

Grangetown Baptist Church; Gospel of John Bible Study; John 5-10
Part 2 of 4

Background of the passage:

This section of John's Gospel begins the shift from reservation and hesitation about Jesus as Messiah (3:26; 4:1–3) to outright rejection. The opposition begins with the controversy regarding Jesus' healing of the paralytic man on the Sabbath (5:1–18).

Following this miracle (5:1–15), Jesus confronts the Jews' religious hypocrisy with clear statements about His deity (5:17–47). For the first time, John reveals the murderous intent of the Jewish leaders (5:16, 18).

In chapter six, John records Christ's feeding of the five thousand. This is the fourth "sign" in John's Gospel, and the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. Not only does this miracle display and demonstrate Christ's power and deity, but it also sets the stage for Jesus' controversial discourse about being the "bread of life."

The broad opposition to Christ intensifies in chapter 6, with many of His disciples abandoning Him.

Think about it: In John 6 what was the reaction of the masses to Christ's feeding of the five thousand? In what ways is this still a common response to Jesus?

Think about it: What do chapters 5-6 indicate will happen to those who refuse to believe in Christ as God's Messiah? How does this (or how should this) affect your actions?

The main thrust of this section of John's Gospel can be summarized as high-intensity hatred, since the smoldering dislike of Christ in chapters 5 and 6 had erupted into a blazing inferno.

Chapters 7 and 8 focus on Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. The two major themes associated with Tabernacles (water and light) come to prominence in this section. The central truth that dominates this entire passage is that Jesus was on a divine timetable. He lived according to God's sovereign and perfect timing and direction.

Chapter 9 features the healing of the man with congenital blindness. Not only does this "sign" point again to the fact that Jesus is Messiah/Son of God, but it also underlines the blindness of the hyper-religious Jews due to their callous unbelief.

As in few other Bible passages, the characteristics of unbelief are seen clearly here:

- 1) unbelief sets false standards
- 2) unbelief always wants more evidence but never has enough
- 3) unbelief does biased research on a purely subjective basis
- 4) unbelief rejects obvious facts
- 5) unbelief is self-centered.

Think about it: What was the crowd's response to Christ's teaching (7:14–19)? What did Jesus say about His own teaching?

Think about it: Jesus claimed to be the Good Shepherd. What does that mean? How should this truth make a practical and tangible difference in your life this week?

Think about it: What does the story of the adulterous woman (8:1–11) reveal about Christ? about forgiveness and grace? about pride? about repentance?

Chapter 10 (Jesus' discourse on being the Good Shepherd) flows directly from chapter 9. Christ addressed the same group of people, those false shepherds who were leading the nation astray from the true knowledge and kingdom of Messiah. In contrast to these self-appointed and self-righteous impostors, the sinless Christ had been appointed by God the Father as Savior and King.

Think about it: As the self-proclaimed "light of the world," Jesus speaks blunt truth to the darkened hearts of sinful people. The only question is, will we hear and obey? Or, like the Pharisees, will we resist and reject the hard truth of God? In what area(s) of your life do you sense the Lord speaking uncomfortable words to you? What will you do?
