

Summary 9:1-10:21

Following closely on the heels of what came before, this next segment occurs sometime between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Dedication (cf. 10:22). And while it is clear that Jesus departed the Temple, he did not leave Jerusalem; after all, the pool where the blind man washed is within the city walls. In fact, it is less than half a mile (as the crow flies) from the steps of the Temple Mount.¹ Jesus continues his Father's work right underneath the noses of his adversaries.

Themes such as Jesus' subservience to God, his authority to heal on the sabbath, and the difference between genuine faith and superficial faith are as much on display here as they were in the preceding chapters. What is curious, however, is how the healing of a blind man provides the backdrop for two more "I am" statements, as Jesus not only says, "I am the door of the sheep," but also, "I am the good shepherd" (cf. 6:35; 8:12).

What's more, it seems that two distinct contrasts are being made in this subsection of John's account. First, he wants us to compare a blind person given sight with a group of people who, though possessed of eyes that see, are still clearly "blind" in another way. Although it is often said, "seeing is believing," John shows us that, in reality, "believing is seeing." Unsurprisingly, terms that refer to eyesight, or the lack thereof, appear nearly thirty times throughout this narrative. The point is that God gives sight—spiritual illumination—only to those who believe in his Son, and, in doing so, only believers see the world as it truly is (cf. 8:12). Anyone who claims to "see" but insists on denying Christ has proven that they can "see" about as well as someone born blind.

But not only is there a massive disparity between the spiritually blind and those who can actually "see," but the beloved disciple also insists that we notice the discrepancy between the bad shepherds of Israel and the Good Shepherd of Heaven. After the events with the blind man, Jesus immediately dives right into the famous "I am the good shepherd" discourse. In doing so, the Son of God is pitting himself against the rulers of Israel. Unlike how the Pharisees readily cast out so-called "sinners," Jesus actively seeks out the outcast and welcomes them into his fold. So, in juxtaposing the two types of shepherds, the Lord will show that he cares deeply for the sheep in a way that no one else has. Indeed, he'll go so far as to lay down his own life for them. Far from being good shepherds, the religious leaders at this time were more like hired hands who would flee at the first sign of danger. They've abandoned their post and

¹ *The CSB Holy Land Illustrated Bible*, (Nashville, TN; Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), p. 1510.

exposed the sheep to ravenous wolves time and time again. As caretakers who've been tasked with protecting God's people, they've utterly failed at their job. And so, not willing to standby and allow his own flock to be mistreated, God sends his own Son to clean up the mess left behind by these faithless under-shepherds.

So great is this new Shepherd that Jesus will not only get the fold of Israel in order, but he will also start incorporating different "sheep" from other folds. Further still, so all-inclusive is this Good Shepherd in his mission that, eventually, there will be only one flock. And admittance into this new flock will not be based on one's birth but on one's belief in Jesus Christ.

VIDEO DESCRIPTION

Wednesday Night Live | John | Week 11

Text: John 9:1-10:21

Leaving behind the Feast of Tabernacles, we begin heading toward the Feast of Dedication. But, before we arrive at our destination, John has a pleasant detour planned for us. In this passage, we'll read about a man who, though born blind, will receive his sight in more than one way. He'll not only be able to see literally, but he will also have an insight that is unparalleled by even the most well-educated of his day.

Sadly, rather than marvel at the miracle, the Jews question, mock, and eventually cast out the once-blind-man from his own community. The powers that be cannot abide by the light of truth. They love their darkness far too much. They would choose to remain blind even though the gift of sight is well within their grasp. As such, what we have recorded here is the first instance of a Jesus-follower being persecuted for their beliefs. And though he's dumped by his own religion, his own neighbors, and even his own family, Jesus—the Good Shepherd—actively seeks him out and welcomes him into the great flock that he might graze in God's pasture forever. Religious folk may abandon their own, but God never does.

Pastor's manuscript can be found [here](#):