

As you read...

In John 9, Jesus performs His sixth miracle by healing a man born blind. After the man was healed, many people in the town notice how this man that they've known for so long can now see and spread the news about this miracle to the Pharisees. As you might imagine, they are not very happy with Jesus for once again bringing so much attention to himself. When they confront Him, Jesus points out their own spiritual blindness. They claim to see clearly yet they don't see plainly the work that God is doing through Jesus.

As chapter ten begins, Jesus continues this same conversation with the Pharisees. As He does, He uses a pastoral illustration—that is, an illustration about shepherding—to make a point about His own purpose and relationship with God's people to the Pharisees.

He does this in two ways.

First, He describes Himself as the gate for the sheep pen. I would imagine this seems like an odd illustration. Jesus shares this to show to the Pharisees and those who are listening that He is not a thief but a caretaker for the sheep of Israel. Those who believe in Him will not perish but will enter into eternal life, like sheep through a gate. Jesus makes it clear what His purpose in this world is. He says, "I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance."

Second, Jesus describes Himself as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life so that the sheep may have it. As a shepherd He both

gives life and protects it. It's a truly incredible image for us to take with us into each new day.

As you read, consider the implications of what Jesus is saying for your own life. What does it mean that you have a shepherd who lays down His life for you? What does it mean to have a savior who has come so that you might have *life*?

Read [John 10:1-42](#)

### ***The Good Shepherd***

**10** *“Truly I tell you, anyone who doesn’t enter the sheep pen by the gate but climbs in some other way is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought all his own outside, he goes ahead of them. The sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> They will never follow a stranger; instead they will run away from him, because they don’t know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup> Jesus gave them this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.*

<sup>7</sup> *Jesus said again, “Truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep didn’t listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the gate. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find*

pasture. <sup>10</sup> A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have *life* and have it in abundance.

<sup>11</sup> “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his *life* for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> The hired hand, since he is not the shepherd and doesn’t own the sheep, leaves them and runs away when he sees a wolf coming. The wolf then snatches and scatters them. <sup>13</sup> This happens because he is a hired hand and doesn’t care about the sheep.

<sup>14</sup> “I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. I lay down my *life* for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> But I have other sheep that are not from this sheep pen; I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. Then there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup> This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my *life* so that I may take it up again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

<sup>19</sup> Again the Jews were divided because of these words. <sup>20</sup> Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and he’s crazy. Why do you listen to him?” <sup>21</sup> Others were saying, “These aren’t the words of someone who is demon-possessed. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

## **Jesus at the Festival of Dedication**

<sup>22</sup> Then the Festival of Dedication took place in Jerusalem, and it was winter. <sup>23</sup> Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's Colonnade. <sup>24</sup> The Jews surrounded him and asked, "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

<sup>25</sup> "I did tell you and you don't believe," Jesus answered them. "The works that I do in my Father's name testify about me. <sup>26</sup> But you don't believe because you are not of my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal **life**, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one."

### **Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus**

<sup>31</sup> Again the Jews picked up rocks to stone him.

<sup>32</sup> Jesus replied, "I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these works are you stoning me?"

<sup>33</sup> "We aren't stoning you for a good work," the Jews answered, "but for blasphemy, because you—being a man—make yourself God."

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Isn't it written in your law, **I said, you are gods?** <sup>35</sup> If he called those to whom the word of God came 'gods'—and the Scripture cannot be broken— <sup>36</sup> do you say, 'You are blaspheming' to the one the Father set apart and sent into

*the world, because I said: I am the Son of God? <sup>37</sup> If I am not doing my Father's works, don't believe me. <sup>38</sup> But if I am doing them and you don't believe me, believe the works. This way you will know and understand that the Father is in me and I in the Father." <sup>39</sup> Then they were trying again to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.*

### ***Many beyond the Jordan Believe in Jesus***

*<sup>40</sup> So he departed again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing earlier, and he remained there. <sup>41</sup> Many came to him and said, "John never did a sign, but everything John said about this man was true." <sup>42</sup> And many believed in him there.*

## Questions

1. As you read you were asked to consider what it meant for you to have a shepherd. Which of Jesus' words help you most to see and understand what it means to have a shepherd?
2. In John 10:10, we find the words for the theme of this Bible Reading Plan. From what Jesus says, what do you think it means that He came so that "they may have life"?
3. We've talked a lot about life and in the question above you were asked to consider what it means to have life. Now I'd like you to consider your own life. On a scale of one to ten, ten

being confident and 1 being completely doubting, how confident are you in the statement: “I have life in Jesus”?

Think about why you answered with the number that you gave and then talk about your answer with a trusted parent, mentor, or friend today. Ask them the same question and then compare answers to the question “Why did I give that number?”

A moment to pray.

Good Shepherd, thank You for guiding me today in Your Word. You laid down Your life for me even though I did not deserve it. When I wander away, You find me and take care of me. I am truly grateful for all that You have provided to me. Continue to guide my steps and give me courage to continue to grow as I talk with others about today. In Your name. Amen.