

## Worksheet #11: John 10:1–42

**Summary:** John 10 opens with the well-known “good shepherd” discourse (10:1–18). This discourse is presented with relatively little information about the setting. It is not until 10:19–21 that we even learn that “the Jews” were the audience, and that Jesus’ words provoked controversy among them. Then, in 10:22, we have a time reference that tells us that these events took place at “the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter.” This places the events of chapter 10 approximately three months after the events surrounding the Feast of Tabernacles in chapters 7–8. Also, as the last Jewish festival prior to the Passover at the time of Jesus’ death, this chapter draws John’s “Festival Cycle” to a close.

After the “good shepherd” discourse, we find Jesus in debate with the Jews about his identity in the grand outer court of the Temple (10:23ff). Here Jesus has strong words for the Jews, telling them that they “are not of [his] sheep” (10:26) and thus do not have eternal life (10:28). He explains that his authority to assess their condition comes from his relationship with God the Father: “I and My Father are one” (10:30). In response, the Jews again attempt (and fail) to stone Jesus for blasphemy (10:31, 39–40). Amidst the stoning attempt, Jesus condemns the Jews, presenting his works as evidence of deity (10:32–38). The story closes outside Jerusalem in the Judean wilderness as people come to Jesus and express belief in him because he fulfilled John the Baptist’s predictions (10:40–41).

### Abbreviated Outline<sup>1</sup> (current passage in bold):

- I. INTRODUCTION: THE WORD MADE FLESH (1:1-18)
- II. THE BOOK OF SIGNS: THE SIGNS OF THE MESSIAH (1:19-12:50)
  - A. *The Forerunner and the Coming of the Messiah* (1:19-51)
    - 1. The Testimony of John the Baptist (1:19-34)
    - 2. The Beginning of Jesus’ Ministry (1:35-51)
  - B. *The Cana Cycle: Jesus’ Inaugural Signs and Representative Conversations* (2:1-4:54)
    - 1. Sign 1: Changing Water into Wine at the Wedding in Cana (2:1-12)
    - 2. Sign 2: One of Jesus’ Jerusalem Signs: The Clearing of the Temple (2:13-22)
    - 3. Representative Conversations: Nicodemus the Jewish Ruler, the Samaritan Woman (2:23-4:42)
    - 4. Sign 3: The Second Sign in Cana: The Healing of the Royal Official’s Son (4:43-54)
  - C. ***The Festival Cycle: Additional Signs amidst Mounting Unbelief* (5-10)**
    - 1. Sign 4 at an Unnamed Feast in Jerusalem: The Healing of the Lame Man (5:1-47)
    - 2. Sign 5: Galilean Passover: Feeding the Multitude and Bread of Life Discourse (6:1-71)
    - 3. Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles (7:1-8:59)
    - 4. **Sign 6: The Healing of the Blind Man and the Good Shepherd Discourse (9-10)**
  - D. *Final Passover: Climactic Sign, the Raising of Lazarus, and Other Events* (11-12)
    - 1. Sign 7: The Raising of Lazarus (11)
    - 2. Final Events of Jesus’ Public Ministry (12)
- III. THE BOOK OF EXALTATION: PREPARING THE NEW MESSIANIC COMMUNITY AND THE PASSION OF JESUS (13-20)
  - A. *The Cleansing and Instruction of the New Covenant Community, including Jesus’ Final Prayer* (13-17)
  - B. *The Passion Narrative* (18-19)
  - C. *Jesus’ Resurrection and Appearances, Commissioning of Disciples* (20:1-29)
  - D. *Concluding Purpose Statement* (20:30-31)
- IV. EPILOGUE: THE COMPLEMENTARY ROLES OF PETER AND THE BELOVED DISCIPLE (21)

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, The Cross, and The Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville, Tenn: B & H Academic, 2009), 307–308.

**Interpretation:** *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. Compare Zech. 11:17, 12:10, and 13:7 with the opening of the good shepherd discourse (John 10:1–5). How does the information in Zechariah help us understand the situation in John 10?  

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2. Jesus claims to be “the door” (10:7) and also “the good shepherd” (10:11). What do these images tell us about Jesus?  

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3. Who does Jesus represent with the images of “the thief” (10:8, 10) and the “hireling” (10:12–13)? What can we draw from these comparisons?  

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4. What does it mean for the good shepherd to give his life *for* the sheep (10:11, 15)?  

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5. What distinguishes “the Jews” here from Christ’s sheep in 10:25–29?  

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6. In 10:34, Jesus quotes from Psalm 82:6 where the term “gods” (Heb. *elohim*) is applied to what class of individuals? Note Jesus’ argument here: if they can be described as “gods” (in some sense), is it not much more appropriate to accept his claim to deity?  

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7. Compare John 1:6–9, 15, 19–36 with 10:40–41. Based on what we have seen in this gospel, has everything that John said about Jesus turned out to be true?  

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**Application:** *Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.*

8. What does this passage tell us about Jesus? How does it help us to understand “his place in the sweep of redemptive history”?<sup>2</sup>  

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9. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?  

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10. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?  

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<sup>2</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 102.