

Date: December 9th, 2025

John Section: John 10:1-21

Key Text: John 10:10-11

Main Idea: Jesus is the Good Shepherd

Genre: Theological Narrative

Author: John

Audience: Primarily second-generation believers, Jews, and Gentiles, needing encouragement and clarity about Jesus' identity.

Setting: Likely written from Ephesus, AD 85-95, in a context of synagogue opposition and emerging false teachings.

Quote of the Week: "The hand that holds the sheep is the same hand that redeemed them." - John Owen

3:30

John Preview:

Highlight:

The Gospel of John is a unique New Testament account of Jesus' life, written by the Apostle John, the beloved disciple. John's Gospel is not merely a biography but a theological portrait, revealing Jesus as the eternal Son of God who became flesh to bring life and light to the world. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John emphasizes signs and discourses that unveil Jesus' divine identity and mission. From the opening words—"In the beginning was the Word"—to the climactic resurrection appearances, John presents Jesus as the one in whom God's glory is revealed, calling all to believe in Him for eternal life. This Gospel is rich with imagery (light, life, bread, water, shepherd, vine) and repeatedly centers on the theme of belief.

Focus of John:

- **Purpose of John:**
 - John tells us his purpose plainly: "But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31).
 - **Themes in John:**
 - Jesus is the Word made flesh
 - Jesus reveals God's glory
 - Eternal life is found in Him alone
 - Belief is the way to life
 - Life flows only from union with Christ
 - **Our Response to this Truth:**
 - Believe in Him – Abide in Him – Live by His Word – Trust in His promises – Love as He loved
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Recap:

John 10:1-6 - Figure Out The Farmland

- What contrast do we immediately notice about these two characters spoken of in verses 1-3:
 - Character 1:
 - Character 2:
- Verses 3-5 introduce a major theme: ownership and relationship.
 - “The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name.”
- Sheep may not be smart (at all), but they know their shepherd:
 - The sheep recognize his voice.
 - They feel safe in his presence
 - They follow him instinctively
 - Sheep are also vulnerable.
- **Question: In verse 6, the crowd fails to understand Jesus’ illustration about the shepherd and the sheep. Looking back at verses 1-5, what spiritual realities do you think they were missing? And in what ways do people today still misunderstand their own need for a shepherd?**

John 10:7-21 - Not a Literal Door

- We then move to verse 7, and we see Jesus has called out the audience who clearly haven't understood His teaching on the sheep and the fold, so Jesus drives the ideas further.
 - In verse 7, Jesus gives us the **3rd metaphorical I AM** statement of John's gospel.
 - "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."
 - Just like in John 6 when Jesus said He is the Bread of Life, **Jesus is not literally bread, and He also not literally a door**, but He is using this picture to show He is the exclusive entry point into God's flock.
 - In verse 8, things get even more interesting. Jesus says, "All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them."
- **Question: Who is he talking about here? Who are these "thieves and robbers"? Has Israel dealt with bad or unfaithful shepherds before? When? Where?**

- The men who deceive the sheep include both Israel's past leaders and the Pharisees, who were leading Israel at that time. Jesus turns directly to them and pushes the point further in verses 9-10:
 - "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."
 - Here, Jesus repeats His bold "**I am**" statement and makes an exclusive claim: salvation comes only through Him. There is no other door, no other path, no other shepherd who can lead to life.
 - For his audience, this would have been shocking. The Pharisees prided themselves on being the gatekeepers of righteousness, yet Jesus declares that salvation does not come through their traditions, law-keeping, or position... it comes through Him alone.
 - This truth is just as relevant now. No amount of sincerity, religiosity, or spirituality can save us.
 - **Only Jesus offers true life. And He doesn't just rescue us; He cares for us continually.** When He says, "He will go in and out and find pasture," He promises security, provision, and nourishment for our souls.
 - This is so important for us to see our Good Shepherd in this light. We all love His provision to be our Savior and the care that He gives in justifying us, but we also must recognize as His bone-headed sheep, He never stops providing for us.
 - **Jesus says the thief comes "to steal, kill, and destroy," but He came so that we may have life and have it abundantly.**
 - **Question: In this text and in your own life, how do you see the world, sin, or false teachings trying to steal or distort your life, and how does Jesus' promise of abundant life offer something different from the world's idea of success, security, or happiness?**
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- We then arrive at verse 11, which is the second of the I AM statements in the passage and the **4th metaphorical I AM** of John's Gospel.
 - "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."
 - Notice how Jesus uses this language and then immediately contrasts it with what His audience knows about shepherding.
 - He builds on the idea of being the door, but now He makes it personal and sacrificial. Unlike a hired hand, who might flee at the first sign of danger to protect himself, Jesus is fully committed to His sheep.
 - Unlike the shepherds of old, as we saw in Ezekiel 34:2-4, who failed to care for the flock, and in John 10:8, where Jesus contrasts Himself with the thieves and robbers of the past, this Good Shepherd does everything to care for His sheep.

- We see our Shepherd is the one Psalm 23:1-3 and Isaiah 40:11 highlight as the one who provides rest, guidance, and comfort for His sheep: “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.”
 - **He doesn’t just watch over them from a distance: He knows them, cares for them, and is willing to risk everything for them.**
 - This isn’t casual care. It’s a deep, personal, covenantal love. Jesus knows His sheep as intimately as He knows the Father. **He loves His sheep simply because they are His.**
 - We see the further depth of Jesus’ love in John 10:15:
 - “Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.” An ordinary shepherd might risk his life for the flock, but ultimately, he wants to survive. Jesus is different. His purpose in coming was to lay down His life for His sheep.
 - This wasn’t accidental; it was the reason He came. Through His death and resurrection, the greatest good for His flock is accomplished: sin and death are defeated.
 - We then get to verse 16, and I think this is probably one of the most challenging verses for His audience:
 - “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.”
 - **Question: Jesus speaks of ‘other sheep’ that are not of this fold. How do you think His original audience might have reacted to this statement, and why might it have challenged their expectations? Does it challenge us as well?**
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- We then see Jesus make an incredible claim, one that is a necessity to understand as believers.
 - Verses 17-18: “For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again.”
 - Jesus makes it clear that He willingly lays down His life for His sheep. This isn’t a passive statement. He is fully aware of His mission and the timing of His death.
 - Throughout John’s Gospel, we’ve seen Him talk about His “hour,” and now He emphasizes that His sacrifice is entirely voluntary and intentionally timed.
 - No one takes His life from Him; He chooses to lay it down, and He has the authority to take it up again.
 - A core truth in Christian theology is **Penal Substitution**: a big phrase that simply means Jesus died for our sins, taking on the punishment (God’s Wrath) we deserved, in our place. Yet, this can be a hard idea to grasp.

- **Question: Why do you think it's difficult for people to accept that Jesus bore the penalty for our sins? How does understanding that He laid down His life willingly and rose again give us confidence and hope?**

- As we land the plane in verses 19-21, we see quite the response to all this incredible dialogue from Jesus.
 - Even in the midst of Jesus' gracious words, division arises among the people. Some are drawn to Him, moved by His message, while others are hardened and reject Him. That is where grace highlights the divide between those who receive it in faith and those who resist in pride.
 - Verses 20-21 show that there are only two responses to Jesus: either reject Him as a blasphemer or accept Him as the Son of God.
 - There is no neutral ground with Jesus. He isn't just a good teacher or moral example. He demands a clear response. We either trust Him as the Savior from our sins or we reject Him entirely.

Other Helpful Resources:

- **He Must Increase Podcast by Connor Shady & Adam Tredeau (Official Podcast of 3:30!) (WEEKLY)**
- Waukesha Bible Church John 10 Sermons - Preached by Connor (Find on YouTube)

Other Reminders:

- Get involved with a church - **Specifically WBC!**
 - **Connor is teaching: 9 AM Class on the Book of Romans at WBC prior to service.**
 - WBC service is at 10:00 AM every Sunday!
 - Check out our Website: Threethirtyministry.com
- Join the 3:30 GroupMe chat to stay up to date on everything 3:30 Ministry.
- Also check us out on Instagram: @three.thirty.ministries and @three.thirty.mens.ministry

The Gospel: ***We Can't, God Can, Jesus Did!***

- **Sin.** None of us can escape it. Because of it, we are spiritually dead and in need of life. Our debt before God is insurmountable. It is the biggest problem any of us has, since there is nothing we can do ourselves to pay that debt. God's standard is perfection, so no amount of good works or religious activities is enough.
 - 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
(Ephesians 2:1-3)
- **But God...** These two words are some of the most powerful words in the Bible. God is merciful and loving. He did what we could never do in and of ourselves. He saved us by grace alone and gave us new life in Christ.
 - 4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
(Ephesians 2:4-7)
- **Jesus saves.** He is God's gift to us. He paid our debt before the Father. And through his death and resurrection, we are raised to eternal life. There is nothing we can do to earn it. It is only through Christ that we live a life pleasing to God.
 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)