

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

JOHN LESSON 5 (Chapters 10-12)

Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Ben Bailey.

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (Jn. 10:11). Welcome to our study of the gospel of John. In chapters 10-12 Jesus makes several important "I am" statements. He begins by noting that He is "the Good Shepherd." Like in Psalm 23, where God is pictured as the Good Shepherd Who leads His children through the valley of the shadow of death, by the green pastures, and by the still waters, Christ is the Shepherd of our souls Who can lead us to Heaven itself.

Beginning in John 10:7, Jesus shows us that He not only is the Good Shepherd of God's flock, but He also is the door by which we enter the family of God. In John 10:7 Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep." The idea of Jesus being the door reflects the fact that He is the access into the fold or flock of God. How does a person get into God's family? A person cannot enter God's family without going through Jesus. In John 14:6 Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except by Me." Jesus is the way. Without Him, a person cannot get into God's family. In Acts 4:12 Peter proclaimed, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Jesus is the spiritual door through which a person must go to get into God's family.

But how does a person go through Christ and get into God's family? The Bible teaches us how to get into Christ, which is how we get into the family of God. In Romans 6:1-4 and Galatians 3:27 we are told, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." In the culmination of God's plan of salvation, it is at baptism that we get into Christ. We go through Him as our Mediator and Sacrifice (1 Tim. 2:4; Heb. 10:12), and we become a part of the family of God. Since Christ is the door, He represents the entrance that we must access in order to get into God's family. A person cannot be saved outside of Jesus Christ. That is the reason God sent His Son into this world. In fact, Jesus said in John 10:9, "If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." The idea there is that salvation and spiritual food are found in Jesus Christ. The idea that we are saved refers to the fact that we are saved from our sins. In 2 Timothy 2:10 we learn that salvation is "in Christ." That is where we find salvation. In 2 Peter 3:18 we are told that once we become Christians, we must grow "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Here is God's guarantee. A person must obey the Gospel and do what Jesus says, not what men say. A person must hear God's Word, believe in Jesus, repents of past sins, confess Christ's name before men, and be baptized into God's family. When a person does that, he can be sure that he is a child of God. He also can be sure that if he follows in the footsteps of Jesus, He will lead him to green pastures and beside still waters. A Christian will always find the spiritual sustenance that he needs.

In 1 Peter 2:2 we are told that, as newborn babes, we are to “desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.” Where do we get that pure milk? Peter said in John 6:68, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” We are to look to Jesus for our sustenance and growth. God’s Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. We must look to Jesus as the door to our salvation, and as the spiritual food that we so desperately need.

In John 10:10-11 Jesus offers another “I am” statement when He says, “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” As the true Shepherd, Jesus gives His sheep abundant life. He is not a hireling. He wants to give His people the best life imaginable. What we have today is far greater than the land flowing with milk and honey into which Moses and Joshua led the people of Israel. Our blessings are spiritual. We can have immediate forgiveness of sins based on the blood of Jesus. And we can have access to the family of God. Ephesians 1:3 says that all spiritual blessings are ours “in Christ Jesus.” Look at what we have if we are children of God. We have access to God through prayer. We can speak directly to God, knowing that He will hear and answer us if it is according to His will. We have access to God’s grace. If we walk in the light, God’s grace covers our sins as we repent and confess of those sins. We have access to the fellowship of the family of God and the love of God. Think of the many blessings that God has bestowed upon us as Christians. As the true Shepherd, Jesus gives us that abundant life. In Philippians 4:13 Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” As part of God’s family, we can enjoy the abundant life.

But here is the problem in our religious world today. There are way too many hirelings who are not concerned about God’s family, who are not concerned about people who are lost, and who are not doing what they are doing for the right reasons. In John 10:12-13 Jesus said that the hireling does not care about the sheep, but is there only because someone hired him. When the wolf comes or when something else bad happens, the hireling leaves. Jesus is not like that. The hireling represents those who are in it for what they can get out of it. There is a multitude of people in the religious world who are not concerned about your soul. Rather, they are concerned about their pocketbooks. They are concerned about lusts of the flesh. They are concerned about financial gain. They are not concerned about reaching out and helping people get to Heaven. The love of money is their motive (1 Tim. 6: 12ff.). What you need to ask yourself is this: Does this person show me from the Bible where these things are correct? And is this person concerned about me going to Heaven, or is he concerned about how much money I can give or whatever else I might be able to do for him? Is he telling me what God says? Is he helping me become a better student of the Word of God? Or, is he concerned about my money. Think about the people in the past who proclaimed that they were God’s servants. They did not necessarily preach the Bible. They proclaimed to be servants of God, yet they were so into begging for money. Then, lo and behold, it was discovered that they were hoarding the funds for themselves, and were not servants of God at all. Be careful who you listen to. Listen to Jesus as the Good Shepherd rather than the hirelings.

In John 10:14-15 Jesus says, “I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.” What makes Jesus the Good Shepherd? It is His ability to lead, and His ability to care and protect His sheep. Jesus also is the Good Shepherd because He made the ultimate sacrifice for His sheep. He leads us beside the still waters. He cares for our souls. He walks with us through the valley of the shadow of death. But He also gave His

life for us. Hebrews 2:9 says that Jesus “tasted death for every man.” He became the Sacrifice that was offered outside the camp (Heb. 13:12-13). Hebrews 2:14 teaches us that Jesus, through death, “destroyed him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” As a result, He can now aid those who come to God through Him. Jesus defeated our greatest enemy by dying as a perfect sacrifice for us. We must look to Jesus because He is the only One Who has ever laid down His life for us a perfect sacrifice. And we cannot get to God without going through Jesus.

Think about the people to whom you might be listening in matters of religion. There are so many people who are listening to the wrong voice. The only voices to which we must listen in regard to matters of salvation are the voices of Jesus and God. On the Mount of Transfiguration, God spoke from Heaven and said, “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear him!” (Mt. 17:5; Mk. 9:7). If someone is telling you something that is not in the Bible, do not believe it. Get away from it as fast as you can. And if you are not sure, what should you do? You should take your Bible and check what is being said. In Acts 17:11 we read of people who “searched the Scriptures daily” to see if the things that Paul was telling them were true according to the Word and will of God.

In John 10:35 Jesus then says concerning the Scripture, “The Scripture cannot be broken.” This is one of the great statements in the Bible about the absolute truth, and the exact fulfillment, of God’s Word. We are not told, “The Scripture might not or should not be broken.” Rather, we are told, “The Scripture cannot be broken.” In essence, Jesus is saying, “God said it, and you can take it to the bank because that is the way it is going to be.” We need to follow the voice of the Good Shepherd as presented in the Bible because the Scripture cannot be broken. What God says, will happen. In saying that the Scripture cannot be broken, Jesus is teaching us that God’s Word (the Bible) is our source of absolute truth. Psalm 119:160 says, “The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of your righteous commandments endures forever.” What does it mean when it speaks of “the entirety”? It means that Genesis 1:1 through Revelation 22:21 is absolute truth. Jesus said in John 17:17, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” In saying that the Scripture cannot be broken, not only is it absolute truth, but every bit of it will be fulfilled exactly as it was written. Concerning the prophecies in the Old Testament regarding Christ, He said in Luke 24 that everything that had been written in the law and the prophets about Him would be fulfilled. By the point of Acts 2, those prophecies had been fulfilled. Jesus was saying that the Word of God is inspired, and that we must realize its complete nature and hold to it. In 2 Timothy 3:16 we are told that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” The word “inspiration” literally means “God breathed.” All Scripture is God breathed. And since the Scripture cannot be broken, the good news is that the Bible alone is everything we need to get to Heaven. In 2 Peter 1:3 Peter said that God “has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us.” The Bible has everything we need to know God, to live the best life, and to get to Heaven. That being the case, we must not listen to anyone except Jesus. He is the only Good Shepherd. If someone is proclaiming something, but cannot show you where it is in the Bible, do not believe it because it is a lie, and that person is not concerned about your soul.

In John 11 and 12 we see the seventh and climactic sign in the miracles of Jesus that John discusses. This sign shows that Jesus is the Master of death. Lazarus, Jesus’ friend, dies. Jesus is heartbroken about it. He goes to Lazarus’ home and calls Lazarus out of the grave by saying, “Lazarus, come forth!” Here, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. It was this sign that caused Christ’s opponents to immediately want to put Him to death. In John 11 and 12 we notice several things about death, one of which is that, like it or not, all people everywhere must die. Hebrews 9:27 says, “It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the

judgment.” Every person living will one day die. All of us will one day pass from this life. And that may not be far away. James 4:14 asks, “What is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.” Psalm 90:10-12 teaches us that, as a general rule, we may get seventy or eighty years on Earth. We all will die. Life is short. Therefore, we must take advantage of the life we have right now.

But for the faithful child of God, death is not a bad thing. To the world, death is gloom and doom. It is dark and ugly. It is the one thing people want to escape. But that is not the case with the child of God. Death should be the one thing we long for because it allows us to go home and be with God. Jesus, through His resurrection, defeated death (1 Cor. 15:55-57). Paul asked, “O death, where is your sting?” There is no sting of death for Christians. In Psalm 116:15 we are told, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” What is it like from God’s standpoint when His children die? It is precious. What is it like from man’s standpoint? Revelation 14:13 says, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.’” It is precious from God’s standpoint, and it is a blessing for us if we have done what God says.

In John 5:28-29 the Bible teaches that all who are in the grave will one day come forth. Therefore, since Jesus is the Master of death, we need to trust in Him, follow Him, and make sure that we have access to His blood and are following His teaching. Here’s why. In John 11:25-26 we see what Jesus had to say about the resurrection. “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” This means that if we are faithful to God as children of Christ, on the last day we will be raised up. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 we are told that if we have already died, we will return with Christ. If not, we will meet Him in the air. We have a great hope because of the resurrection (Rom. 1:4). Philippians 3:20-21 tells us that our bodies will be changed, and we will be like Christ. Thus, we can answer the question of Job 14:14 when Job asked, “If a man dies, will he live again?” Jesus said that if we are one of His children, then when we die, we never really die because we will rise again. Thus, we have the hope of the resurrection yet to come.

What is it that motivates children of God to remain faithful? It is knowing that if we remain faithful to God, when we die, we will not be “dead all over like Rover.” Rather, we will come out of the grave because we have a home waiting for us in Heaven. That ought to be the theme and joy of every Christian’s life. We must want to live faithfully so that we can take part in the resurrection yet to come, and then live forever with God.

There is a sense, of course, in which death can be sad. In John 11:35 (the shortest verse in the English Bible), we read that “Jesus wept.” Jesus cried when He learned the news that Lazarus had died. But why did He weep? Death is not a bad thing, as we have already seen. Likely, Jesus wept because He knew that even though He would raise Lazarus, he still would have to die again. Jesus wept at the loss of a friend. In Luke 19:41 Jesus shed tears over the lost. On one occasion He said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, I would bring you as a hen gathers her chicks under her, but you were not willing.” He wept over the city, the people, and the nation that would be lost because they were not looking for the Savior as they should have been. Jesus wept over the loss of a friend, and He wept over spiritual loss. But He also wept tears of agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (Lk. 22:39-46; Heb. 5:7). There is nothing wrong with shedding tears at times. But here is what is different for children of God. We do not sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13). Yes, we may experience sorrow. And we may long to be with the person who has died. But we do not sorrow like those in the world. We sorrow in view of the hope we have.

In John 12 Jesus, because of miracle He had performed of raising Lazarus from the dead, is going to begin to be persecuted. People will not want to believe in Him. From this point, He is headed toward the cross. It is in John 12 where we see the true motivation of Judas. He was a thief who kept his hand in the money pouch. He was not concerned about the poor, but was concerned about money. No wonder, then, we see in Luke 22 that Satan entered into Judas and used him to betray the Savior. One of the greatest requests is seen in John 12:20-26. People came and said, "We wish to see Jesus." How we wish there were more people like that who really want to know the Savior. All people can have access to Him because Jesus promised that He would be lifted up. In John 12:32-33 we read, "I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself. This He said, signifying by what death He would die." Jesus was lifted up (Mt. 27). He was hung on a cross that was viewed as a curse, yet was turned into a blessing because of Jesus' great sacrifice.

But mere "mental acceptance alone" will not get a person into the family of God. How does a person become a child of God? In John 12:42-43 we learn that it is not by belief alone that a person does that: "Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Look at the problem people have when they say, "All you have to do is believe." The people mentioned in John 12:42-43 would **had** to have been saved because it says that they "believed in Jesus." Can a person be saved without confessing and acknowledging Jesus as his Lord? Not according to Matthew 10:32-33, where Jesus said, "Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." If belief alone can save, and if that is a biblical doctrine, then the people in John 12:42-43 **had** to be saved. Yet Jesus said that if a person would not confess Him as Lord, then that person was **not** saved. Those people would not confess Christ as Lord. From that, we can learn that belief alone will not save anyone. The only time that "faith alone" or "belief alone" is mentioned, God says the exact opposite of what much of the religious world today says. James 2:24 says, "You see then that a man is justified by works, **and not by faith only.**" Remember that earlier we talked about hirelings? Anyone who tells you that you are saved by faith only is a hireling, and is not concerned about your soul. God says in the Bible that we are **not** saved by faith alone.

How do we know that is true, and that is the way it really is? Look at John 12:48. On the final day, what will decide whether or not we will be with God? Jesus said, "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day." We can know that we are right with God if we simply follow the Bible. We also can know that if we do not follow the Bible, we will not make it to Heaven. It is very simple. If we will simply read the Bible, do what it says, and apply it to our lives instead of listening to what everyone else says, then we can be sure we are right with God because we have obeyed the Scriptures. In 1 John 5:13 we are told, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life." We can know we are right with God if we do what God says.

How does a person become a Christian? How does a person become a part of God's family? How does a person go through Jesus as the door? How does a person make Jesus his or her Good Shepherd? Here's how.

A person must hear God's Word. Romans 10:17 says, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." We know that hearing is essential because Hebrews 11:6 that "without faith it is impossible to please God." A person must have faith. And the way by

which faith is obtained is by hearing God's Word. Then a person must believe in Jesus as God's Son. Jesus said in John 8:24, "Unless you believe that I am He, you will surely die in your sins." Having believed in Jesus, a person then must repent of sin. In Luke 13:3 Jesus said, "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." Repenting is a changed will that leads to a changed way. Then a person must confess the name of Jesus. Romans 10:10 says, "With the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." A person must confess Jesus as God's Son and Savior of the world. Then that person must be baptized in water to be forgiven of his sins and to become a part of God's family. A person cannot be saved if he is not baptized. Baptism is the point at which a person gets into the family of God, and it is the point at which a person's sins are washed away. Someone asks, "Where is that in the Bible?" It is in Acts 2:38, where Peter said, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Jesus said in Mark 16:15, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved." Saul was told in Acts 22:16, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Peter said it so clearly in 1 Peter 3:21 when he said, "Baptism does also now save us." If God said that baptism saves, how can we say anything else? Are you a part of the family of God? Are you a part of Jesus' fold? Do you have access to the resurrection of life? If you have not done these things, then you are not a part of God's family. But the good news is that you can stop listening to the hirelings and start listening to Jesus. Do today what He says, and you can become a member of the church of Christ, which is His body. We hope you will do that. Join us next time as we study more from the Book of John.

Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

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STUDY QUESTIONS FOR JOHN LESSON 5 (CHAPTERS 10-12)

1. According to the material in this lesson, when Jesus said in John 10:7, "I am the door of the sheep," what did He mean by such a statement?
2. What else, according to John 14:6, is Jesus?
3. According to 2 Timothy 2:10, where is salvation found?
4. Where are all spiritual blessings found, according to Ephesians 1:3?
5. According to Romans 6:1-4 and Galatians 3:27, if a person wants to get "into Christ," how would he or she go about doing that?
6. Who, according to John 6:68, possesses "the words of life"?
7. How does John 10:10-11 depict Jesus?
8. John 10:12-13 speaks about "hirelings." According to the material contained in this lesson, who are some modern-day hirelings?
9. In John 10:15, what did Jesus say He was willing to do for His sheep?
10. According to the last part of Hebrews 2:9, what did Jesus do for humanity?
11. According to Hebrews 2:14, what did Christ's death on the cross accomplish?
12. What did Jesus mean when He said in John 10:35 that "the Scripture cannot be broken"?
13. According to Psalm 119:160 and John 17:17, what is God's Word?
14. According to 2 Peter 1:3, what has God given us in His Word?
15. What miracle do we see Jesus performing in John 11?
16. According to John 11:53, what was the reaction of the Jewish leaders to the miracle that Jesus performed in John 11?
17. How, according to Psalm 116:15, does God view the death of one of His children?
18. What did Jesus mean in John 11:25-26 when He said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live"?
19. What did Jesus mean when He said in John 12:32-33, "I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself"?
20. According to Jesus' statement in John 11:25-26, what is the correct answer to the question that Job asked in Job 14:14 (If a man dies, shall he live again?)?