

Series: Jesus 7 'I AM' Statements
"I AM the Good Shepherd" – Pt. 2
John 10:22 - 42

Big Idea – Jesus Christ is the Son of God

Jn 10:22 The time came for the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter,
23 and Jesus was walking in the Temple in Solomon's Porch.

24 The Jews gathered around him and said, "How long will you make us wonder about you? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

25 Jesus answered, "I told you already, but you did not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name show who I am.

26 But you don't believe, because you are not my sheep.

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

28 I give them eternal life, and they will never die, and no one can steal them out of my hand.

29 My Father gave my sheep to me. He is greater than all, and no person can steal my sheep out of my Father's hand.

30 The Father and I are one."

31 Again the Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus.

32 But he said to them, "I have done many good works from the Father. Which of these good works are you killing me for?"

33 The Jews answered, "We are not killing you because of any good work you did, but because you speak against God. You are only a human, but you say you are the same as God!"

34 Jesus answered, "It is written in your law that God said, 'I said, you are gods.'

35 This Scripture called those people gods who received God's message, and Scripture is always true.

36 So why do you say that I speak against God because I said, 'I am God's Son'? I am the one God chose and sent into the world.

37 If I don't do what my Father does, then don't believe me.

38 But if I do what my Father does, even though you don't believe in me, believe what I do. Then you will know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."

39 They tried to take Jesus again, but he escaped from them.

40 Then he went back across the Jordan River to the place where John had first baptized. Jesus stayed there,

41 and many people came to him and said, "John never did a miracle, but everything John said about this man is true."

42 And in that place many believed in Jesus.

1. The Setting – vs. 22, 23

events in last half of the chapter 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.

The "Feast of the Dedication" aka (Hanukkah, "the feast of lights") takes place in December, near the time of the Christian Christmas celebration. The feast commemorates the rededication of the temple by Judas Maccabeus in 164 B.C., after it had been desecrated by the Romans.

2. The Set-up – vs. 24

The Jewish leaders were celebrating a great event in history yet passing by a great opportunity right in their own temple!

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. "How long are You going to hold us in suspense?" they kept saying to Him. "Tell us plainly—are You the Messiah?"

3. The Shepherd's Answer – vs. 25 – 34

(John 4:26; John 8:58)

Jesus reminded them of what He had already taught them. He emphasized the witness of His *words* ("I told you") and His *works*.

Their problem was not that He had not told them; their problem was they would not believe what He told them!

Who are the sheep? – vs. 25 - 27

(Romans 11:33-36; Ephesians 1:4; John 10:29; 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24).

Jesus went much deeper in His explanation this time, for He revealed to the Jewish leaders why they did not understand His words or grasp the significance of His works: they were not His sheep. From the human standpoint, we become His sheep by believing; but from the divine standpoint, we believe because we are His sheep. 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.

The lost sinner who hears God's Word knows nothing about divine election. He hears only that Christ died for the sins of the world, and that he may receive the gift of eternal life by trusting the Saviour. When He trusts the Saviour, he becomes a member of God's forever family and a sheep in the flock. Then he learns that he was "chosen... in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). He also learns that each saved sinner is the Father's "love gift" to His Son (see John 10:29; 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24).

In the Bible, divine election and human responsibility are perfectly balanced; and what God has joined together, we must not put asunder.

Double security of the sheep – vs. 28, 29

(John 3:16; 6:39; 17:12; 18:9; 10:10; Matthew 7:13-29;

Aka eternal security x 2

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: **1.** by definition—we have "eternal life," and that cannot be conditional and still be eternal. **2.** 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. The dog and the pig will go back into sin (2 Peter 2:20-22); but the sheep, being a clean animal, will follow the Shepherd into the green pastures. The false professor will talk about his faith and even his works, but he will never make it into heaven (Matt. 7:13-29). Most of us know people who professed to be saved and then went back into sin, but their doing so only proved that they never really trusted Christ to begin with. Jesus did not promise security to anyone but His true sheep.

note that He has a threefold relationship to His sheep. 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.

Deity of the Shepherd – vs. 30

(John 6; 8:58; 17:21-24; 10:33; Leviticus 24:16; Numbers 15:30ff; Deuteronomy 21:22).

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.)

The Jewish leaders understood clearly what He was saying! Some modern liberal theologians would water down our Lord's statement, but 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. The Scripture's Authority – vs. 35 – 40

(Psalm 82:6; Exodus 21:6; 22:8, 9; John 10:36; 5:25; 10:37,38; 7:44; 8:59)

the Scripture cannot be broken. I.e., deprived of its inerrancy and binding authority. Jesus here employs rather technical exegesis of the OT.

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?

John 10:36 is crucial because it gives a double affirmation of the deity of Christ. First, the Father sanctified (set apart) the Son and sent Him into the world, and second, Jesus stated boldly, "I am the Son of God" (see John 5:25). He gave them the "plain answer" they asked for, but they would not believe it!

Could they have believed? 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.

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.

John the Baptist had ministered at Bethabara (John 1:28), but 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.

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).

Have you responded personally to our Lord's three great declarations recorded in this chapter?

He is the Door. Have you "entered in" walked through the door 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).