



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



# The Holy Gospel According to St. John

## Chapter 10

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# Introduction

- The Lord's discourse on the good shepherd takes place after the healing of the man born blind who had then been banished from the Sanhedrin and who had entered into the Lord's Church
- But some think it was spoken not less than three months after
- Christ, having declared Himself to be the light of the world, which should blind some while it illuminated others, John 9:41, continues His discourse
- And, under the similitude of a shepherd and his flock, shows that He was about to form His Church of Jews and Gentiles, and that into it He would admit none but those who heard His voice



# Introduction

- The Lord reveals the clear difference between the shepherd who cares for his sheep and the hired servants
- In other words, He indicates the difference between the Lord Jesus Christ who yearns to deliver mankind and the Pharisees who are preoccupied with their personal honor, authority and profit
- Their actions showed they had no concern for the spiritual welfare of Israel, but were hirelings who used the sheep for their personal benefit



# Introduction

## Chapter Outline:

- Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6
- Jesus the Good Shepherd 10:7-21
- The Shepherd Knows His Sheep 10:22-30
- Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus 10:31-39
- The Believers Beyond Jordan 10:40-42

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- Jesus had been involved in an ongoing debate or conflict with the Jewish leaders about who He was
- His miracles should have convinced them that His claims were true
- But He had repeatedly stated that they were blind to the truth, because they did not really want to follow God (9:40:41)
- They pursued other motives

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- In this section, John records a lengthy statement by Jesus comparing Himself to a Good Shepherd and the Jewish leaders to thieves or wolves who came to steal His sheep
- Jesus and other Bible writers had often used the sheep/shepherd illustration to teach various truths about the relationship between God and His people
- The best known of these is Psalms 23
- But other examples are found in Psalms 77:20, 79:13, 80:1, 95:7, 100:3; Isaiah 40:11, 53:6; Mark 14:27; Luke 12:32; 15:3-7; John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28-30; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:1-4

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- Jesus began His illustration by contrasting the true shepherd to thieves
- The true shepherd would enter the sheepfold by the door, but one who would try to climb up and enter some other way must be a thief
- The shepherd did not need to use deceit, trickery, or any illegitimate means to get the sheep to follow him or to claim leadership of the sheep
- He had a legitimate right to lead the sheep, so he could come in directly through the door, using honest, upright means to call the sheep to follow him

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- One would resort to dishonest, deceitful methods only because he had no legitimate claim to lead the sheep
- *he who enters by the door*, Observe here the marks, qualities, and duties of a good servant
- With a divine commission, and by a divine authority, who comes not of himself, but is sent
- The good servant does not take the honor to himself, or thrust in himself, and assume an office to himself, but is called unto it

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- St. Augustine wrote of his role as a shepherd of Jesus' flock, “I seek to enter in among you, that is, into your heart, to preach Christ: if I were to preach other than that, I should be trying to enter by some other way. Through Christ I enter in, not to your houses but to your hearts. Through Him I enter and you have willingly heard me speak of Him. Why? Because you are Christ's sheep and you have been purchased with Christ's blood.”

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- There is only one gate and the gate is Christ
- Jesus is both the "gate" and the "gatekeeper"
- “May we not be confused in understanding His words, my brethren. He does carry the symbols of both the door and the doorkeeper. For what does the door indicate? It is the way to enter in. And what does the doorkeeper represent? He is the one who opens the door. Therefore who is the One who opens it other than He Himself in order to be revealed and seen?”  
St. Augustine

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- The good Shepherd does not send his sheep into a field where there are no wolves
- Indeed, He stresses that He sends them ‘in the midst of wolves’, Matthew 10:16
- Therefore, He goes before them to protect them from these wolves
- The Lord has gone before His sheep to the pasture of the Cross and of sufferings so that the sheep would not fear the road leading to Golgotha

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- Therefore, they will not fear death and for as long as they are in the company of the Crucified Lord
- *they know his voice*, There are dangers for the sheep if they do not recognize the shepherd's voice
- The flock or individual sheep can be deceived and led astray, just as those within the Church can be deceived and led astray by following the voice of a false teacher
- Jesus will address the danger of the flock being threatened by false teachers in the next passage

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- Note that the shepherd does not need to drive the sheep, but leads them
- Nor does he need to compel each one to follow; he simply calls
- It is interesting that Jesus said the shepherd calls the sheep *by name*
- There is a personal relationship between the shepherd and the sheep

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- Since there are "thieves" and "robbers/bandits" who may be calling to us, we must know the voice of Christ so that we are not led astray
- To study Sacred Scripture through the teaching authority of the Church and to faithfully receive the Sacraments is the best way to become familiar with our Shepherd's voice
- *they did not understand the things which He spoke to them,* They do not understand and so He patiently tries again in John 10:7-18 by extending the sheep/shepherd metaphor of verses 1-5 into another parable

# Jesus the True Shepherd 10:1-6



- What they did not understand was the spiritual truths underlying these phenomena
- The Pharisees were unable to understand the Lord's words
- They were the ones who claimed to be the teachers of the people
- They claimed they possessed knowledge and did not need to learn anything
- They held in their hands the Word of God, yet they misinterpreted it due to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their inner vision

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- They did not understand; therefore He went through the parable again more explicitly, interpreting the main features
- “When the Lord leads us to the Father, He calls Himself ‘the door’. When He watches over us, He calls Himself ‘the Shepherd’. So that we might not think that His sole mission is to bring us to the Father, He calls Himself ‘the Shepherd’” St. John Chrysostom
- *who ever came before Me are* , Meaning those who came of their own accord, without being sent: not so the prophets, who had their mission from God

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- But our Lord probably refers to the scribes and Pharisees, who have come to challenge His authority and His origins in front of the people and who pretended to show the way of salvation to the people - who in fact clothed themselves with the fleece, and devoured the sheep
- Or He may point to false messiahs who have preceded Him and will come after Him
- But "true Israelites" do not heed the voices of those who oppose Him, John 5:45, 8:42,46-47

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- As the door, Jesus provides the means for the sheep to obtain what they need
- If they enter by Jesus, they can be saved
- This surely refers to forgiveness of sins, which can be obtained only through Jesus, Acts 4:12
- But the door provides access to other blessings too
- The door allows the sheep to go in and out and find pasture – spiritual nourishment

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- He is not just 'a way' among many other ways
- The Lord is the only way that leads us to the embrace of the Father
- In this sense He is the Door and we cannot enter into heaven through any door other than through Him: He is the only Door
- The thief, however, has no interest in providing for the nourishment or well being of the sheep
- He steals the sheep for his own gain, not for the benefit of the sheep

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- He will kill them, destroy them, and harm them
- The description of the thief is opposed to that of the shepherd, who constantly goes in and out and finds pasture
- The thief's visits are but rare, and when he comes it is but for his own selfish purposes, and for the ruin of the flock
- *they may have it more abundantly*, He gives the abundant graces that will flow from Christ to His Church in the Sacraments to enrich the lives of each individual on their journey of salvation and the Church's journey through time to the final hour of mankind

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- The prophets of the Old Testament foresaw the Lord Jesus Christ as the good Shepherd, Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34:23, 37:24; Zechariah 13:7
- The disciples experienced Him as the bishop of our souls, 1 Peter 2:25, as the Chief of the Shepherds, 1 Peter 5:4, and as the Great Shepherd, Hebrews 13:20
- Jesus identifies Himself as the *good shepherd* using the significant words *I AM* for the fourth time

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- He is the Shepherd who is ideally good, fulfilling every thought of guidance, support, self-sacrifice that had ever gathered round the shepherd's name
- No image of Christ has so deeply impressed itself upon the mind of the Church as this has
- We find it in the earliest Christian literature, as in Tertullian (Works, vol. i., p. 371, in Ante-Nicene Library), or Clement of Alexandria (Works, vol. i., pp. 149, 462, A.N. Lib.)

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- We find it in the very earliest efforts of Christian art, in painting, embroidery, and even statuary
- It comes to us naturally in our hymns and prayers
- That self-sacrifice that would lead the shepherd to risk his own life for that of his flock has its ideal fulfillment in Him who is the Good Shepherd, and will give His life for mankind
- The word rendered *gives His life* should be almost certainly lays down His life
- Jesus is speaking of in verse 11 of His death

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- In his Homilies on St. John, St. John Chrysostom writes: "..He is speaking of His passion, making it clear this would take place for the salvation of the world and that He would go to it freely and willingly"
- *hireling*, A man employed to take care of the sheep, to whom wages is paid
- The Lord tells us about careless shepherds
- He calls them 'hirelings' because they serve in return for money or reward and not out of true love for God's people

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- As he does not own the sheep, and guards them merely for pay, rather than risk his life he would leave the flock to the ravages of wild beasts
- The word translated "hireling" is often employed in a good sense; but here it denotes one who is unfaithful to his trust
- The *wolf* is the world and the devil in opposition of the Word of God

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- This is where the difference lies between the shepherd and the hireling: one seeks his safety regardless of the sheep; while the other seeks the well being of the sheep regardless of his own needs
- In the past, Ezekiel reprimanded the (hirelings) and said, *“Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?”* Ezekiel 34:2
- Jesus here repeated that He is the Good Shepherd, and that He will lay down His life for the sheep, in contrast to the hirelings who flee in the face of danger

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- The thought of the Good Shepherd is repeated to show that it expresses the closest communion between the shepherd and the sheep
- *I know My sheep, and am known by My own*, This is the essence of a relationship with Christ
- In the Biblical sense "knowledge" is not simply the conclusion of an intellectual process, but it is the fruit of an experience, a personal encounter

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- “Good shepherding reveals reciprocal love and acquaintance between the shepherd and his flock. The Shepherd knows his flock based on his closeness to them rather than on more regimental knowledge drawn from scholarly books. He relates to his sheep and they relate to Him, and so they become his subjects who are qualified to know Him.” St. Augustine

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- This reciprocal knowledge, *I know My sheep, and am known by My own*, is so sure and profound that it can only be compared to the mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son
- He then applies to Himself what had been stated in general of all good shepherds in John 10:11, *The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep*
- This statement is prompted by His reference to His knowledge of the Father
- He knows it is the Father's will that He should lay down His life, John 10:17-18

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- The Lord then speaks about the other sheep that are from other nations
- These are the sheep that He will gather with those of the house of Israel to form one flock under One Shepherd
- All are invited to enjoy the protection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world
- At the same time, the Lord confirms His all-inclusive plan in order to destroy the haughtiness of the Jews
- They imagined the Messiah would come to them alone, and that they were the unique flock of God

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- The Lord confronted the Pharisees in various ways
- In this passage, He is telling them that they are about to lose their role as shepherds of His people as He Himself will take charge of their needs
- From the very beginning, Jesus intended for people of all nations to follow Him, Ephesians 2:13-18; Acts 10:34,35, 10:1-11:18, 2:38-39; 15; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Galatians 3:28

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- Because Jesus was willing to lay down His life for the sheep, His Father loved Him
- Jesus then plainly stated that, though He knew He was going to die, it would not be because these Jews and His enemies would overpower Him and take His life against His will
- On the contrary, no one could take it from Him if He was determined to stop them
- He could call 12 legions of angels to stop it, Matthew 26:53

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- He had power from the Father to lay down His life and power to take it up again
- Therefore, when He died, He would be dying because His love for His sheep led Him to willingly lay down His own life
- It would be a voluntary sacrifice
- Though others would slay Him, they could not do so if He chose to stop them

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- This makes it a real sacrifice and therefore something for which we too ought to love Him above all others
- *I may take it again* He is here predicting not only His death but also His resurrection from the dead
- “He lay down His life in order to glorify us. However, He possessed the divine authority to lay it down and to take it up too... His goodness is evident here: He voluntarily lays His life down- now you also observe His authority to take it again.”  
St. Ambrose

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- Now again, just as in 7:43, the people were divided over His sayings
- Some thought He had a demon and was insane, so people should not listen to Him, 8:52
- But others thought He could not have a demon, since He had opened the eyes of the blind, 9:29-33,16
- The crowd continues to be divided over who is this man from the Galilee but with each encounter He wins more disciples

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- *These are not the words of one who has a demon, If He was deranged by an unclean spirit, His words would bear a similarity to the spirit that produced them*
- But these are words of deep sense, soberness, and piety, people were wondering!
- Besides, could a demoniac open the eyes of blind men?
- This is not the work of a demon

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

## 10:7-21



- Not a word of impatience proceeds from His lips
- Nor a look of contempt or indignation is seen on His face
- And what was He doing to merit all this? Why?
- He was instructing the ignorant, and telling the wretched that He was just going to die to save their souls!
- Amazing love of God, and ungratefulness and stubbornness of men

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- Further discussion with these unbelieving Jews occurred at the Feast of Dedication
- This was in the winter
- This feast was also called the Feast of Lights (also as Hanukkah) and was instituted by Judas Maccabeus, in commemoration of his purifying the temple after it had been defiled by Antiochus Epiphanies and rededicated it to the service of God

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- Jesus was walking in a porch of the temple called Solomon's porch
- This was not part of the actual temple itself, but was a large covered area in the temple grounds
- Later, the early church often used it as a place for meeting and teaching, Acts 3:11, 5:12
- This demonstrates that it was a large enough area to accommodate very large crowds where everyone could yet hear one who was speaking

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- Jesus Himself had not only said it in plain terms to the Samaritan woman, John 4:26 but He had frequently delivered this truth so openly to them that He came from heaven
- That He was sent into the world that all men should be saved by believing in Him
- That He was the Son of God and One with the Father
- But they easily perceived He made Himself God
- They wanted to have Him to declare it again, that they might accuse Him of rebel and traitor to the Roman authorities

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- They desired to appear as individuals who sought knowledge
- Some commentators find that the question was a true reflection of their inner conflict
- They sensed His holiness- perceived through His deeds; and they recognized His stature
- But they feared for their positions; and their corrupt souls prevented them from accepting Him

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- Here, as in John 8:25, where a similar direct question was put to Him, the answer is indirect
- It could not be otherwise
- Their misconception of the Messianic work had made the very word Messiah an impossible one for Him to utter to them
- To have said He was the Messiah would have been to sanction their thought of Him as a temporal prince
- To have said that He was not would have been to contradict the essential truth

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- He refers them, then, to His earlier words and deeds in proof of what He was
- To inquirers of simpler hearts, as the woman of Samaria and the man born blind, He had used the word Messiah
- To them He had again and again told the same truth, though the actual word had never crossed His lips while speaking to them
- He has told Them that He is the light of the world; the Son of God; the good shepherd; that He has come to save - to give life - to give liberty - to redeem all

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- That, in order to this, He must die, and rise again; and that He is absolute master of His life, and of His death
- As if He was telling them, “Have you not noticed My omniscience, in searching and discovering the very secrets of your hearts? Have you not seen my omnipotence in the miracles which I have wrought? Have not all these been sufficient to convince you? And yet you will not believe!”
- *you are not of My sheep*, By refusing to believe in Him, and to follow His doctrine, by their own willful blindness

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- *My sheep hear My voice, But they will not hear*
- *they follow Me, But they will neither follow nor acknowledge Him*
- Christ here says that His sheep hear His voice, and follow Him: but let us ask ourselves:
- Do we cling close to this heavenly shepherd?
- Do we follow Him, both by our faith and by our lives?
- Do we know Him, and hear His voice?

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- Do we fly from strangers, the world, the flesh, and the devil?
- If so, we are His sheep indeed
- And if we persevere, He will bring us, in spite of the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the pastures of eternal life
- But if we run away from our shepherd, to follow these strangers, we must expect to fall a prey and a victim to wolves
- The word 'perish' is used here to indicate the fearsome eternal destruction

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- The word 'snatch' indicates violent action used against a person
- No one can protect us from such violence except the powerful Hand that holds and shields us
- Jesus provides protection for those who believe in Him and remain faithful
- Notice Jesus says *I give them eternal life* in the present tense; not *I will give*
- The gift is present and continuous!

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- *is greater than all*, More powerful than all the united energies of men and demons
- He who loves God must be happy and he who fears Him need fear nothing
- The Lord Jesus Christ says, *no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand*, in this manner He indicates that His hand and His Father's are one in terms of power and in essence for they are the same
- The Lord does not say 'I and My Father are identical'

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22



- *But I and My Father are one*
- This indicates a union of love and work as well as a union in the essence
- Jesus is claiming unity with God in a way other people do not have
- He is claiming Deity, 8:58, 1:1, 20:28
- The unity of the most Holy Trinity cannot be divided even when we distinguish between the three Divine Persons

# The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

## 10:22-30



- *I and My Father*, the Creator of all things, the Judge of all men, the Father of the spirits of all flesh - are One, One in nature, One in all the attributes of Godhead, and One in all the operations of those attributes: and so it is evident the Jews understood him, John 17
- St. Augustine says, “Listen to the Son himself, 'I and the Father are one.' He did not say, 'I am the Father' or 'I and the Father are one [Person].’ But when he says 'I and the Father are one,' notice the two words 'we are' and 'one'..[.] for if they are one, then they are not diverse; if 'we are', then there is both a Father and a Son.”

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- The Jews, says St. Augustine, understood well enough what the Arians will not understand, that from Christ's words it followed that He was one and the same God with the eternal Father
- The Jews, in opposition to our Savior's doctrine, took up stones to destroy Him, in order that He might preach no more to them
- *took up stones again*, The evangelist adds the word again, because they had attempted to do this before, John 8:59
- But it seems they were prevented from doing this now

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- Jesus responded by calling attention again to His miracles; His good works
- He had done many, and obviously the power had to come from God
- So, He asked which one of them was their justification for stoning Him
- Of course, He knew they were not stoning Him for the miracles, but His intent was to point out that, in determining to stone Him, they were again overlooking His miracles
- No matter how many miracles He did proving He was from God, they were determined to find fault with Him

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- They ignored the evidence and attacked anything that seemed to imply that He was from God
- But if the evidence was valid, then He was from God and there was no grounds to attack Him
- They ought instead to have accepted and followed Him
- So, He called attention to His miracles and asked which of them was grounds for killing Him
- *from My Father*, He intended to confirm that He and the Father work together

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- They responded that it was not His good works that led them to seek to kill Him but the fact He claimed to be God, though He was a man
- But note again that the Jews here recognized Jesus' statement as a claim to Deity
- What irritated them so much was that they understood Him as speaking of a unity of nature
- Therefore they say here, *make Yourself God*; which they understood, not in a figurative, metaphorical, or improper sense, but in the most literal meaning of the term

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- In referring to "the Law" Jesus could be referring to the Old Testament in general or just to the Pentateuch, the first 5 books of Moses as a whole
- Jesus cited a passage in which men were called "gods" – Psalm 82:6
- In this passage, the inspired writer was, apparently, speaking to the judges of Israel calling them gods
- They were representatives of God, acting in God's place for the people

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- So, they are spoken of as gods
- The word does not, of course, here mean that they really possessed Deity
- The Psalmist goes on to say: *‘But you shall die like men and fall like one of the princes’*, Psalm 82:7
- Jesus appealed to this passage in their “law” – that which they themselves accepted as authority

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- He then argued that, if the Scriptures so spoke, how could they object if He Himself claimed to be the Son of God, since He obviously had evidence that God the Father had sent Him into the world?
- *the Scripture cannot be broken*, Jesus is affirming, as He has in past references to Sacred Scripture, that Scripture consists of the very words of God, and its teaching is as true as God Himself and is reliable testimony which cannot be ignored or set aside

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- Whether He is a blasphemer or not depends upon whether He represents God or not, and to prove this He appeals again to the works
- Are they or are they not the works of the Father? John 10:32; John 5:17,36, 14:10
- If the people had trouble believing Jesus' claims, they needed to accept the conclusion proved by His works
- He had to be from God
- There was no other sensible explanation for His miracles

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- They surely had no grounds therefore to kill Him, for His very miracles proved God was working through Him
- The "works" of Jesus are enough to authenticate His mission in the eyes of the people and to support His claims to divinity
- He has show absolute power over creation and that He can suspend the laws of nature
- These works give testimony to His true nature
- To kill Him would be to oppose God
- He expressed His relationship with God by saying the Father was in Him and He in His Father

# Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

## 10:31-39



- This again implies Deity, though not so directly as in verse 30
- They could not reply to His arguments but by stones
- The evidence of the truth could not be resisted; and they endeavored to destroy the person who spoke it
- *He escaped out of their hand*, Nothing is said of the manner, and there is no reason to suppose anything more than, while they were plotting how they might take Him, He passed out of the Temple, John 8:59
- Or, perhaps making Himself invisible, or hindering them by His divine power

# The Believers Beyond Jordan

## 10:40-42



- Perhaps He realized that He had now pushed the conflict as far as it could go without them killing Him, and the time had not yet come for that
- So, He went for a time east of Jordan (beyond Jordan) to the place where, some time earlier, John had been baptizing
- Here the people were more receptive, so He had one final period of safety before returning to Jerusalem for the final confrontation that led to His death

# The Believers Beyond Jordan

## 10:40-42



- John the Baptist's work of preparation is still producing results
- The crowds who accepted his message are now following Jesus
- They believe John's testimony of Him, Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, John 1:34
- They concluded that what he had said about Jesus was true, and they believed in Him
- Note that John did no miracles
- None were ever recorded, and here we are told directly that he did not do them

# The Believers Beyond Jordan

## 10:40-42



- Nevertheless, the people accepted him as a prophet
- *And many believed in Him there*, Because of the testimony of John the Baptist whom they knew to be a good and a wise man, and a prophet of the Lord; and they knew he could neither deceive nor be deceived in this matter
- And because of the miracles which they saw Jesus work
- These fully proved that all that John had said of him was true
- The scribes and Pharisees with all their science could not draw a conclusion so just



# Discussion

- Jesus' followers are referred to as His sheep. What are some positive characteristics of sheep? Some negative characteristics? Can you see any of these positive or negative characteristics in your life?
- How do the sheep respond to the shepherd's voice? To the voice of a stranger? Can you remember a time when you had difficulty telling the difference between the shepherd's voice and the voice of a stranger? How can we learn the difference?

# Discussion



- If in this metaphor the Jewish religious authorities are the “robbers,” what are they stealing? What does the Good Shepherd bring that they cannot or will not offer?
- What does it mean when Jesus says, *I am the gate for the sheep*?
- Jesus states that He is the Good Shepherd. What are some of the characteristics of the Good Shepherd?
- What is a hireling, and how would one act differently from the good shepherd?

# Discussion



- According to Jesus, why did the Jews not believe in Him?
- Describe the protection Jesus and His Father give the sheep.
- Why do the Jews want to stone Jesus? In what ways can we today "stone" Jesus?
- Why does Jesus say they should believe Him (verses 37-38)?
- Verse 42 says that many believed in Jesus. What convinced you to believe in Jesus?