

The Journey

Series 04: Christ

Week 36: Jesus Power and Religious Leaders Plot

We are indebted to [Ethnos360](#) for providing the basis of these lessons

Review (Where We Have Been)

Questions for Review...

Why did the Pharisees disapprove of Jesus' disciples?

Because they didn't follow all the man-made rules which the Pharisees claimed were necessary to please God

-Why were the Pharisees wrong that eating certain foods makes a person unacceptable to God?

Because it's the sin in hearts that makes us unacceptable to God, not what we eat

- Why did God accept the tax collector?

Because he agreed with God that he was a sinner and needed God's mercy.

-Why did God reject the Pharisee?

He was proud and thought that his goodness would make him acceptable to God

-Why are our good works unable to make us acceptable to God?

We are sinners and even our best could never measure up to God's holy standard

BIG Idea

Jesus is the long-promised good shepherd

Jesus is the singular way to God

Information (What We Need to Know)

John 9:5 - Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world."

Through John, he gives us 7 powerful "I am" statements that Jesus uses to describe himself. These should ring familiar because "I am" is used also in Exodus 4:26, 6:20, 13:19.

7 "I Am" statements in John

Also see: Exodus 4:26, 6:20, 13:19

- John 6:35, 41, 48, 51
- John 8:12
- John 10:7, 9
- John 10:11, 14
- John 11:25
- John 14:6
- John 15:1, 5

John 9:18-23 (ESV) The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight **19** and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” **20** His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. **21** But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” **22** (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) **23** Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

Religious leaders despised Jesus and were seeing every opportunity to stop or destroy him. They wanted the blind man to deny the work of Jesus. His response was simple.

John 9:25 He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

I was once in darkness and now I see the light. Jesus who was once just a man to him sees his identity as truly God. After going back and forth with the man and his refusal to implicate Jesus they cast him aside.

Verse 34 - The religious leaders do exactly what the blind man's parents feared. They cast him out of the synagogue because he would not deny Jesus. Severing him from his community. No celebration because a poor blind beggar is now healed. Once in darkness and now seeing the light.

John 9:35-38 (ESV) Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"
36 He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" **37** Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." **38** He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

Matthew 15:14 & Luke 6:39 - Jesus calls the religious leaders blind guides. They should be leading the people spiritually but they themselves are completely spiritually blind.

Weeks ago we talked about the paralytic healed vs the religious with paralyzed hearts. Now we have seen a blind man who sees vs those who are truly spiritually blind.

These religious leaders were considered by God to be shepherds of God's people. They were to watch over, care for, guide, help, encourage, strengthen, provide for, and protect God's people, the sheep.

If you walked through the Old Testament on the journey you fought your way through Ezekiel and perhaps remember God prophesying against the shepherds. These leaders of God's people who were no longer fulfilling their God-given duties but were watching over and caring for themselves at the expense of God's sheep.

Please take some time to look at Ezekiel 34 to see the dire contract we are about to see between these evil shepherds and the one true good shepherd who was promised.

Ezekiel 34:22-23 (ESV) I will rescue (save) my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. **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.

Isaiah spoke of this Good Shepherd

Isaiah 40:11 (ESV) 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.

Go back further and Moses prophesied as well for the coming Good shepherd

Numbers 27:16-17 (ESV) “Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation **17** who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no shepherd.”

As we begin Chapter 10 we clearly remember Jesus’ healing of the blind man and the interaction with the religious leaders. It is this context that Jesus begins talking about Shepherds, Sheep, and the sheepfold.

The shepherd was very careful with his sheep and he lovingly watches over them. At night to protect them he puts them in a pen/sheepfold in order to protect them. **(PHOTO of SHEEPFOLD)**. You notice there is no door. The shepherd would sleep in the doorway so no sheep could get out nor could any wolves get in. **(DRAWING OF SHEEPFOLD)**

Jesus gives 2 characteristics of Sheep.

1. The sheep know the voice of the shepherd and follow Him (3)
2. The sheep will not follow a stranger but will rather flee from him (5)

Jesus goes further helping His disciples and the religious leaders understand what he was getting at.

John 10:7-11 (ESV) So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. **8** All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. **9** I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. **10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. **11** I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

V. 8 is a direct reference to Ezekiel 34 - the thieves and robbers are the shepherds mentioned in Ezekiel but also the religious leaders who fought against Jesus and sought to destroy Him. Listen

Ezekiel 34: 2b-5 (ESV) 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;

Jesus gives us another “I am” statement. This time he says, **I am the door** for the sheepfold. In other words, I am here to watch over, care for, and protect the sheep that have been neglected and abused.

Notice that he switches from Plural thieves and robbers to a singular THIEF. Here he switches from the religious leaders to the **one** they truly represent. SATAN. And Jesus sets himself in deep contrast to not only the religious leaders but also satan.

What an accurate description he gives of Satan. He comes only to Steal, Kill and Destroy. What God created and loves Satan despises and actively works to destroy. Jesus also describes him in chapter 8.

John 8:44 (ESV) You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Here Jesus draws our minds directly to Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel. Lying and warping the truth. Starting all the way back in Genesis 3&4. It is Satan’s DNA, his only plan - to destroy God’s good creation. Our world is exploding with Satan’s lies. (Reproductive healthcare, gender-affirming care) All of it stands in the face of God and His purposes for us in order to keep us from God and trapped in SIN.

Right before this Jesus points out in verse 34 that sin enslaves us.

John 8:34 (ESV) Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

Jesus closes verse 11 in John 10 by completing the contrast with the reality that he was the Good Shepherd promised in **Numbers 27, Isaiah 40, and Ezekiel 34**. And He would be the one who would CRUSH the head of the serpent/Satan.

Let's bring this home with my favorite "I am" statement.

John 14:6 (ESV) Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Notice how carefully Jesus words this. Satan's popular lie is that Jesus is A way. He is A truth, he is A life. There are many other ways to God is the lie we hear over and over in our culture. Jesus never claimed to be God. Claiming Jesus is the only way is not very inclusive. Absolutely Right!

Jesus is the Way - Reconciliation with God

Jesus is The Way: way for what? Reconciliation with God. Remember our sin separates us from God. He is our enemy if we are in our sin and we cannot do anything on our own to make ourselves pleasing or acceptable to God.

Romans 3:23 - tells us we all stand condemned before God.

If you are looking for the way to God. Jesus said HE IS THE WAY. No list of things to do. All you need is to believe that Jesus is God. And as we will see in a couple of weeks on His blood can bring your peace with God. No longer separated by your sin and an enemy of God but now a friend of God and a life given to follow Jesus alone.

Jesus is the Truth - Revelation of God

Jesus is The Truth: We have a very active enemy that is constantly poisoning our world with Sin. Believe your truth. Follow your truth. Declare and believe whatever you want. These lies go directly back to

the lies of satan in the garden. He is a one-trick pony. He cannot even come up with better lies.

Listen to Paul...

Ephesians 4:18-21 (ESV) They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. **19** They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. **20** But that is not the way you learned Christ!— **21** assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,

We have been following God's plan from the beginning of The Journey. Genesis 1:1 - In the Beginning, God. God knew what he was doing when he created everything. God knew about satan's rebellion in Heaven. He knew about the attack against and the fall of humanity. The best most profound way he could show himself to us was through the person and work of Jesus (God in the flesh) in our salvation. Jesus is the Revelation of God for all mankind. God has been so completely faithful as we have seen from Genesis 1:1 all the way through the New Testament.

Jesus is the Life - Regeneration from God

Listen to Paul again...

Ephesians 2:1-5 (ESV) 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. **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—

Through Jesus God comes and takes our once dead hearts and dead end path and makes us alive in JESUS. We have NEW desires. We have NEW Life. We have a NEW way. We see things DIFFERENTLY. Because we no longer listen to the lies of Satan. Satan becomes our enemy, not God.

Jesus our true Good Shepherd watches over us, provides for us, protects us, cares for us. And one day we will see HIM as Peter, James, and John saw him on that mountain. Glorious and pure our Savior King. Our Good Shepherd

Application (What We Need to Do)

We do not need to discover or make a way for ourselves, but we need to trust in Jesus and follow Him. We do not need to master all truth, but we need to know Jesus and grow in his truth. We do not need to achieve the life that we desire, but we need to receive Jesus and the life that He gives. **-Richard D. Phillips**

How will you respond to Jesus' declaration?