

**John 10:22-42**  
**September 14, 2025**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

Q: How would you help a person who has trusted Christ for salvation, but expresses uncertainty about being truly saved? [Let people engage]

**Transition:** Sometimes people will say “I’ve made mistakes. I have regrets.” Or, “I raised my son in the church, he made a profession of faith and was baptized, but he’s not walking with the Lord.” Or, “He’s gotten into drugs and he’s living with someone. God is just not a part of his life.” The Bible teaches very plainly that you can know for sure that “once-saved-always-saved.” You can know for sure that your eternal destiny is secure!

And today’s text is one of the Bible’s best texts that anchors us in the doctrine of eternal security. Let’s listen to Jesus and the promise he gives believers.

**BOOK:**

***The Unbelief of the Jews***

**10** <sup>22</sup> Then came the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) at Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. <sup>24</sup> The Jews gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”

<sup>31</sup> Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, <sup>32</sup> but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?”

<sup>33</sup> “We are not stoning you for any of these,” replied the Jews, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are gods’ (Ps 82:6)? <sup>35</sup> If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken—<sup>36</sup> what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’? <sup>37</sup> Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. <sup>38</sup> But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.” <sup>39</sup> Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

<sup>40</sup> Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here he stayed <sup>41</sup> and many people came to him. They said, “Though John never performed

a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man was true.”<sup>42</sup> And in that place, many believed in Jesus.

**Process Observations/Questions:**

Q: What stood out to you? What questions do you have? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about man? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit? [Let people engage]

Q: What is your takeaway? [Let people engage]

**LOOK:**

Have you responded personally to our Lord’s three great declarations recorded in this chapter? He is the Door. Have you “entered in” by faith so that you are saved? He is the Good Shepherd. Have you heard His voice and trusted Him? After all, He laid down His life for you!

He is the Son of God. Do you believe that? If yes, you can be ASSURED that you have eternal life!

**Close in Prayer**

## **Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

***Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). The Bible Exposition Commentary (Vol. 1, pp. 331-333). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.***

### **“I Am the Son of God” (John 10:22–42)**

The events in this section occurred about two and a half months after those described in John 10:1–21. John put them together because in both messages, Jesus used the imagery of the shepherd and the sheep.

**The encounter (vv. 22–24).** The “Feast of the Dedication” (Hanukkah, “the feast of lights”) takes place in December, near the time of the Christian Christmas celebration. The feast commemorates the rededication of the temple by Judas Maccabeus in 164 b.c., after it had been desecrated by the Romans. This historical fact may bear a relationship to the words of Jesus in John 10:36, for He had been set apart (dedicated) by the Father and sent into the world. The Jewish leaders were celebrating a great event in history yet passing by a great opportunity right in their own temple!

The leaders surrounded Jesus in the temple so that He had to stop and listen to them. They had decided that it was time for a “showdown” and they did not want Him to evade the issue any longer. “How long are You going to hold us in suspense?” they kept saying to Him. “Tell us plainly—are You the Messiah?”

**The explanation (vv. 25–42).** Jesus reminded them of what He had already taught them. He emphasized the witness of His words (“I told you”) and His works (see John 5:17ff, and 7:14ff for similar replies).

But our Lord went much deeper in His explanation this time, for He revealed to the Jewish leaders why they did not understand His words or grasp the significance of His works: they were not His sheep. From the human standpoint, we become His sheep by believing; but from the divine standpoint, we believe because we are His sheep. There is a mystery here that we cannot fathom or explain, but we can accept it and rejoice (Rom. 11:33–36). God has His sheep, and He knows who they are. They will hear His voice and respond.

The lost sinner who hears God’s Word knows nothing about divine election. He hears only that Christ died for the sins of the world, and that he may receive the gift of eternal life by trusting the Savior. When He trusts the Savior, he becomes a member of God’s family and a sheep in the flock. Then he learns that he was “chosen . . . in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). He also learns that each saved sinner is the Father’s “love gift” to His Son (see John 10:29; 17:2, 6, 9, 11–12, 24).

In the Bible, divine election and human responsibility are perfectly balanced; and what God has joined together, we must not put asunder.

Jesus went on to explain that His sheep are secure in His hand and in the Father’s hand. “They shall never perish” is His promise (John 3:16; 6:39; 17:12; 18:9). The false shepherds bring

destruction (John 10:10, same Greek word); but the Good Shepherd sees to it that His sheep shall never perish.

The security of God's sheep is assured here in several ways. First, by definition—we have “eternal life,” and that cannot be conditional and still be eternal. Second, this life is a gift, not something that we earn or merit. If we were not saved by our own good works, but by His grace, then we cannot be lost by our “bad works” (Rom. 11:6). But most important, Jesus gave us His promise that His sheep do not perish, and that His promise cannot be broken.

It is important to keep in mind that Jesus was talking about sheep—true believers—and not counterfeits. The dog and the pig will go back into sin (2 Peter 2:20–22); but the sheep, being a clean animal, will follow the Shepherd into the green pastures. The false professor will talk about his faith and even his works, but he will never make it into heaven (Matt. 7:13–29). Most of us know people who professed to be saved and then went back into sin, but their doing so only proved that they never really trusted Christ to begin with. Jesus did not promise security to anyone but His true sheep.

As you review our Lord's teaching about His ministry as the Good Shepherd, you note that He has a threefold relationship to His sheep. He has a loving relationship because He died for the sheep, as well as a living relationship because He cares for the sheep. It is also a lasting relationship, for He keeps His sheep and not a one is lost.

Our Lord made a statement that He knew would startle His enemies and give them more reason to oppose Him (John 10:30). It was the “plain answer” that the religious leaders had asked for. “I and My Father are One” is as clear a statement of His deity as you will find anywhere in Scripture. This was even stronger than His statement that He had come down from heaven (John 6) or that He existed before Abraham ever lived (John 8:58).

The word One does not suggest that the Father and the Son are identical persons. Rather, it means that they are one in essence: the Father is God and the Son is God, but the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father. He is speaking about unity, not identity. (See John 17:21–24 for similar language.)

The Jewish leaders understood clearly what He was saying! Some modern liberal theologians would water down our Lord's statement, but the people who heard it knew exactly what He was saying: “I am God!” (note John 10:33.) To speak this way, of course, was blasphemy; and according to Jewish belief, blasphemy had to be punished by being put to death (see Lev. 24:16; Num. 15:30ff; Deut. 21:22).

Our Lord used Psalm 82:6 to refute their accusation and halt their actions. The picture in Psalm 82 is that of a court, where God has assembled the judges of the earth, to warn them that they too will one day be judged. The Hebrew word Elohim can be translated as “god” or as “judges,” as in Exodus 21:6 and 22:8–9. It is also one of the Old Testament names for God. The Jewish rulers certainly knew their own language and they knew that Jesus was speaking the truth. If God called human judges “gods,” then why should they stone Him for applying the same title to Himself?

John 10:36 is crucial because it gives a double affirmation of the deity of Christ. First, the Father sanctified (set apart) the Son and sent Him into the world, and second, Jesus stated boldly, “I am the Son of God” (see John 5:25). He gave them the “plain answer” they asked for, but they would not believe it!

Could they have believed? Jesus invited them, urged them, to believe, if only on the basis of His miracles (John 10:37–38). If they would believe the miracles, then they would know the Father, and that would open the way for them to know the Son and believe on Him. It was simply a matter of examining the evidence honestly and being willing to accept the truth.

Once again, they tried to arrest Him (see John 7:44; 8:59), but He escaped and left the area completely. He did not return to Jerusalem until “Palm Sunday,” when He presented Himself as Israel’s King.

John the Baptist had ministered at Bethabara (John 1:28), but we are not sure where this was. It was on the other side of the Jordan River, perhaps eighteen to twenty miles from Jerusalem. Some maps put it almost directly across from Jerusalem, just east of Jericho.

Why did Jesus go there? For one thing, it was a safe retreat; the Jewish religious leaders were not likely to follow Him there. Also, it was a good place to prepare for His final week of public ministry when He would lay down His life for the sheep. As He remembered His own baptism by John, and all that He had experienced at that time (Matt. 3:13–17; John 1:20–34), it must have fortified Him for the suffering that He knew He must endure.

The common people continued to seek Jesus, and He continued to minister to them. It is worth noting that John the Baptist’s witness was still bearing fruit long after he was dead! His witness to Jesus Christ led many to trust the Savior. John was not a miracle worker, but he was a faithful witness who pointed to Jesus Christ. “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

Have you responded personally to our Lord’s three great declarations recorded in this chapter? He is the Door. Have you “entered in” by faith so that you are saved? He is the Good Shepherd. Have you heard His voice and trusted Him? After all, He laid down His life for you!

He is the Son of God. Do you believe that? Have you given yourself to Him and received eternal life? Remember His stern warning: “If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24).

**Blum, E. A. (1985). *John*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 311-312) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books**

#### **4. The final public teaching (10:22–42)**

John then recorded a final confrontation of Jesus with the hostile Jerusalem crowd (vv. 22–39), followed by His withdrawal beyond Jordan (vv. 40–42) because of attempts to kill Him.

10:22–23. **The Feast of Dedication** is nowadays called Hanukkah or the Feast of Lights. It commemorates the reconsecration of the temple by Judas Maccabeus in 165 b.c. after its desecration in 168 b.c. by Antiochus IV (Epiphanes). The time for the eight-day feast was in December. **It was winter**. The feast reminded the Jewish people of their last great deliverance from their enemies. **Solomon’s Colonnade** was a long-covered walkway on the east side of **the temple**. Two months had elapsed since Jesus’ last confrontation with the Jews (7:1–10:21) at the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2), which was in October. Jesus again returned to the temple **area**.

10:24. **The Jews gathered around Him**. Actually they “closed in (*ekyklōsan*) on Him.” The hostile Jerusalem leaders were determined to pin Him down, so they surrounded Him. His enigmatic sayings plagued them, and they wanted Him to declare Himself on their terms. **How long will You keep us in suspense?** they asked. “Keep us in suspense” is literally “hold up our soul.” They insisted, **If You are the Christ, tell us plainly**.

10:25–26. Jesus responded that **the miracles** (lit., “works”; cf. vv. 32, 38) He had done are clear evidence that He is from the Father (cf. Isa. 35:3–6; John 3:2; 9:32–33). He is the One the Father sent, but He did not match their expectations. He was no Judas Maccabeus nor would His ministry be like Moses’. Their problem was a lack of spiritual perception and faith. **But you do not believe because you are not My sheep** is a simple statement of fact about their conduct. It also reminds one of the ultimate mystery of God’s election (cf. 6:37).

10:27. Jesus’ flock is responsive to His teaching. They **listen to His voice** (vv. 3–5, 16). They have an intimacy with Jesus (**I know them**; cf. vv. 3, 14), they understand His message of salvation, **and they follow Him** (vv. 4–5). To follow Him means to obey the Father’s will as Jesus did.

10:28. This is one of the clearest statements in the Bible that one who believes in Jesus for salvation will never be lost. Believers sin and stumble, but Jesus as the perfect Shepherd loses none of His flock (cf. Luke 22:31–32). **Eternal life** is a gift (John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 10:10; Rom. 6:23). If one has it, he has it eternally. **They shall never perish** is a strong affirmation in the Greek: *ou mē apolōntai eis ton aiōna* (“they will indeed not ever perish”; cf. John 3:16, *mē apolētai*, “never perish”). The security of the sheep is found in the ability of the Shepherd to defend and preserve His flock. Such security does not depend on the ability of the frail sheep. **No one can** even **snatch His sheep out of His hand**. “Snatch” is *harpasei*, related to *harpax* (“ravenous wolves, robbers”). This is a fitting word here for the same verb (*harpazei*) is used in 10:12, “the wolf attacks” (lit., “snatches away”).

10:29. **My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all**. That is, **no one** is strong enough to **snatch** any of Jesus’ flock from the **Father’s hand** (or from Jesus’ hand, v. 28). As the NIV margin states, verse 29a in many early Greek manuscripts reads, “What My Father has given Me is greater than all.” The thought of the verse in either case is that the Father who is omnipotent secures the flock by His power and protection. God’s plan of salvation for Jesus’ flock cannot be aborted.

10:30. When Jesus said, **I and the Father are One**, He was not affirming that He and the Father are the same Person. The Son and the Father are two Persons in the Trinity. This is confirmed

here by the fact that the word “One” is neuter. Instead, He was saying They have the closest possible unity of purpose. Jesus’ will is identical to the Father’s regarding the salvation of His sheep. And yet absolute identity of wills involves identity of nature. Jesus and the Father are One in will (and also in nature for both are God; cf. 20:28; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9).

10:31–32. The hostile crowd reacted and attempted **to stone** Jesus (cf. 8:59) because they understood the implications of His claim. Jesus’ courage was displayed in His calm question: **Which of His many great miracles** (lit., “works”; cf. 10:25, 38) **from the Father** was their reason for wanting to **stone** Him?

10:33. They claimed that they found no objection in His works. (Yet His healings on the Sabbath had angered them [5:18; 9:16].) They said they objected **because He, a mere man, claimed to be God**. This, they said, was **blasphemy**. And yet, ironically, Jesus, who *is* God, did become Man (1:1, 14, 18). Jesus did not walk around Palestine saying “I am God,” but His interpretation of the Sabbath and His words about His union with the Father revealed His claim of oneness in nature with God.

10:34. Jesus’ response to their objection requires a bit of insight into the methods of argument common in Rabbinic discussions. He first directed them to the Old Testament: **in your Law**. Normally “the Law” refers to the first five books. But here it means all the Old Testament, for Jesus quoted from the Psalms. It was “your” Law in the sense that they gloried in their possession of it, and also in the sense that they should submit to its authority over them. Psalm 82 speaks of God as the true Judge (Ps. 82:1, 8) and of men, appointed as judges, who were failing to provide true judgment for God (Ps. 82:2–7). “Gods” in Psalm 82:1, 6 refers to these human judges. In this sense, God **said** to the Jews, **You are gods**. In no way does this speak of a divine nature in man.

10:35. As seen in verse 34, Jesus argued that in certain situations (as in Ps. 82:1, 6) men were called ... “gods.” The Hebrew word for **God** or gods is *Elohim*. This word is used elsewhere (e.g., Ex. 21:6; 22:8) to mean human judges. Jesus added to His argument the words, **and the Scripture cannot be broken**, so that no one could evade its force by saying an error was in the Scriptures. This important text clearly points up the inerrancy of the Bible.

10:36. Jesus now completed His argument. Since the inerrant Bible called their judges “gods,” the Jews could not logically **accuse Him of blasphemy** for calling Himself **God’s Son** since He was under divine orders (**set apart**) and on God’s mission (**sent into the world**).

10:37–38. Though the Jews were reluctant to **believe** Jesus’ words, God was giving them **miracles** (lit., “works”; cf. vv. 25, 32), which he was doing through Jesus. These signs were given for their learning so that by pondering their significance they might recognize Jesus’ oneness with the **Father (the Father is in Me, and I in the Father)**. Nicodemus had recognized this for he said, “No one could perform [those] miraculous signs ... if God were not with Him” (3:2).

10:39. **Again** an attempt was made **to seize** (from *piazō*) **Him** (cf. 7:30, 32, 44; 8:20), perhaps to bring Him to trial. Once again, since it was not God's time, **He escaped** (cf. 5:13; 8:59; 12:36). No explanation is given as to how He escaped.

10:40–42. Because of their hostility, **Jesus went ... across the Jordan to Perea**, which had been the location of **John** the Baptist's activity (1:28). Jesus' ministry here was received much more favorably, probably because the Baptist had prepared the people there. **John**, even though dead, was still having influence in people's lives as they remembered his witness. **Though John never performed a miraculous sign** (*sēmeion*), the people **believed** his witness **about** Jesus. By contrast, the hostile Jerusalem crowd had seen His signs and yet disobeyed. In Perea **many** trusted **Jesus** as Savior.

**White, J. E. (1998). *John*. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Holman Concise Bible Commentary* (p. 478). Broadman & Holman Publishers.**

### **One with the Father (10:22–42)**

The Feast of Dedication was the celebration of the dedication and subsequent reopening of the temple by Judas Maccabeus in December of 165 b.c., after it had been desecrated by the Syrian ruler Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 b.c. (see Dan. 11:31). This event is commonly referred to as “Hanukkah” or “The Feast of Lights.”

Jesus stated that His sheep are given eternal life and that no one can “snatch them out of my hand.” When a person comes to Christ as Savior and Lord, nothing can remove that person from the state of salvation against their will. If one is truly saved, then that person can rest assured that they are held in the hand of God, protected from any assault to their state of redemption. Jesus also declared that “I and the Father are one.” Jesus and God are not, according to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, identical persons but separate persons who are of identical nature.

At this the Jews picked up stones to kill Him, for it was blasphemy for a man to claim to be God (10:33). Jesus responded to their anger by pointing back to the Old Testament where, in accord with the worldview of the ancient Near East, rulers and judges, as emissaries of the heavenly King, could be granted the honorary title “god” (Ps. 82). If they could be culturally comfortable with that title for those to whom the Word of God came, why did they rebel against the idea that the Messiah would be God's Son? And if this does not make sense, Jesus argued, then simply look at my life and the miracles performed. This did not persuade the Jews, and again they tried to seize Jesus for execution.

**The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). John 10:22-42. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.**