in one flock. And they all stand under the leadership of one shepherd. The unity is not a natural unity, but one brought about by the activity of the Shepherd in "bringing" them.*
- 4) Warren Wiersbe, *The missionary message of the Gospel of John is obvious: "For God so loved the world" (John 3:16). Jesus Himself defied custom and witnessed to a Samaritan woman. He refused to defend the exclusivist approach of the Jewish religious leaders. He died for a lost world, and His desire is that His people reach a lost world with the message of eternal life.*
- 5) William Hendriksen, *The idea that the Gentiles would be fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, in other words that they would enter into the kingdom on the basis of equality with the Jews, this idea (though not excluded by the prophets) is not stressed in the Old Testament. Hence, Paul could speak of it as a mystery (Eph. 1:9, 10; 3:1–6).*
- 6) George Beasley-Murray, *The sheep of the different folds are not to remain in their separateness, but "they shall become one flock," under the care of the one Shepherd. Their unity is the fruit of his solitary sacrifice (vv 15, 17–18) and his unique relation to God and man (vv 14–15a) as the Pauline epistles joyfully proclaim (Rom 5:12–21; 2 Cor 5:14–21; Eph 2:11–18).*
- 7) William Barclay, *Even the Old Testament is not without its glimpses of that day. Isaiah had that very dream. It was his conviction that God had given Israel for a light to the nations (Isaiah 42:6, 49:6), and there had always been some lonely voices which insisted that God was not the exclusive property of Israel, but that Israel's destiny was to make him known to all people ... The unity comes from the fact, not that all the sheep are forced into one fold, but that they all hear, answer and obey one shepherd. It is not a unity of churches; it is a unity of loyalty to Jesus Christ. The fact that there is one flock does not mean that there can be only one Church, one method of worship, one form of church administration. But it does mean that all the different churches are united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ.*
- 8) Grant Osborne, *The coming of the Gentiles into the people of God was proclaimed in the Abrahamic covenant, where God told Abraham that a major purpose for his choice of Israel was so that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen 12:3; also 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14), and reiterated in Isaiah 49:6 ("a light for the Gentiles," also 42:6). It was always God's plan to bring the Gentiles into his larger fold, and he actually chose Israel to bring about the procession of the nations to Zion (Isa 2:2–4; 11:10, 12; 14:1; 56:6–7; 60:3). In John, Jesus is the "Savior of the world" (4:42) and the "light of the world" (8:12). While the world hates God and rejects Jesus, God loves the world (3:16), and the mission of Jesus and the disciples is to the world (17:18; 20:21).*

4. The Father loves the Son Who has authority to lay down His life for His flock (17-18), ***For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.***

a. Related verses

- 1) Philippians 2:9, *Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,*
- 2) John 5:20, *For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.*
- 3) Isaiah 53:12, *Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.*
- 4) Hebrews 2:9, *But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*
- 5) John 10:11, *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*
- 6) Matthew 26:53, *Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?*
- 7) John 2:19, *Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."*
- 8) John 12:49, *For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.*
- 9) John 14:31, *but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.*
- 10) John 15:10, *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.*

b. Comments

1) Concerning God's love for the Son (17)

- a) Edwin Blum, *The Father has a special love for Jesus because of His sacrificial obedience to the will of God.*
- b) Thomas Constable, *Having declared the intimate knowledge that the Father and the Son share, Jesus now explained why the Father loved Him as He did. Jesus did not mean that the Father's love resulted from the Son's performance. It would still have existed if Jesus had failed to obey Him completely. The Father loved the Son unconditionally from the beginning. However, the Son's full obedience to the Father's will resulted in the Father having a special love for the Son that obedience under testing drew forth. Similarly, God loves all believers unconditionally, but when they obey Him, they enjoy an intimacy with Him that only obedience makes possible (cf. 15:14) ... Jesus died sacrificially with His resurrection and glorification in view. He did not die thinking that He would remain dead. His death was one event in a larger chain of events, with the big picture always in view as Jesus anticipated the Cross.*
- c) Gerald Borchert, *'Because [dia touto] the Father loves me, that is the reason [hoti, therefore] I lay down my life.'* *The model of the Father provided the model for the Son, which in turn should provide the model for the followers of Jesus (cf. 13:34; 15:1).*
- d) Leon Morris, *One might have expected rather the thought that the Father loves the Son for what he is and that this leads to the cross (cf. 3:16). But the meaning here is that the death of Jesus is the will of God for him. And because he is in perfect harmony with the will of God he goes forward to that death. Thus the Father's love is the recognition from the Father's side of the perfect community between them in this matter.*
- e) William Hendriksen, *The Father will show his love by the reward described in Phil. 2:9.*
- f) George Beasley-Murray, *The Father's love for the Son is linked with the Son's death for the world. This event is naturally not represented as the origin of that love but its supreme manifestation and enactment.*

- g) E. C. Hoskyns, *The love of the Father for the Son is set in the context neither of the original creation nor of a relationship which existed before the world was made, but of the love of the Father for the world of men and women.... The love of the Father is directed towards the Son, because by him, by his voluntary death, the obedience upon which the salvation of men depends has been accomplished.*
 - h) Grant Osborne, *The basis for everything—from creation to redemption—is the Father’s love (10:17). Salvation is possible because “God so loved the world” (3:16), but that salvation is anchored in the Father’s love for the Son, and Jesus’ mission was the outgrowth of that love within the Godhead. Here the Father’s love is intertwined with his Son’s submission to his will, Christ’s perfect union with the divine plan, the salvation that flows out of his vicarious sacrifice for sinful humankind.*
 - I) F. F. Bruce, *If he was to impart resurrection life to others, he must receive resurrection life himself, and to receive resurrection life he must first pass through death. Only by falling into the ground and dying could the grain of wheat “yield much fruit” (John 12:24). Only by laying down his life and receiving it again could the shepherd bring his “other sheep” together with the sheep from the original fold into his “one flock.”*
- 2) Concerning Jesus’ authority over His life (18)
- a) Edwin Blum, *Jesus was not a helpless pawn on history’s chessboard.*
 - b) Thomas Constable, *God had given Jesus the authority to offer Himself as a sacrifice for humankind’s sins and the authority to rise from the dead. Nevertheless, the Son remained submissive to the Father in the triune hierarchy. Jesus willingly offered Himself; no human took His life from Him. However, He offered Himself in obedience to the Father’s will ... Anyone can lay his or her life down in death sacrificially, but only Jesus could lay it down and then take it back again in resurrection. The New Testament writers attributed Jesus’ resurrection to all three members of the Trinity: the Father (Rom. 6:4), the Son (John 2:19), and the Spirit (Rom. 8:11).*
 - c) Arthur Pink, *It was not the nails, but the strength of His love to the Father and to His elect, which held Him to the Cross.*
 - d) Warren Wiersbe, *From the human point of view, it appeared that Jesus was executed; but from the divine point of view, He laid down His life willingly. When Jesus cried on the cross, “It is finished!” He then voluntarily yielded up His spirit to the Father (John 19:30). Three days later, He voluntarily took up His life again and arose from the dead.*
 - e) Kenneth Gangel, *Substitutionary atonement is the heart of the gospel (Isa. 53:6), and that certainly focuses the Lord’s words here. He would join the sheep from a variety of pens and he would die for all of them.*
 - f) Leon Morris, *The Lord’s death does not take place as the result of misadventure or the might of his foes or the like. No one takes his life from him. Far from this being the case, he himself lays it down, and does so completely of his own volition. He claims authority both to lay down his life and to take it again. And, characteristically, the whole is linked with the Father. He gave commandment to this effect, and Jesus accordingly is simply doing his will.*
 - g) William Hendriksen, *Christ’s action differs in two respects from that of a shepherd who risks his life in behalf of the flock: a. it is a voluntary sacrifice (when the proper moment arrives, Jesus will not try to cling to life, like the shepherd who, in his struggle with the wolf, tries to save himself); and b. it actually saves the sheep. We now (verses 17 and 18) note still a third difference: c. Jesus lays down his life in order to take it again.*
 - h) Louis Barbieri, *According to this verse, Jesus had the authority to resurrect Himself from the dead, something that would be impossible for a mere human. The Father (Ac 2:32; 4:10; Rm 10:9) and the Son (Jn 2:19) were both active in the death and resurrection of Jesus.*
 - i) William Barclay, *Few passages in the New Testament tell us so much about Jesus in so short a compass ... (1) It tells us that Jesus saw his whole life as an act of obedience to God ... (2) It tells us that Jesus always saw the cross and the glory together ... (3) It tells us in a way that we cannot possibly mistake that Jesus’ death was entirely voluntary.*

C. Reactions to Jesus' teaching (19-21)

1. Some believed He was insane (19-20), ***There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. 20 Many of them said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?"***

a. Related verses

- 1) John 7:43, *So there was a division among the people over him.*
- 2) John 9:16, *Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.*
- 3) John 7:20, *The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?"*
- 4) Mark 3:21, *And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."*

b. Comments

- 1) Edwin Blum, *For the third time Jesus' teaching divided the people (cf. 7:43; 9:16).*
- 2) Thomas Constable, *Again Jesus' claims resulted in some of His hearers believing in Him and others disbelieving (cf. 7:12, 43; 9:16). Here the expression "the Jews" refers to the Jewish people generally, not specifically to the religious leaders, as it usually does in this Gospel. Evidently it was the apparent contradiction between Jesus' claim to be the coming shepherd of Israel, and His claim that He would die for the sheep, that caused the cleavage. Some even concluded that He was demon-possessed and therefore insane (cf. 7:20; 8:48).*
- 3) Warren Wiersbe, *The old accusation that Jesus was a demoniac was hurled at Him again (John 7:20; 8:48, 52). People will do almost anything to avoid facing the truth!*
- 4) Leon Morris, *It is not without its interest that the only occasions in this Gospel when the word "demon" occurs are when the Jews are accusing Jesus of being demon-possessed or when he is defending himself from the charge (or others are doing so, as in v. 21). A further point to be noted is that on this occasion having a demon and being mad are apparently equated ... Those who hold that Jesus has a demon are able to dispense with the evidence. He is mad, they say, and therefore there is no point in taking notice of him.*
- 5) William Hendriksen, *It is not difficult to understand that to the mind of the natural man the words of Jesus appeared to be foolishness. Why would a man lay down his life in order to take it back again? True, some people desire to commit suicide, but surely not with the intention of coming back to life once more even if they could!*

2. Others believed He could not be under the control of a demon (21), ***Others said, "These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"***

- a. Thomas Constable, *Others concluded that He was sane and sober, because of His gracious revelations and His ability to cure the man born blind (9:1-12).*
- b. Leon Morris, *Others were impressed both by Jesus' words and by his deeds. The words, they affirmed, are not the words of a demon-possessed man. And a demoniac would not have been able to open the eyes of a blind man. Their respect for the facts prevented this group from prejudging the case. So they refused to condemn Jesus. Yet their position remains entirely a negative one. They say what Jesus is not, but they make no attempt to say what he is.*
- c. William Hendriksen, *Those who disagreed with the majority revolved in their minds the entire beautiful allegory of the good shepherd who in contrast with strangers knows his sheep, in contrast with thieves and robbers owns his sheep, and in contrast with hirelings loves his sheep. Perhaps they could not understand everything, but of one thing they were certain: "These are not the remarks of a demon-possessed (person)." Besides, they have not forgotten the great miracle which Jesus had performed so very recently. As they see it, this miracle has evidential value (see on 9:16, 31-33).*

CONCLUSIONS

- Thoms Constable, *John continued to stress the two opposite conclusions that people continued to draw, even though Jesus' witness to His deity was sufficiently consistent and clear. This should be an encouragement to all of us who testify for Him. Not even Jesus Himself convinced everyone that He was God's Son.*
- Edwin Blum, *Since Jesus Christ is "the Door," we would expect a division, because a door shuts some people in and others out! He is the Good Shepherd, and the shepherd must separate the sheep from the goats. It is impossible to be neutral about Jesus Christ; for, what we believe about Him is a matter of life or death (John 8:24).*
- William Hendriksen, *With respect to him no one can be neutral!*
- George Beasley-Murray, *The mention of the division indicates the uncertainty and tension in the situation, and so prepares for the following section, where the uncertainty and tension reach explosion point (vv 24–39).*
- William Barclay, *The effect of Jesus is not the effect of a madman. The undeniable fact is that millions upon millions of lives have been changed by the power of Jesus Christ. The weak have become strong, the selfish have become selfless, the defeated have become victorious, the worried have become serene, the bad have become good. It is not madness which produces such a change, but wisdom and sanity ... The choice remains—Jesus was either mad or divine. Having reviewed the evidence, the only conclusion that an honest person can reach is that Jesus brought into the world not a deluded madness but the perfect sanity of God.*
- Grant Osborne, *We live in a divided world, with racial tension everywhere we look. Jesus makes it possible for this divided world to find oneness, as love tempers divisions and enables us through the love of the Godhead to bridge the gaps and indeed become "one sheep" united under the one Shepherd. Jesus' mission to the world becomes our mission.*

THE FINAL CONFRONTATION AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION, JOHN 10:22-42

INTRODUCTION

- Thomas Constable, *The present section of the fourth Gospel is strongly Christological and focuses on Jesus' identity. In this subdivision of the text Jesus presented Himself as the Messiah (vv. 22–30) and as the Son of God (vv. 31–39). This resulted in the climax of hostility against Him.*
- Warren Wiersbe, *The events in this section occurred about two and a half months after those described in John 10:1–21. John put them together because in both messages, Jesus used the imagery of the shepherd and the sheep.*
- Leon Morris, *The question of the Person of Jesus dominates the section. It becomes clear that people must either recognize that Jesus stands in such a relation to the Father as no one else ever did, or else reject him entirely. John's account of the public ministry of Jesus ends accordingly with the final breach with the Jews, after which Jesus retires beyond the Jordan.*
- Leon Morris, *The Jews' reaction to Jesus' great assertion is the extreme one of trying to stone him, but he stops them with an argument based on Psalm 82:6.*

COMMENTARY

- A. Jesus claims unity with the Father (22-30)
1. The time and setting (22-23), ***At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon.***
 - a. Related verses
 - 1) Acts 3:11, *While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's.*
 - 2) Acts 5:12, *Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico.*

b. Comments

1) *the Feast of Dedication*

- a) Charles Swindoll, *During this festival, Jewish resentment for Roman occupation ran especially high and their desire for the Messiah more acute than usual.*
- b) Louis Barbieri, *Symbolically, Jesus is the One who restores* Thomas Constable, *The eight-day Feast of Dedication, now called Chanukah (or Hanukkah), the Feast of Lights, was not one of the feasts prescribed in the Mosaic Law. The Jews instituted it during the inter-testamental period (cf. 1 Macc. 4:36–59; 2 Macc. 1:9, 18; 10:1–8) ... This feast commemorated the purification and rededication of the temple by Judas Maccabeus (“Judas the Hammer”) on the twenty-fifth of Chislew (modern late December and early January), 164 B.C. The Syrian invader Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) had profaned the temple, three years earlier, by replacing the brazen altar with a pagan one, on which he offered a pig as a sacrifice to Jupiter. Antiochus attempted to Hellenize Judea, but the Jewish patriot Judas Maccabeus was able to lead a guerilla revolt that has borne his name ever since. After three years he defeated the Syrians and liberated the Jews.*
- c) Leon Morris, *It was the last great deliverance that the Jews had known, and therefore it must have been in people’s minds a symbol of their hope that God would again deliver his people ... John wants us to see in Jesus the fulfillment of all that the feast stands for.*
- d) William Hendriksen, *It is an eight-day, joyous festival, marked by illumination of the dwellings (hence, also called “feast of Lights”) and family-reunions. Though it is not one of the three great pilgrim-feasts, it nevertheless, drew many people to Jerusalem.*
- e) Warren Wiersbe, *The feast commemorates the rededication of the temple by Judas Maccabeus in 164 B.C., after it had been desecrated by the Romans. This historical fact may bear a relationship to the words of Jesus in John 10:36, for He had been set apart (dedicated) by the Father and sent into the world. The Jewish leaders were celebrating a great event in history yet passing by a great opportunity right in their own temple!*
- f) Kenneth Gangel, *The Feast of Dedication was also a Feast of Lights pointing to a time when Messiah would come to the temple and throw out all invaders, thereby reestablishing the kingdom. These grand visions persisted in the Israeli nation until the sack by the Romans in A.D. 70.*
- g) George Beasley-Murray, *Unlike Tabernacles, the festival could be celebrated at home. A lampstand with eight lamps was used; according to Shammai, the eight lamps were lighted on the first day, and one light was extinguished each day until there were none, but according to Hillel, one lamp should be lighted on the first day and one added each day till all eight were alight. Rejoicing was the keynote of the festival, and no mourning was allowed during its observance ...*
- h) William Barclay, *It is not without significance that it must have been very close to this time of illumination that Jesus said: ‘I am the light of the world.’ When all the lights were being kindled in memory of the freedom won to worship God in the true way, Jesus said: ‘I am the light of the world; I alone can light men and women into the knowledge and the presence of God.’*

2) *... it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon*

- a) Edwin Blum, *Solomon’s Colonnade was a long covered walkway on the east side of the temple. Two months had elapsed since Jesus’ last confrontation with the Jews (7:1–10:21) at the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2), which was in October. Jesus again returned to the temple area.*
- b) Thomas Constable, *In warmer weather, Jesus would have taught in one of the open-air courtyards of the temple. Because it was winter, He taught what follows in Solomon’s colonnade, on the temple courtyard’s eastern side. Perhaps John mentioned this detail because it was in Solomon’s colonnade that the first Christians gathered regularly (Acts 3:11; 5:12). One writer suggested that John may have included the reference to winter because of the spiritual climate, namely, the generally frigid attitude of the Jews toward Jesus.*
- c) George Beasley-Murray, *A great deliverance from an Antichrist and the triumph of true religion was being celebrated, but the frosty temperature without corresponded to the frozen spirits of “the Jews.” For them there was no sign of the Deliverer, but among them stood Jesus, whom many of the populace regarded as the Messiah, but who did not observe the Law as the sacred tradition demanded, and whose speech and actions were tantalizing.*

- d) Leon Morris, *The term “Colonnade” denotes a roofed structure supported on pillars. It would have given a certain amount of shelter from the wintry weather. The reference is to a colonnade in Herod’s temple. It appears to have been a very old structure, and was popularly thought to have been part of Solomon’s Temple, though this belief, of course, was not well founded ... It seems to have stretched along the east side of the Temple, and apparently it was the place where the scribes normally held their schools. Jesus is not depicted as engaging in any formal teaching on this occasion, but simply as walking in this colonnade.*
- e) William Hendriksen, *This portico is said to have been the only remnant of the original temple. Because it was so regarded it was called Solomon’s portico (see also Acts 3:11; 5:12). It lasted until the destruction of the temple by Titus, A.D. 70 ...*
2. The Jews wanted Jesus to state plainly that He is the Messiah (24), ***So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.”***
- a. Related verses
- 1) John 1:41, *He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ).*
 - 2) Matthew 26:63, *But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.”*
 - 3) Luke 22:67, *“If you are the Christ, tell us.” But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe,*
- b. Comments
- 1) Edwin Blum, *The hostile Jerusalem leaders were determined to pin Him down so they surrounded Him. His enigmatic sayings plagued them, and they wanted Him to declare Himself on their terms.*
 - 2) Warren Wiersbe, *The leaders surrounded Jesus in the temple so that He had to stop and listen to them. They had decided that it was time for a “showdown” and they did not want Him to evade the issue any longer.*
 - 3) George Beasley-Murray, *Despite all that Jesus is recorded as saying to the Jews, including the immediately preceding chapters, he had never publicly stated that he was the Messiah (the admission to the Samaritan woman was no public proclamation). His claims to being the source of living water (7:37–38), Light for the world (8:12), the Shepherd of the sheep (10:11) were certainly astonishing, but was he prepared to affirm that he was the Anointed of God, and so the King of the coming Kingdom of God? That was the crucial matter.*
 - 4) Thomas Constable, *Jesus had often hinted at being the Messiah when He spoke publicly to the Jews. Still He had not plainly claimed to be the Messiah (“the Christ”) like He had when He had talked with the Samaritan woman (4:26). The reason the Jews wanted Jesus to make His claim clear here appears to have been so that they could condemn and eventually kill Him ... It was His critics’ determined unbelief that made His claims obscure to them, not His inability or unwillingness to reveal Himself. Furthermore, for Jesus to have claimed to be the Jews’ Messiah publicly would have stirred up a political movement that He did not want to support.*
 - 5) Leon Morris, *They are serious and want a clear reply. Their question, “How long will you keep us in suspense?” implies that Jesus has not been quite fair to them. He has not made his position plain but has kept them in suspense, not knowing what he claimed for himself. So now they demand plain speech ... they rightly discern that the critical question is that of Jesus’ messiahship and accordingly proceed to interrogate him on the matter. This makes the passage important for our understanding of this Gospel, the aim of which is to show that Jesus is the Messiah and to bring people to believe in him as such (20:31).*
 - 6) F. F. Bruce, *... the authorities would not have been any more inclined to believe in him as the Messiah if he had made the claim “plainly.” If his works and teaching did not convey their proper message, no words from him would have been any more convincing. The Evangelist reckons that, quite apart from any express claim from Jesus’ lips, the record of his ministry should suffice to bring readers to believe in him as “the Christ, the Son of God and, believing, to have life in his name” (John 20:31).*

3. Jesus' response to the Jews (25-30)
 - a. He declared that they disbelieved His works (25-26), **Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, 26 but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.**
 - 1) Related verses
 - a) John 5:36, *But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me.*
 - b) John 10:38, *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 am in the Father."*
 - c) John 5:43, *I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him.*
 - d) John 8:47, *Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."*
 - 2) Comments
 - a) William Barclay, *Jesus' answer was that he had already told them who he was. True, he had not done so in so many words; for, as John tells the story, Jesus' two great claims had been made in private. To the Samaritan woman he had revealed himself as the Messiah (John 4:26), and to the man born blind he had claimed to be the Son of God (John 9:37). But there are some claims which do not need to be made in words, especially to an audience well qualified to perceive them. There were two things about Jesus which placed his claim beyond all doubt, whether he stated it in words or not. First, there were his deeds ... Every one of Jesus' miracles was a claim that the Messiah had come ... Second, there were his words. Moses had forecast that God would raise up the Prophet who must be listened to (Deuteronomy 18:15). The very accent of authority with which Jesus spoke, the way in which he regally cancelled the old law and put his own teaching in its place, was a claim that God was speaking in him. The words and deeds of Jesus were a continuous claim to be the Anointed One of God.*
 - b) William Hendriksen, *If the Jews had been willing to approach the words of Jesus with a believing heart, they would have known that Jesus was, indeed, the Messiah, the Son of God, sent by the Father to accomplish his mediatorial task. The declaration, "I did tell you," is entirely justified, as anyone can see by rereading the following passages: 5:17-47; 6:29, 35, 51-65; 7:37-39; 8:12-20, 28, 29, 42, 56-58; and 10:7-18. Jesus explains that unbelief has a blinding and stultifying effect: lack of faith (resulting from ill-will toward Jesus) means lack of spiritual understanding.*
 - c) Thomas Constable, *Jesus did not mean that He had claimed publicly to be the Messiah. He had not. He meant that He had told the Jews that He was the Messiah indirectly, by His works (cf. 5:16-47; 6:32-59; 7:14-30). His miracles proved who He was, namely, God's Son sent to fulfill the Father's prophesied will. But the Jews generally rejected that testimony because they wanted a different type of Messiah. The ultimate reason they did not understand Jesus was that they were not of the sheep that the Father had given to the Son (cf. vv. 1-18; 6:37). This condition did not excuse their unbelief, but it explained it ... in this entire representation God remains holy as well as sovereign, and it is man upon whom all the blame rests.*
 - d) Warren Wiersbe, *From the human standpoint, we become His sheep by believing; but from the divine standpoint, we believe because we are His sheep. ... In the Bible, divine election and human responsibility are perfectly balanced; and what God has joined together, we must not put asunder.*
 - e) Edwin Blum, *Their problem was a lack of spiritual perception and faith. But you do not believe because you are not My sheep is a simple statement of fact about their conduct. It also reminds one of the ultimate mystery of God's election (cf. 6:37).*
 - f) Kenneth Gangel, *Here is our key word again—believe—appearing in both verses and indicating that the first characteristic of true sheep is that they believe in the shepherd. Jesus made faith the cardinal issue separating unbelieving Jews from the true sheep ... To be sure, one becomes a true sheep by placing faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. But once the Holy Spirit implants that nature in us, we respond to the Shepherd because that is what sheep do.*

- g) Leon Morris, *The trouble with these men is that they do not pay attention to the significance of what is going on before their very eyes. The recent healing of the blind man is in their minds (v. 21), and this should answer their question. Such works do indeed bear a vivid witness.*
- h) Charles Swindoll, *Belief is the authenticating response of a believer to his or her Savior, and it is the Savior who does the saving, not the saved. Therefore, it is the faithfulness of Christ that seals the believer's salvation, not the faithfulness of the believer. Plain and simple: those who believe in Christ will never be lost.*
- b. He stated that His sheep follow Him (27), ***My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.***
- 1) Related verses
 - a) John 10:14, *I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,*
 - b) John 10:16, *16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*
 - 2) Comments
 - a) Thomas Constable, *Verse 27 repeats revelation that Jesus had previously given (vv. 3–5, 14).*
 - b) Edwin Blum, *Jesus' flock is responsive to His teaching. They listen to His voice (vv. 3–5, 16). They have an intimacy with Jesus (I know them; cf. vv. 3, 14), they understand His message of salvation, and they follow Him (vv. 4–5). To follow Him means to obey the Father's will as Jesus did.*
 - c) Warren Wiersbe, *There is a mystery here that we cannot fathom or explain, but we can accept it and rejoice (Rom. 11:33–36). God has His sheep and He knows who they are. They will hear His voice and respond.*
 - d) Kenneth Gangel, *... this verse identifies two more signatures of the sheep: they listen to the shepherd and then they follow the shepherd. This is not new information since we found it in verse 16, but repetition emphasizes importance. True sheep listen to the shepherd; false sheep pay no attention.*
 - e) Leon Morris, *One might have expected "and they know me," but the proposition is reversed. It is the knowledge Christ has of the sheep that is important, and accordingly it is this that receives the emphasis. The result of this knowledge is that they follow him, the present tense denoting a habitual following.*
 - f) F. F. Bruce, *Here they are described as the good shepherd's own sheep, who instinctively recognize his voice and follow him. Those who neither believe nor follow him show by that very fact that they do not belong to his own sheep. Not only do his own sheep recognize his voice, but he for his part knows them—knows them individually, calls them by name (verse 3).*
- c. He gives them life everlasting (28) ***I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.***
- 1) Related verses
 - a) 1 John 2:25, *And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.*
 - b) 1 John 5:11, *And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*
 - c) John 17:12, *While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*
 - d) John 18:9, *This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: "Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one."*
 - e) John 6:37, *All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.*
 - 2) Comments
 - a) C. K. Barrett, *Faith rests upon election, not upon human choice.*
 - b) Edwin Blum, *The security of the sheep is found in the ability of the Shepherd to defend and preserve His flock. Such security does not depend on the ability of the frail sheep. No one can even snatch His sheep out of His hand.*

- c) Thomas Constable, *The eternal life that Jesus gives is made possible through His own life. Consequently it is impossible for His sheep to ever perish—not just after we die, but also after the moment we trust in Christ onward. The sheep’s ultimate security rests with the good shepherd, who promised here that no one would be able to snatch them out of His hand—no thief (v. 10), no robber (v. 8), no wolf (v. 12), no one—including oneself (cf. Rom. 8:35–39) ... Jesus had previously said that part of the task that the Father had given Him to do was to preserve all those whom the Father gave Him (6:37–40). Thus we can see that it is impossible, even for one of the sheep, to wriggle out of the good shepherd’s grasp ... This is one of the clearest promises of the eternal security of the believer that God has given us in His Word. It is also a clear statement of the fact that eternal life comes to us as a gift, not as wages we earn (cf. Eph. 2:8–9).*
- d) Warren Wiersbe, *Jesus went on to explain that His sheep are secure in His hand and in the Father’s hand. “They shall never perish” is His promise (John 3:16; 6:39; 17:12; 18:9). The false shepherds bring destruction (John 10:10, same Greek word); but the Good Shepherd sees to it that His sheep shall never perish ... The security of God’s sheep is assured here in several ways. First, by definition—we have “eternal life,” and that cannot be conditional and still be eternal. Second, this life is a gift, not something that we earn or merit. If we were not saved by our own good works, but by His grace, then we cannot be lost by our “bad works” (Rom. 11:6). But most important, Jesus gave us His promise that His sheep do not perish, and that His promise cannot be broken ... It is important to keep in mind that Jesus was talking about sheep—true believers—and not counterfeits.*
- e) Leon Morris, *It is one of the precious things about the Christian faith that our continuance in eternal life depends not on our feeble hold on Christ, but on his firm grip on us. We should notice that the teaching of this verse is not that believers will be saved from all earthly disaster, but that they will be saved, no matter what earthly disaster may befall them.*
- f) Louis Barbieri, **No one will snatch them out of My hand** *underscores the power of the Shepherd apart from any conduct of the sheep.*
- g) William Barclay, *He promised a life that was secure. Nothing could snatch them from his hand. This would not mean that they would be saved from sorrow, from suffering and from death; but that in the sorest moment and the darkest hour they would still be conscious of the everlasting arms underneath and about them. Even in a world crashing to disaster, they would know the serenity of God.*
- h) Charles Swindoll, *Belief is the authenticating response of a believer to his or her Savior, and it is the Savior who does the saving, not the saved. Therefore, it is the faithfulness of Christ that seals the believer’s salvation, not the faithfulness of the believer. Plain and simple: those who believe in Christ will never be lost.*
- d. They are a gift from His Father (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.**
- 1) Related verses
- a) John 6:37, *All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.*
- b) John 17:2, *since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.*
- c) John 14:28, *You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.*
- d) Deuteronomy 32:39, *“See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.*
- 2) Comments
- a) Thomas Constable, *Jesus strengthened this promise of security. He reminded His hearers that because what He did was simply to execute the Father’s will, it was the Father, as well as Himself, who would keep His sheep secure (cf. 17:12) ... No one can steal from God. No one has superior strength or wisdom to overpower or outwit Him (cf. Col. 3:3). No one will snatch His sheep from God (v. 28), and no one can do so either.*

- b) Robert Jamieson, *The impossibility of true believers being lost, in the midst of all the temptations which they may encounter, does not consist in their fidelity and decision, but is founded upon the power of God.*
 - c) Edwin Blum, ... *the Father who is omnipotent secures the flock by His power and protection. God's plan of salvation for Jesus' flock cannot be aborted.*
 - d) Warren Wiersbe, *He has a loving relationship because He died for the sheep, as well as a living relationship because He cares for the sheep. It is also a lasting relationship, for He keeps His sheep and not a one is lost.*
 - e) Kenneth Gangel, *There can be no greater security, no safer shelter, no more sure salvation, and no more clear signature than this relationship to the God of the Bible through his Son the Good Shepherd. No wonder Paul could write, "Your life is now hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).*
 - f) Grant Osborne, *Neither satanic powers nor human rulers have sufficient strength to derail God's people. Again, Paul develops this very well in Romans 8:31–39. No one, not the predatory leaders of Jesus' day or the false teachers of Paul's day, had the power to "snatch them out of my Father's hand." God's people are safe in him.*
 - g) F. F. Bruce, *God and Christ are together engaged to protect believers. Whom Christ protects, God protects; whom Christ keeps in his hand, God keeps in his. And even if it were (mistakenly) thought possible to snatch one of Christ's people from his hand, it is self-evident that no one is powerful enough to snatch any one or anything (no object is expressed) from the hand of God.*
- e. Jesus and the Father are One, (30), ***I and the Father are one.***"
- 1) Related verses
 - a) John 17:11, *And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.*
 - b) John 17:22, *The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,*
 - c) John 14:9, *Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*
 - 2) Comments
 - a) Louis Barbieri, *The word "one" is neuter, not masculine, confirming that the Father and Son are one in nature and purpose, not one in identity. In other words, Jesus is fully divine, but He is a divine Person distinct from God the Father.*
 - b) Thomas Constable, ... *Here He claimed to function in union with the Father. However the context, and other statements in this Gospel, show that His unity with the Father extended beyond a functional unity and did involve essential metaphysical unity as well.*
 - c) Edwin Blum, ... *He was saying They have the closest possible unity of purpose. Jesus' will is identical to the Father's regarding the salvation of His sheep. And yet absolute identity of wills involves identity of nature. Jesus and the Father are One in will (and also in nature for both are God; cf. 20:28; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9).*
 - d) Warren Wiersbe, *Our Lord made a statement that He knew would startle His enemies and give them more reason to oppose Him (John 10:30). It was the "plain answer" that the religious leaders had asked for. "I and My Father are One" is as clear a statement of His deity as you will find anywhere in Scripture. This was even stronger than His statement that He had come down from heaven (John 6) or that He existed before Abraham ever lived (John 8:58) ... The word One does not suggest that the Father and the Son are identical persons. Rather, it means that they are one in essence: the Father is God and the Son is God, but the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father. He is speaking about unity, not identity. (See John 17:21–24 for similar language.)*
 - e) Leon Morris, *They had asked Jesus for a plain statement of his messiahship, and they got more than they had bargained for.*

- f) Robert Lightner, *What security! The eternal presence of the Father and the Son guarantees the eternal security of the believer. The life which Christ gives is 'eternal.' Those possessing it shall 'never perish.' No one shall pluck the sheep from the Shepherd's hand.*
- g) Jesus' unity came from perfect love and perfect obedience which is sourced in identical essence.

B. The Jews were extremely offended by Jesus' claims (31-39)

1. They prepared to kill Him (31), ***The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.***

- a. Related verse, John 8:59, *So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.*
- b. Comments
 - 1) F. F. Bruce, *The previous occasion of his enemies' trying to stone him in the temple precincts was when he made the declaration, "Before Abraham was born, I am" (John 8:58, 59). The claim implicit in that declaration was similar to that made more expressly in the words, "I and the Father are one." It was a claim which, in their eyes, merited the penalty prescribed in the law for one who blasphemed the divine name.*
 - 2) Thomas Constable, *Clearly the Jews understood Jesus to be claiming more than simple agreement with God in thought and purpose. They understood Him to be claiming equality with the Father as deity ... This is the first explicit charge of blasphemy (though cf. 8:59). They believed Jesus was blaspheming because He was claiming to be God (cf. 5:18; 8:59; Mark 14:61-64).*
 - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *The Jewish leaders understood clearly what He was saying! ... the people who heard it knew exactly what He was saying: "I am God!" (note John 10:33.) To speak this way, of course, was blasphemy; and according to Jewish belief, blasphemy had to be punished by being put to death (see Lev. 24:16; Num. 15:30ff; Deut. 21:22).*
 - 4) Leon Morris, *They were not preparing an indictment so that the authorities could take the requisite action. In their fury they were preparing to be judges and executioners in one.*
 - 5) William Hendriksen, *The word "again" refers to the fact that this was not the first time that they had tried to stone Jesus (see on 8:59 and cf. 11:8).*
 - 6) Grant Osborne, *The law demanded that blasphemy was to be punished by stoning (Lev 24:16). Technically, it was outlawed, for the Romans reserved the right of capital punishment for themselves. Still, it did take place at times (Acts 7:54-8:1, the stoning of Stephen).*

2. Jesus questioned their reason for wanting to kill Him (32), ***Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?"***

- a. Louis Barbieri, *Jesus questioned His opponents about their charges. Of all the wonderful miracles He had shown them, for which of them were they stoning Him? This sarcasm was designed to shake them from their evil prejudice.*
- b. Thomas Constable, *Jesus' question confronted the Jews with the incongruity of executing a man for restoring people who had suffered from handicaps. Jesus' miracles testified that He was doing divine work.*
- c. Edwin Blum, *Jesus' courage was displayed in His calm question: Which of His many great miracles (lit., "works"; cf. 10:25, 38) from the Father was their reason for wanting to stone Him?*
- d. Leon Morris, *We should not miss the calm courage he displayed ... In the face of stoning he quietly resumed the discussion and pointed out that he had shown many good works. "From the Father" indicates that Jesus is not acting in isolation.*
- e. William Hendriksen, *The works which Jesus had performed, being works from the Father, showed that Jesus and the Father are one; hence, that he is not a blasphemer, and should not be stoned but worshiped!*
- f. F. F. Bruce, *His works bore witness to his divine mission (John 5:36); his words were in perfect harmony with his works.*

3. They prepared to stone Jesus because of His claims to be God (33), **The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.”**
 - a. Related verses
 - 1) Leviticus 24:16, *Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.*
 - 2) Matthew 9:3, *And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.”*
 - 3) John 5:18, *This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.*
 - b. Comments
 - 1) Thomas Constable, *If Jesus was not really claiming to be God, He could have easily corrected the Jews’ misunderstanding here. The fact that He did not is further proof that the Jews correctly understood that He was claiming to be God.*
 - 2) Edwin Blum, *Jesus did not walk around Palestine saying “I am God,” but His interpretation of the Sabbath and His words about His union with the Father revealed His claim of oneness in nature with God.*
 - 3) Kenneth Gangel, *They could hardly challenge the miracles or deny what so many people attested to be true. The issue was his nagging claim to deity. To put it another way, they nailed Jesus to the cross not for his works, but for his words.*
 - 4) Leon Morris, *Jesus, they affirm, is a man, yet makes himself God. This shows that they had discerned accurately enough what his teaching meant. What they did not stop to consider was whether it was true.*
 - 5) William Hendriksen, *The Jews regarded Jesus as a mere man who committed the terrible sin of trying to make others believe that he was God.*
 - 6) Louis Barbieri, *This is the first time in John the Jews charged Jesus directly with blasphemy. They accused Him of being a man who made Himself out to be God. Ironically, Jesus was claiming that He was the second member of the Godhead who became a man (1:14; Gl 4:4; Php 2:6–7; 1Tm 3:16).*
 - 7) Grant Osborne, *The Jewish opponents don’t catch the relationship between what Jesus does and who he is ... To them his works are irrelevant in light of his claim, which constitutes blasphemy and demands stoning. It is an affront to their monotheism and cuts at the very essence of their beliefs.*
 - 8) F. F. Bruce, *High as his claims are, then, they are grounded in the truth of his being and his mission. His works are the works of God; his words are the words of God. He is not “making himself God;” he is not “making himself” anything, but in word and work he is showing himself to be what he truly is—the Son sent by the Father to bring light and life to mankind.*
4. Jesus responded to their charge (34-36)
 - a. Understanding Jesus’ use of Psalm 82:6 (34), **Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’?”**
 - 1) Related verse, Psalm 82:6, *I said, “You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you;*
 - 2) Comments
 - a) R. V. G. Tasker, *The meaning here is ‘this passage of Scripture cannot be set aside as irrelevant to the matter under discussion.’*
 - b) Warren Wiersbe, *Our Lord used Psalm 82:6 to refute their accusation and halt their actions. The picture in Psalm 82 is that of a court, where God has assembled the judges of the earth, to warn them that they too will one day be judged. The Hebrew word elohim can be translated as “god” or as “judges,” as in Exodus 21:6 and 22:8–9. It is also one of the Old Testament names for God. The Jewish rulers certainly knew their own language and they knew that Jesus was speaking the truth. If God called human judges “gods,” then why should they stone Him for applying the same title to Himself?*
 - c) Edwin Blum, *In this sense, God said to the Jews, You are gods. In no way does this speak of a divine nature in man.*

- d) Louis Barbieri, *In Ps 82:6, even sinful Israelite leaders were given the title gods since they had the divine responsibility to speak the word of God and carry out justice under God.*
 - e) Grant Osborne, *If these failed people could be called “gods,” how could anyone object to Jesus being called “Son of God”?*
- b. Jesus’ rebuttal (35-36), ***If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— 36 do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?***
- 1) Related verses
 - a) Matthew 5:17, 19, *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them ... 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*
 - b) John 3:17, *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*
 - c) John 5:17-18, *17 But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.” ... 18 This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.*
 - 2) Comments
 - a) Thomas Constable, *Jesus’ statement affirms the unity, authority, and inerrancy of Scripture. Jesus held a very high view of Scripture. His point was that it was inconsistent for the Jews to claim the Old Testament as their authority (v. 34) and then to disregard something that it said because they did not agree with it ... The Jews celebrated the sanctification of their physical temple with the Feast of Dedication, but they were unwilling to accept the spiritual temple that replaced it, namely, Jesus.*
 - b) Edwin Blum, *Jesus added to His argument the words, and the Scripture cannot be broken, so that no one could evade its force by saying an error was in the Scriptures. This important text clearly points up the inerrancy of the Bible ... Jesus now completed His argument. Since the inerrant Bible called their judges “gods,” the Jews could not logically accuse Him of blasphemy for calling Himself God’s Son since He was under divine orders (set apart) and on God’s mission (sent into the world).*
 - c) Kenneth Gangel, *The Scripture cannot be broken was a strong tribute by the Son of God to the*
 - d) Leon Morris, *If in any sense the Psalm may apply this term to men, then much more may it be applied to him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world.” Jesus is not classing himself among men. He calls himself “the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world” (for “sent” see on 3:17). He separates and distinguishes himself from men. His argument is of the “How much more—” variety ... He held that he was not making himself anything. He was what he was, and it was the Father who in the first instance sent him into the world, and in the second instance testified of him (5:37).*
 - e) Louis Barbieri, *There is no error in Scripture (Scripture cannot be broken). Therefore, how much more should the Christ, sanctified and sent into the world (v. 36) on a divine mission to speak the word of God as the incarnate Word of God (1:1, 14) and to carry out justice (5:22, 27, 30), be rightly called the divine (sinless) “Son of God?”*
 - f) Grant Osborne, *... He is the one whom the Father “set apart as his very own,” his one and only Son; and ... he is the one consecrated to be “sent into the world” to accomplish the divine mission only he could fulfill. Putting them together, Jesus was set apart for his Father’s holy mission.*

5. Jesus declared that His works give evidence to His special relationship to the Father (37-38), ***If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; 38 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 am in the Father.***

a. Related verses

- 1) John 15:24, *If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.*
- 2) John 10:25, *Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me,*
- 3) John 14:10-11, *Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.*
- 4) John 14:20, *In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.*
- 5) John 17:21, *that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*
- 6) John 17:23, *I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.*

b. Comments

- 1) Thomas Constable, *Jesus next identified the evidence that His critics should consider, namely, His works, including His miracles (cf. v. 25). He acknowledged that verbal claims were not sufficient in themselves. The Jews should learn from His works, and continue to learn from them, that He was doing the same kinds of good works that God the Father did. Jesus manifested divine compassion and divine power in His works, the same traits that showed up in God the Father's works.*
- 2) Edwin Blum, *These signs were given for their learning so that by pondering their significance they might recognize Jesus' oneness with the Father (the Father is in Me, and I in the Father). Nicodemus had recognized this for he said, "No one could perform [those] miraculous signs ... if God were not with Him" (3:2).*
- 3) Warren Wiersbe, *Jesus invited them, urged them, to believe, if only on the basis of His miracles (John 10:37-38). If they would believe the miracles, then they would know the Father, and that would open the way for them to know the Son and believe on Him. It was simply a matter of examining the evidence honestly and being willing to accept the truth.*
- 4) Kenneth Gangel, *Jesus reminded the Jews that they had a basic test for truth teaching: if people who claim to be God's Son do not do God's will, then their claims can be challenged. But the contrary should also prevail. If Jesus' behavior had been marked by the kind of righteousness and power that people associated with the God they had worshiped, why not believe his words and attribute his works to God? If they had done that, the unbelieving Jews would have understood that the Father was in the Son and the Son in the Father.*
- 5) Leon Morris, *The expression translated "that you may learn and understand" contains the same verb twice, with only the tense being changed ... The first verb is in the aorist with the meaning "that you may come to know," while the second is in the present, signifying "and keep on knowing." Jesus is looking for them to have a moment of insight and then to remain permanently in the knowledge that moment has brought them. The knowledge to which a right perception of the works would bring them is that of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son.*
- 6) George Beasley-Murray, *A renewed appeal is made to recognize the testimony of the "works" of Jesus as pointing to his unity with the Father. That unity, however, is now defined in terms of mutual indwelling, "the Father in me and I in the Father." The expression conveys the thought of completest unity ...*

- 7) William Barclay, *A word is something about which people can argue; but a deed is something beyond argument. Jesus is the perfect teacher in that he does not base his claims on what he says, but on what he is and does. His invitation to the Jews was to base their verdict on him, not on what he said, but on what he did; and that is a test which all his followers ought to be able and willing to meet. The tragedy is that so few can meet it, still less invite it.*
 - 8) F. F. Bruce, *In the discourse on the good shepherd he has spoken of the mutual knowledge of the Father and himself, and has extended that knowledge to embrace the mutual knowledge of the shepherd and his own sheep (verses 14, 15). This mutual knowledge is now said to be based in a mutual indwelling. The claim is repeated in John 14:10; Jesus there goes on to make it plain that this “coinherence” is a coinherence of love, which is extended to embrace his love for his people and theirs for him (14:20–24). Indeed, as the upper room discourse shows, such is Jesus’ oneness with the Father that those who love him are brought into the sphere of the life of God, which is the life of perfect love.*
6. Jesus eluded their attempt to arrest Him (39), ***Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.***
- a. Related verses
 - 1) John 7:31, *So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.*
 - 2) John 7:44, *Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.*
 - b. Comments
 - 1) Kenneth Gangel, *All this poured more fuel on an already raging fire. The more truth Jesus proclaimed, the less they believed him and the more they sought to kill him.*
 - 2) Thomas Constable, *Jesus’ critics correctly understood His latest words (v. 38) as a claim to equality with the Father. Therefore they again tried to arrest Him. Jesus eluded them again because it was not yet time for His passion (cf. 7:30; 8:20). This act was the climax of official antagonism during this period of Jesus’ ministry so far.*
 - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *Once again, they tried to arrest Him (see John 7:44; 8:59), but He escaped and left the area completely. He did not return to Jerusalem until “Palm Sunday,” when He presented Himself as Israel’s King.*
 - 4) Charles Swindoll, *The religious leaders reacted in typical religious fashion toward those they couldn’t control: they sought to seize Him in order to execute Him. But He escaped.*
 - 5) George Beasley-Murray, *The scene ends as in 8:59; the Shepherd, like his sheep, is in the almighty Father’s hand till his hour strikes (cf. 7:30; 8:20).*

C. (40-42)

1. Jesus left Jerusalem and crossed the Jordan (40), ***He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he remained.***
- a. Related verse, John 1:28, *These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.*
 - b. Comments
 - 1) Thomas Constable, *The Apostle John probably identified Jesus’ destination as he did in order to imply the ending of Jesus’ public ministry, which John the Baptist had introduced.*
 - 2) F. F. Bruce, *Jesus now left Jerusalem, which he was not to visit again until Palm Sunday, between three and four months later. He went to Bethany beyond Jordan, where John had borne witness to him in the early days, before the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry.*
 - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *... we are not sure where this was. It was on the other side of the Jordan River, perhaps eighteen to twenty miles from Jerusalem. Some maps put it almost directly across from Jerusalem, just east of Jericho ... Why did Jesus go there? For one thing, it was a safe retreat; the Jewish religious leaders were not likely to follow Him there. Also, it was a good place to prepare for His final week of public ministry when He would lay down His life for the sheep. As He remembered His own baptism by John, and all that He had experienced at that time (Matt. 3:13–17; John 1:20–34), it must have fortified Him for the suffering that He knew He must endure.*

2. Many believed in Jesus (41-42), **And many came to him. And they said, “John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true.” 42 And many believed in him there.**

a. Related verses

- 1) John 1:29-34, *The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ 31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” 32 And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”*
- 2) John 7:31, *Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?”*

b. Comments

- 1) Thomas Constable, *John the Baptist was by this time dead. However, many people from Perea recognized that Jesus was fulfilling what John the Baptist had predicted of Messiah. Their attitude contrasts with the hatred and unbelief of many in Jerusalem. They accepted John the Baptist’s testimony about Jesus, because it proved to be true so far, not because the forerunner had performed signs, which he had not done.*
- 2) Warren Wiersbe, *The common people continued to seek Jesus, and He continued to minister to them. It is worth noting that John the Baptist’s witness was still bearing fruit long after he was dead! His witness to Jesus Christ led many to trust the Saviour. John was not a miracle worker, but he was a faithful witness who pointed to Jesus Christ. “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).*
- 3) Kenneth Gangel, *Not all followed the rejecting, murderous intentions of the Pharisees. Some people were impressed that though John the Baptist had never performed a miraculous sign, yet he had promised the Messiah would come. Now here he stood and they chose to be numbered among his sheep.*
- 4) Leon Morris, *This final mention of John in this Gospel at the same time sounds a note of high praise and puts a definite stress on his subordinate position. It is high praise, for it affirms that his witness to Jesus was true, and true in its entirety. But there is subordination, for John did no miracle. His function was solely to bear witness to Jesus (see on 1:7).*
- 5) William Hendriksen, *It stands to reason that here, in the very district where John had been baptizing and where Jesus himself also was baptized, many people remembered the Baptist and his ministry of preparation. They recalled what John had said about Jesus (see on 1:19–36; 3:22–36; and 5:33), and when they heard the words of Jesus as they flocked around him and saw his signs (in contrast with John who had not performed any signs), they exclaimed, “John did no sign (see on 2:11); yet (even though he did no sign to confirm his message) everything John said about this man was true (cf. 5:33).”*
- 6) William Barclay, *To John’s proclamation, Jesus added God’s power. John could diagnose the situation; Jesus brought the power to deal with the situation. These Jews had looked on John as a prophet; now they saw that what John had foretold of Jesus was true, and many of them believed.*
- 7) F. F. Bruce, *As they listened to his words and watched the things he did, they recalled John’s testimony to him and were compelled to acknowledge its truth ... In this Gospel John is presented from first to last as the ideal witness, and it is as such that he is presented here. John had long since been imprisoned and put to death, but his words lived on.*
- 8) Grant Osborne, *John had truly fulfilled the purpose of his ministry; he had prepared for Jesus and brought many to him.*

SUMMARY

- William Barclay, *It often happens that those for whom a great future is painted, and who set out with the hopes of others upon them, disappoint that future and belie these hopes. But Jesus was even greater than John had said he would be. Jesus is the one person who never disappoints those who set their hopes upon him. In him, the dream always comes true.*
- Warren Wiersbe, *Have you responded personally to our Lord's three great declarations recorded in this chapter? He is the Door. Have you "entered in" by faith so that you are saved? He is the Good Shepherd. Have you heard His voice and trusted Him? After all, He laid down His life for you! He is the Son of God. Do you believe that? Have you given yourself to Him and received eternal life? Remember His stern warning: "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24).*
- Kenneth Gangel, *Are you a sheep? Do you hear the Shepherd's voice? Do you believe the Shepherd? Do you follow the Shepherd? This world affords no security or certainty. But the heavenly Shepherd promises that his sheep will live under his protection forever. Let the words of this key verse burn into your heart and fall often from your lips: "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand" (10:28).*