

Whosoever Will 6-28-26

2026-06-17 16:01:20

Good morning. We are looking today at John chapter 10. Can you believe we are getting to the midpoint of our study in John? It seemed so long when we started, and yet here we are at the midpoint already. This week, we're going to talk about Christ the door, which breaks down into three parts as usual. The first is an illustration in verses one through six. Secondly, you have an explanation in verses seven through twenty-one. And then finally, you have the application of the lesson in verses 22 through 42. The first 22 verses, which we've already covered this morning, take place immediately after the healing of the blind man. The latter part of the chapter takes place, probably some two to three months later. There is a time span between the beginning and the ending of this chapter. The beginning of the story is sometimes referred to as a parable, but actually it's more of a proverb or an allegory.

It's based around the writings of David in the Psalms. He wrote a beautiful trilogy in Psalm 22, 23, 24. In Psalm 22 you have the Good Shepherd who will die for his sheep. In Psalm 23 you have the Great Shepherd who cares for the sheep. And then finally, in Psalm 24, you have the Glorious Shepherd coming again for his sheep to take them home. You have the picture of Christ's past ministry dying for us on the cross. His current ministry of caring for his sheep and our daily walks, and then finally, coming again for us one day to take us to be with him forever. The illustration part of the story, of course, was sheep and shepherds a perfect example. Every hillside in Palestine had sheep or shepherds. Probably in that region everybody either was a shepherd, or they at least knew a shepherd. They were hardworking, they were fearless, they were willing to lay their lives down for the sheep.

They knew each sheep by its name. The sheep are basically peaceful animals; they're not aggressive. By Jewish law, they were clean animals, but there are some downsides to it also. They have a very poor sense of direction. They tend to wander. They tend to get lost. They are useful; they are productive; they produce wool. They need a shepherd though; they have to have someone to feed them, to lead them. So they are basically stupid and totally dependent on their shepherd, which of course makes them the perfect picture of us as Christians. We have to have our Shepherd daily to lead us. We are His sheep, we are His children. He knows us by name, He cares for us daily, He looks after all of our needs, takes care of all the things that we need. We get the explanation of this story that he told in the beginning of the chapter beginning in verse 11.

Jesus says this to the crowd. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. This is the fourth of Jesus's great I am statements. And remember, these are only found in the Gospel of John. Of course, there were things that they heard, but they did not include them in their writings. John. Did he think this was so important improving to his readers that Jesus was the Son of God I am? The fourth great statement here: "I am the good shepherd." The good shepherd knows each sheep by

name. How many times already in our study of John has Jesus called a name or will call a name in the latter chapters? We've already had Nicodemus, we've had Nathanael, we've had Lazarus coming up, Mary at the tomb. Each time tenderly calling the name of some of his sheep. Not only does he know our names, he knows our nature.

He knows all about us. In his own little flock of twelve, there was Peter. He knew he was impulsive, outspoken. Thomas always hesitating, always doubting. John loving Jesus absolutely unconditionally. Andrew always bringing somebody to meet Jesus. And of course, lastly, Judas Iscariot the wolf in sheep's clothing, the betrayer that had to be part of the group. Jesus says not only am I the good shepherd I am willing to lay my life down for. The sheep, of course, it's a reference to Calvary on the night before He died. Jesus prayed, "If possible, let this cup pass." Jesus knew it was not possible. He it is not a request; it is a statement of fact. If possible, let it pass. I know it cannot. He knew there was no other way that only His sinless blood could atone for the sins of mankind for thousands of years. So He's the good shepherd; He knows our name.

He knows our nature, and we talked about how he knew the nature of each of the disciples. But what about us? He knows our nature. He knows our frailties. He knows our weaknesses. He knows everything about us, and lastly, he's willing to lay his life down for us. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; the wolf snatches them and scatters the flock. He flees because he is a hired hand. And he does not care about the sheep. So Jesus now contrasts himself with the Jewish religious leadership. Jesus being the good shepherd, them being the hired hand, the hireling who cares nothing about the flock. They claimed to be shepherds for the entire nation of Israel. They set the standard of morality. They were the epitome of goodness.

In reality, they were just hired help. They cared nothing about the sheep. All they were interested in was promoting their own agenda, their own selves being kowtowed to on the street corners, being admired by the people for their brilliance and their adherence to the law. They only cared for the sheep in the good times when danger came, they fled. Verse 14: "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me." Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, I lay down my life for the sheep. Jesus not only knows his sheep, but he cares what happens to them. He knows we struggle. He knows we have disappointments. He knows we suffer pain in our life. Remember, he says he drank the cup of bitterness of all time for mankind. He dwelt among mankind for 33 plus years. He saw every human frailty that could possibly exist.

And yet, in spite of all of our flaws, in spite of all of our disappointments and all of our struggles, He loved us enough to go to the cross and die for us. And remember too, Jesus was not only divine; He was also human. We've already talked about He got thirsty. He got tired. He wept. He went through all these emotions just like we do. He saw disappointment. He saw struggles. He felt pain - all of these things because He had a human side. The Mid Eastern sheepfolds held multiple flocks at night. A watchman slept across the entrance

to the sheepfold to protect the sheep. Then in the morning, each shepherd would come to the sheepfold and would call for his flock. They knew his voice. The sheep would not go to any other shepherd but their own shepherd. Once they were outside of the sheepfold He would lead them, they would follow. He led them to green pastures, He led them beside still waters.

By the way, why still waters? Sheep will not eat from rushing or running water. They have to have still water. He would dam up a pool for them to drink from and just a beautiful picture. We talked a couple of weeks ago about how Jesus led the people when he fed the 5,000. He led them to a green pasture, he seated them, he provided food for them in front of the enemy that just like David said in the 23rd Psalm, "He leads us daily into green pastures and still waters." Pictures of peace and tranquility of times of struggling in our lives that he is the one who brings us back to the center point. He is the one who keeps us focused on him verse 16, and he says, but I have other sheep, and they are not of this fold, but I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock with one Shepherd. Who are these other sheep?

Primarily Gentiles, but probably some others also. Remember in Jesus' day, pretty much the world was divided into either a Jew or a Gentile. We've already looked at some of these other sheep. There was the Samaritan woman, the half breed woman. There was the nobleman who most likely was a Roman official. There were believing Jews like Nicodemus. So Jesus says there are other sheep in my flock, I know them, I care for them, I am going to take care of them just as I take care of you. On the day of Pentecost, at least three thousand people from all over the world are going to hear God's love in a message in their own language. So anyone can enter the flock. We are the whosoever will class, and so whosoever will can come in, but not everyone is willing to. He's not going to force you into the sheepfold, but you can enter freely.

Verse 17, for this reason, the father loves me because I lay down my life, so that I may take it back. No one has taken it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it back. This commandment I received from my father. I lay my life down. I take my life back. He's talking about a voluntary death and a voluntary resurrection. Jesus was not executed. We talked about that last week. When Caiaphas prophesied, when they were talking about whether or not he was going to commit suicide, he did not commit suicide but he voluntarily died. He gave up his life for mankind. So Jesus' death was not an execution; it was a free will offering. Acts twenty two says the father raised him from the dead.

Peter in his writing recorded that it was through the power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus was raised from the dead. So it was a flawless partnership: Father, Son, and Spirit all involved in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Verse 19: Dissension occurred among the Jews because of these words. Naturally they can't agree with anything. Many of them were saying he has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to him? Others were saying, These are not the words of one who is demon possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can it? So here you have that dissension again. Of course,

the Jews is the hypocritical religious leadership, and they are arguing among themselves again and again. But the ranks are beginning to break apart. These verses imply that some of this Jewish leadership.

They're beginning to have doubts. They're beginning to believe this Jesus might really be who he says he is. He really might be the Son of God because of the things that he has done, the words that he has spoken. But the majority of them still claim he's got to be demon possessed, but others are saying such reverent words, so holy, so well thought out. No demon could say these things. But the opposition still continues to hold out that he is the demon, that they will do this literally until he dies on the cross. And because of peer pressure, most of them just go along with him. They may have felt differently, but outwardly they had to agree with them. The last section is the explanation of all of this. This takes place possibly two to three months later. Verse 22: "At that time, the Feast of Dedication took place in Jerusalem." It was winter.

And Jesus was walking in the temple area, in the portico of Solomon. The Jews then surrounded him and began saying to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus had been gone from Jerusalem for two to three months. John doesn't really say where they went, but he went away for a period of time. And yet the minute he comes back, the religious leadership descends on him again, pestering him about who are you? Why are you here? Just go away and leave us alone. And John puts some markers here. He says, first of all, The time of the year, it was winter, and it was the Feast of Dedication. The second thing is that it was the temple area. It was the Portico of Solomon. Of course, in Jesus' day, Herod had expanded the temple area, till it was massive, nothing at all, like the modest temple that started out when Zerubbabel built it. He tells us when it was, and he tells us where all of this took place.

The Feast of the Dedication, also called the Feast of the Lights. Today we refer to it as Hanukkah. It takes place in our month of December and it was a specific commemoration. It was the one that commemorated the overthrow of Antiochus Epiphanes in 174 BC. We studied him when we were doing the book of Revelation. This story is actually told in The Book of Maccabees, The Apocryphal books, we do not include them in our Bible. But they are available. You can read them. It was a group of basically guerrilla warriors, and Jerusalem had been overtaken by Antiochus Epiphanes, a Roman, and he was a foreshadowing of the antichrist. He conquered Jerusalem, he abolished temple worship, he sacrificed a pig on the altar. All of these things were just a foreshadowing of what antichrist will do when he comes.

Look at the similarity of Antiochus and Antichrist, a very similar sound to the two names. The Maccabees with their guerrilla warfare defeated him, cleansed the temple, reestablished temple worship. And so this Hanukkah festival celebrates that victory in 174 BC. So at this time, Jewish homes were usually decorated with lamps and with candles; hence, the Festival of Lights. They lit their homes up in celebration of the freedom that the Maccabees had brought to them so long ago. Jesus has been away for a while, but as soon as he returns, the battle starts again. This is like the showdown in the old Western movies. You got the good guys, the bad guys, the standoff in the

middle of town. The question is: Are you the Messiah or not? How much longer are you going to tease us? How much longer before you tell us who you really are?

The religious leadership really doesn't want an answer. They have made their minds up. All they want Jesus to do is to say something incriminating, something they can use to accuse him, something that they can arrest him and put him into prison or even kill him, if at all possible. They simply want him to incriminate himself. So that's why this constant pestering. He has given them the answer time and time again, they stupidly foolishly refuse to believe it, they just keep arguing with him but they are hoping he will say something that they can accuse him. And of course, Jesus hears their vocal words, he hears their whispered words, he knows what's in their hearts. And of course, he's certainly not going to give them anything that they're looking for. Verse twenty five: Jesus answered them. He says, I told you and you did not believe me. The works that I do in my Father's name, these testify of me, but you do not believe because you are not.

My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. So here we are two to three months after the allegory about the sheep, the sheepfold and the shepherds. And he's still referring back to that. He said it was so plain. You understand sheep, you understand shepherds, you understand sheepfolds. And you still don't want to understand what I'm saying to you and who I am. He says, how many more times am I going to have to tell you who I am? He said you've heard my words. Some of you are even admitting that they testified to who I am. You have seen the works that I have done, and you have agreed no one but the Son of God could do these works. A demon could not do them. Satan cannot do them. There has got to be something more to me than you are seeing. He says. You do not believe because you are not my Father's sheep. If you were His sheep, you would hear and you would understand. So He says, 'You do not belong to my Father; you are lost.'

You're going to die in your sins if you do not believe and repent. He says, and remember, my Father has many sheep in His flock. They know Him, they love Him, and because they know Him, they know Me. They love Me. They listen to My voice. They follow Me like the sheep follow their shepherds. He said, you are none of these things because your hearts are cold and frozen. You have never yielded to God. You claim to know Him, you claim to love Him but you were as far removed from God as you could possibly be. Verse twenty eight Jesus continues on about the sheep in his flock. He says, I give them eternal life and they will never perish. 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. I and the Father are one again he goes back to my sheep.

Who hear my voice, they obey me and because they do, they are safe. They are safely held in my hand. There is no power, no person, Satan himself cannot snatch them out of my hands because I hold them securely. There is no power that can separate me from my children. He says, but you, on the other hand, are going to die in your sins and rebellion. And you're going to spend eternity with your father with Satan. In the lake of fire. Verse 31, and

the Jews picked up stones again to stone him. And Jesus replied to them, I showed you many good works from the Father for which of them are you stoning me? And the Jews answered and said, We are not stoning you for good work, but for blasphemy because you being a man, being only a man in their opinion, make yourself out to be God.

This is the third attempt that John has recorded for the leaders to try to kill Jesus. There were probably others that aren't even recorded by John. They are angry, they are frustrated. In taking up stones to kill him, they are actually violating Roman law. The Romans had been in control in Jerusalem for about a hundred years now. And one of the first things they did was they took capital punishment away from the Jews and reserved it only for the Roman courtroom. The Jews could not execute anybody. For these people who claim to be such good citizens, who claim to be so much in love with the law and keeping of the law, are actually breaking the civil law that they live under. And I don't know if you remember a week or two ago, they were arguing among themselves if they didn't do something about Jesus soon, the Romans were going to come and fire all of them, and they were all going to be out of a job.

Both under the law of God, under the Mosaic law, but they're also under the Roman civil law. They are violating both here. Jesus basically says to them, "Let me get this right." He says, "Do you really want to kill me because I have done so many good deeds? I have helped so many people. I have done things for people that you could never do. You would never even dream of doing these things." And the Jews say, "Oh no, no, no. It's not for the good you have done. It's because you are blasphemous. You being a nobody from Nazareth claim to be God." So no, you do very good things and we're not stoning you for that. We're stoning you for the bad thing you do. You claim to be from God. Blasphemy is a word we've kind of tossed around in here several times. Do you know what it actually means? The dictionary says it is the act of expressing profound.

Disrespect, contempt, or irreverence towards a deity, a sacred object, considered inviolable. It can be speech, writing, or behavior that mocks, denounces, or slanders something considered too sacred to be dishonored. This is what they're accusing him of. Basically, he is claiming to be God when they, in their hearts, know that he is not God, that he couldn't be from God because he's from Nazareth. Verse 34, and Jesus answered them and says, 'Has it not been written in your law?' And that's come up several times. It's now become their law. They have so polluted it. They have added so many isms to it, that it is no longer God's law. It is their law. It is the Jewish religious leadership's Law. He says, 'Is it not written in your law? I said you are gods.' And if he called them gods to whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be nullified.

Are you saying of him, who the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?' Jesus is quoting here from Psalm eighty two verse. They should probably know well. It was written by Asaph. He was a Levite musician who lived about one thousand BC, about the time of David, who also penned many of the Psalms. In Psalm eighty two God was speaking to the earthly judges. Particularly to the Jewish

religious judges who had been picked to oversee religious arguments, things dealing with the law, things dealing with temple worship. So he says to them, 'You are gods,' but it is not a compliment. It was a slanderous that you have elevated yourself to a position I never intended. You have named yourself judge and jury basically.

You are not what I wanted you to be. You are not what I wanted you to do. And if you notice in the psalm, the psalmist refers to them as gods with a little g that should be acting on behalf of the God capital G. But as time passed, they became more and more corrupt. They became more and more unjust and were in it primarily to promote themselves. They were in it primarily for their own benefit, and God says, You've made yourselves into little gods, haven't you? So Jesus is saying to the religious leadership, if God referred to these mere mortals as gods, what about him? You claim you search the scriptures. You love the scriptures and you see what the scriptures say about me, but you don't believe me. He says my works and my words are certainly greater than those of those earthly judges.

And yet you refuse to believe who I really am. All you want to do is accuse me and kill me. He uses the expression sanctified here or set. Jesus' statement about his relationship with the heavenly Father is what he's talking to here. It's interesting, he said he was sanctified. He did not become the Son of God when he was born to Mary in Bethlehem. He has always been The Son of God. He has always been a part of the Trinity. He was present at creation. He was with God before creation. So they're arguing that, well, maybe when you were born, you thought you became the Son of God, but you did not. I was the Son of God always. I have always been and I always will be God. And he says an interesting thing to them too. Remember Scripture cannot be broken. Scripture cannot be nullified.

God has put His seal of authority on it, and it is true. It is authentic. It is the living Word of God, and yet you disobey it. Verse thirty seven: If I do not do the works of my Father, do not believe me. But if I do them, the works of my Father, even though you do not believe me, believe in the works so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father. He's already named off multiple witnesses to his authenticity, and we've gone over these multiple times. John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit, His heavenly Father, the Scriptures, even Jesus himself, the miracles that he performed. All testified. Deuteronomy says two or more. Jesus has given them five or more. So he says you do not respect the Word, you do not listen to the Word, you do not obey the Word and yet I am The Word!

He's already acknowledged, about the two witnesses. He says, "What about miracles? You just said that I do good deeds. And yet, you can't believe that I do them with the power of God because I am His Son." He said, "You've been amazed by them. You want to see more of them and yet, when I do them, then you accuse me of being demon possessed." He says, "If you cannot believe in the Father who sent Me then who are you going to believe in?" He says, "It is the Father whom I obey and it is the Father whom I follow, and you still don't want to believe." There's really almost a hint of sarcasm here. He's implying that they are too ignorant to know God and His ways. They are too

ignorant to recognize Him. They are too ignorant to recognize the Son, who is the very image of God that is standing before them. Verse thirty nine And therefore they were seeking again to arrest Him, and He eluded their grasp. As we've said before, sometimes He just simply vanished from their sight.

Appeared somewhere else, perhaps he blinded their eyes, they could not see where he was, but he went away to beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and he stayed there for one more failed attempt to arrest him. And so Jesus leaves Jerusalem. This is the final time he will leave Jerusalem. He will not be back until the week of the crucifixion. He will not return until Palm Sunday, and that's going to be about four to five months from now. He simply vanishes. He reappears in beyond Jordan. So where did he go? Where is beyond Jordan? It's the northeastern corner of the Sea of Galilee. It is where John the Baptist began his ministry. It is the area where John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. So he has returned there. The people in this area were the ordinary town folks. They were the ones that loved Jesus, that flocked to him, that couldn't get enough of him. So he will stay here.

Until he begins his final journey to Jerusalem, to the crucifixion. It is unlikely the religious leadership will follow him here. It was a distance away, but also it was because of the poor, ignorant, stupid people that lived there that were believing in this man, and they certainly didn't want to associate with them. So Jesus feels like he's going to have some sanctuary. He's going to have some relief from the leadership that they will not follow him into these ordinary little towns. With ordinary little believing people. Verse 41, He is now in the region beyond Jordan. Many came to him and saying, while John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true, and many believed in him there. And he makes an interesting point here something we sometimes don't think. John never performed a miracle that was not his gift. John, the Baptist was not gifted with the ability to perform miracles. He was a gifted preacher.

Teacher, he baptized many, but he was not a performer of miracles. And John the Baptist has been dead for quite a while now, and yet the people still remember him. They remember his words; they remember the things that he said about Jesus. And as time has passed, more and more have believed that these things about Jesus are true; that John the Baptist was really right about him. The Bible says many believed, and we've talked about it several times. Many did believe to saving faith, but others had head knowledge only. They believed in the miracles, they believed He was a great teacher, that He was a good man, but they did not yield their lives to Him. So 'believed' here of course can have multiple meanings. Well this week we have America 250.

Her name was Katherine Lee Bates. She was a schoolteacher from Boston. In 1893, she took a tour of the Western United States, was gone for several months, and then took the train back to Boston. On the way back to Boston, she wrote a poem. One part of the poem says this: "O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife who more than self their country loved and liberty. More than life. America, may God thy gold refine till all success be nobleness and every gain divine." And Jesus said, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Who more than self their country

loved and liberty more than life. That's from John fifteen thirteen. Many of you were here about.

Two weeks ago, when Major General David Pritchett spoke to the senior adults at the June luncheon. He is the Adjutant General of Alabama National Guard. In his comments, he said: "God will bless our country as long as God-fearing women and men lead." Great warriors are good, but God-fearing warriors are even better. And to back his words with his life, he had his four senior staff with him that day. He and all of his staff are Christians. They profess Jesus as their Lord and Savior. And he commented, we are responsible for the lives of over 12,000 National Guard personnel here in Alabama. It is such.

Joy and a relief to know when we get up in the morning, and we are responsible for the lives of these people that we have Christians making these decisions. And I am surrounded by them. So what Katherine Lee Bates wrote all those years ago is very true today. You probably will well remember in the weeks following 9/11 in 2001, this is the 25th anniversary this year, that this song America The Beautiful became almost like a second national anthem. It and Amazing Grace were the two songs that were sung the most after the national anthem during that time of national grief and grieving. The song that she wrote over 125 years ago is still true today: "Love self more than love country more than self and liberty more than life." Let's pray before we go. Father, thank you that you have blessed us with a free country, that it has remained free. God, may that.

Be our heritage, on and on, that godly men and women will continue to lead. They will continue to obey you. And as our people pray, you will heal our nation. Bless us now this week with a productive week, a week where we are obedient to you, to the leadings of your Spirit in our lives. And bring us back next week safe and ready to study your Word again. For it's in your name we pray. Amen.

JOHN CHAPTER TEN

Christ, The Door

Take a Ways

The Illustration (Vss 1-6)

The Explanation (Vss 7-21)

The Application (Vss 22-42)

One lesson that Jesus is trying to teach the disciples is patience
They have seen many things happen instantly

Water to wine – loaves and fishes to a banquet – sight to the
blind

But Jesus' ongoing confrontations with the leadership
Is teaching then patience – God is waiting – wanting none to
perish

Our physical sight is dim
But when Jesus comes again our spiritual sight will be 20/20
I Corinthians 13:12

Mark 8:17 is a parallel chapter to John 10
In it Jesus chides the disciples for their weak faith
After all they have seen, heard and done
Their faith is not as strong as it should be

Her name was Katherine Lee Bates – a Boston school teacher
In 1893 she took a tour of the Western United States
On the train back to Boston, she wrote:
Oh beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife
Who more than self their country loved – and liberty more than
life
America, America may God thy gold refine
Til all success be nobleness and every gain divine

And Jesus said:
Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life
for his friends.

John 15:13
KJV