

## Seeking the Genuine Shepherd

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**Introduction:** Our God wants us *to seek and determine* what is genuine (true).

A. God's plan is for genuine hearts to *seek His light*. (Jn 8:12, 26, 31-32)

1. Conflict, confusion, seeking and reasoning is part of God's plan *to open and change hearts*.
2. The ministry of Christ is filled with challenges that *many ran away from* but a few sought and found the truth.
3. *As long as we live* we are to continue in this process of honestly and humbly seeking God's way. Consider the examples in Heb 11! (Heb 11:6, Rom 12:2)

B. Let us examine a series of events surrounding Jesus teaching in the temple.

1. In these examples we can see Jesus *intentionally provoking conflict* in order to open hearts. This becomes a clear demonstration of what and who is true!
2. A genuine faith comes and is maintained by those who seek the light!

### I. Jesus worked a miracle that refuted a false doctrine

A. Jesus worked a miracle *that was irrefutable*. (Jn 9:4-7)

1. How does a miracle provide light?
2. Imagine the facial features of a man born blind and who lived for several years.
3. Imagine the shock of those who daily saw this man begging.
4. The Pharisees *rightly investigated the event* in detail. (Jn 9:8, 9, 13, 18-20)
5. This miracle was shocking and could open many hardened hearts. The most talented debater had to admit *helplessness in trying to refute this!* (Acts 4:16-17)
6. How can darkness overcome light? You must force people to close their eyes!

B. Jesus worked this irrefutable miracle *on the Sabbath*. (Jn 9:14-16)

1. An *honest heart* can discover when he has been in error. Light is welcomed!
2. Consider how this miracle *forced men to think*. The Pharisees insisted that a miracle cannot be performed on the Sabbath.
3. Think about the *absurdity of this!* Has any Pharisee ever performed a miracle??
4. The formerly blind man can win any debate with these men and *they knew it*. Instead of debating they changed the subject. (Jn 9:16-17; 24-25, 27-28, 29-34)
5. There is a distinct difference between *an honest heart and a corrupt one*.

C. Jesus wanted men *to reason and debate doctrine*. (Jn 7:16-17)

1. *He openly gave reasons* why the Pharisees were wrong about this and many other things. (Lk 13:14-17; 14:3-6)
2. *In conflict the genuine heart can be seen!* How many churches are really open to an open examination of their teachings? Creeds can close hearts! (Mt 15:8-9)
3. We can easily go down these paths! Do we seek the easy way out?
4. Consider *the blessings and changes* that came to the healed man. This man became a threat to others because he found the truth. (Jn 9:35-38)

## **II. Jesus wanted men to come under a genuine shepherd**

- A. Directly after this event Jesus pleaded with men to seek a true shepherd. (Jn 10:1-10)
1. It is a common event for men to be captured by men falsely speaking for God.
  2. Do you express loyalty to a denomination? Do you say you will never change?
  3. A religion of ease will lead you to men who will take advantage of you. Are you seeking the truth or worldly ease? Satan can provide the latter! (2 Tim 4:2-4)
  4. Please fight to make faith your own. Less teaching and watered down teaching is not the path for the genuine seeker. (Acts 17:11)
  5. "Ask your preacher" is a path that may bring trouble.
- B. Consider the false shepherds in the Old Testament.
1. God allowed Ezekiel to see the hearts and the actions of the elders of Israel. (Ezk 8:1, 7-12)
  2. While we cannot see into the hearts of men we can see their actions and attitudes. Consider how these elders reacted to God's prophets!
  3. When men seek worldliness they will have a following. The flock will not be prepared for spiritual challenges. (Isa 56:10-11; Jer 10:21; Ezk 34:7-8)
  4. Consider the stand and teaching that you give your children!
- C. Jesus let the people see the difference between Him and their shepherds.
1. They saw their leadership deny a miracle and then seek to manipulate their followers with fear. You cannot be open and honest with them! (Jn 9:20-22)
  2. They saw leaders that lashed out with outrageous charges when others did not bow down to their doctrinal positions.
  3. When you have a leadership of fear and intimidation you will find yourself entering the "world of throw-away people." Consider the man's parents.
  4. When one comes to know Jesus then this is the only voice you will trust. (Jn 10:3-5)
  5. Do we know who to trust?

## **III. The blessings of having Jesus as our shepherd**

- A. You will never doubt that your real needs will be met. (Ps 23:1-6)
1. When you find that shepherd you will find that distinctive path.
  2. While dangers will come you know that He will fight for you! (Jn 10:11-14)
  3. The stress and worry of the world can be removed.
- B. Can we place the highest priority and commitment to seeking this shepherd?
1. Consider the simple but profound change that will come upon us. (Mt 11:28-30)
  2. There is only one door and one shepherd. It is worth giving up all for His care. (Jn 10:10)
  3. The miracle and actions of Jesus caused a division among the people. Do not be afraid to join the genuine few who follow the true shepherd! (Jn 10:19-21)

**Conclusion:** The great Shepherd awaits our daily decision to follow Him.