

# John 10vs22-42

Which flock..?

© St Helen's Church

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, published by Harper Collins Publishers. © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.

Used by Permission. All rights reserved.

# Which flock..?

## John 10 vs 22-42

### *Let's recap...*

In this study we come to the end of the second major section of John's Gospel. The section began back in ch 5 with the healing of the man who had been paralysed for 38 years.

We have seen that the key themes of this section were:

➤ The identity of Jesus : God's Son

John 5 v 18b: **...he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.**

➤ The work of Jesus: bringing eternal life and judgement

John 5 v 17: *But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."*

John 5 v 24: *"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."*

➤ The hostility of the Jews – the historic people of God

John 5 v 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.*

These themes have continued right through chs 5-10, culminating in the healing of the man who was born blind in chapter 9, and the connected discourse in ch 10:

➤ The identity of Jesus

John 9 vs 32-33: *Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. 33If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."*

➤ The work of Jesus

John 9 v 3: *Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him."*

John 9 v 39: *Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind."*

- The hostility of the Jews

John 10 v 20: *Many of them said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?"*

In this study, these closing verses of part two of the Gospel contain the big three themes of the section:

- The identity of Jesus

John 10 v 30: *"I and the Father are one."*

- The work of Jesus – John 10 vs 27-29:

John 10 vs 27-29: *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> 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."*

- The hostility of the Jews – John 10 vs 31:

John 10 v 31: *The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.*

The passage breaks into two parts with the first part focussing on Jesus' work of calling the true people of God to himself....and the second part focussing on Jesus' work of exposing false shepherds and phoney sheep... (vs 31-39)

- This all begs the question of us: are we true sheep – or phoney?!

The section closes with Jesus withdrawing to where it all started back in ch 1, so this really is the end of Part II of John's gospel!

## ***The true Shepherd...with his true flock***

Let's start by reading John 10 vs 22-30:

10 vs 22-30: *"At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. <sup>24</sup> 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." <sup>25</sup> 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, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one."*

## ***Background information...***

The Feast of Dedication - This is a Jewish festival, observed for eight days in December, in commemoration of the re-consecration in 165 BC of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, and especially of the altar of burnt offering. Both had been desecrated in the persecution that occurred under the Roman invader, Antiochus Epiphanes, in 168 BC.

What is the 'issue' that sparks Jesus' teaching in vs 25 -30?

v 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."*

How does Jesus respond?

vs 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, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock.*

- "I've already told you..."
- "I've already given you all the necessary evidence..."
- "...BUT you won't believe because you don't belong to God – you are phoney!!

This begs the questions:

- So who ARE the TRUE sheep of God's flock?
- What is the hallmark of those who are true sheep?

v 27: *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."*

So what are the benefits for the flock?

- Eternal life – NEVER perishing!  
v 28: ***"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish..."***

- Absolute security: totally guarded by the Father and the Son  
v 28b-29: ***"...and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 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."***

How is it that God's TRUE sheep can be sure they are safe?

- v 29a: ***"My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all..."***

The answer to the Jews' question in v 24...

v 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."*

... is v 30!

v 30: *"I and the Father are one."*

This gives rise to one final dispute in which Jesus demonstrates once again the folly of his opponents' position!

### ***The false sheep... with their phony excuses!***

Read John 10 vs 31-42: *The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. <sup>32</sup> Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?" <sup>33</sup> 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." <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? <sup>35</sup> If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— <sup>36</sup> 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'? <sup>37</sup> If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; <sup>38</sup> but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father." <sup>39</sup> Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.*

*<sup>40</sup> He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he remained. <sup>41</sup> And many came to him. And they said, "John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true." <sup>42</sup> And many believed in him there.*

They want to stone him again... therefore the Jews clearly knew and understood what Jesus was saying – and they view it as blasphemy:

v 31: *The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.*

Read again through vs 31-42 ... There are at least three steps in Jesus' logic as he exposes their error:

Step one: "Look at the works!"

v 32: *Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?"*

The Jews reply: “No no – it’s not the works – it’s your word”...

v 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.”*

Step two: Jesus responds: “Listen to my **WORD** – it’s the Father’s word!”

He says: “BUT - my word is no different to God’s”! (Another lesson for them from the Old Testament - it is as if Jesus is saying, “You don’t know your Bible!!”)

vs 34-36: *Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? <sup>35</sup> If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— <sup>36</sup> 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’?”*

Jesus is quoting Psalm 82... written about the kings of Israel:

Psalm 82 vs 6-7: *I said, “You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; <sup>7</sup> nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince.”*

“**You are gods, sons of the Most High**” – is an exalted term.

Nevertheless, despite their divine title such kings of this world will die – as will ANY worldly prince.

Jesus is reminding the Jews that in the Psalms there are men who are referred to in this extraordinary, highly exalted way...

“...Therefore it shouldn’t surprise you that when God sends me, I am called – the Son Of God!”

Step three: “Think about my WORKS...my WORD...the Father’s WORD...and again my WORK!”

John 10 vs 37-38: *“If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; <sup>38</sup> but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.”*

So how do Jesus’ word and ‘the works’ fit together?

- A sign....a “**work**” ... is a visual demonstration of the Father’s work, and proof that Jesus is doing the Father’s work. In each case, its significance is unpacked through Jesus “**word**”.

In other words, the ‘signs’ are ‘SIGN-IFICANT!!’

So when our friends start pulling our leg about studying the Bible – how can we use this logic? And why is Jesus so important?

- “Just look at what he did – and what he said! You can’t deny the works and actually you would be amazed at the clarity of what he said ...his word!! His word ties in precisely with the word of God that was spoken about him hundreds of years before he came!!”

And if our friends dismiss the words of Jesus, come back – as he did - to the works!

- Just like the blind man who stood up for Jesus in ch 9!

*John 9 vs 30-33: The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshipper of God and does his will, God listens to him. <sup>32</sup> Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”*

*John 10 v 39: Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.*

- It’s highly unlikely that Jesus ran away – most probable is that they simply couldn’t arrest him...  
He, the Son of God, was more than capable of making it impossible for them. Jesus has made it clear that it’s not yet ‘his time’ – he is in complete control.

Remember ch 10 v 18, where Jesus talks about his forthcoming death:

*10 v 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.”*

This closing part of the second section of John’s leaves us with an implied question....

...If there are TRUE sheep and a TRUE Shepherd (vs 22-30) and false sheep and phoney shepherds (vs 31- 39) – “WHICH FLOCK DO I BELONG TO?!”

- What is your answer to that question... and why!?
- From the verses we’ve just studied... what would Jesus say to you about your response?

## Conclusion

Jesus now returns to where everything began way back in John ch 1 ...

Read 10 vs 40-42: *He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he remained. <sup>41</sup> And many came to him. And they said, "John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true." <sup>42</sup> And many believed in him there.*

John the Baptist said Jesus is:

- the Lord
- the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world
- greater than John - ch 1 v 30: “[he] **ranks before me, because he was before me**”
- the one on whom God’s Spirit remains
- the one who baptizes with God’s Spirit
- the Son of God

All these claims have been shown to be true in chs 2-10.

vs 41-42 provide a fitting conclusion to this second section of John’s gospel:

vs 41-42: *And many came to him. And they said, "John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true." <sup>42</sup> And many believed in him there.*

- Let’s think again: which flock do I belong to?
  - How does this study either help give you assurance after your answer to this question, or challenge you..?

## Next time...

Life and death – the dead will rise...



## *John 10 vs 22-42*

<sup>22</sup> At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. <sup>24</sup> 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." <sup>25</sup> 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, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one."

<sup>31</sup> The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. <sup>32</sup> Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?" <sup>33</sup> 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." <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? <sup>35</sup> If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— <sup>36</sup> 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'? <sup>37</sup> If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; <sup>38</sup> but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father." <sup>39</sup> Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

<sup>40</sup> He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he remained. <sup>41</sup> And many came to him. And they said, "John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true." <sup>42</sup> And many believed in him there.