



What Only Jesus Could and Can Do **John 10:11-21**

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father (John 10:17-18—KJV).

For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father (John 10:17-18—NASB).

For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father (John 10:17-18—NRSV).

A shepherd would risk his life and sometimes lose it to defend his sheep. As the Good Shepherd, when Jesus came into the world, He knew that He would die to save His sheep—all those who would receive Him as Lord and Savior and enter His sheepfold. Only by God's Son dying on the cross as a voluntary sacrifice for the sins of God's children could God be both just and merciful to forgive them for their sins and prepare them for eternal life with God and all who love God and one another. Jesus knew what His Father expected of Him and what He had agreed to do before He was born in human flesh. When Jesus obeyed His Father's command, Jesus fulfilled their agreement and sealed the new covenant between God and His people in His own shed blood. As the Son of God, Jesus did what no mere human could do. Jesus chose His way of death and His moment of death, not by suicide, but at the hands of sinful men in fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Then Jesus chose His way to live again in a glorified human body that could pass through walls and appear to His disciples in a room or on a road. Jesus did and continues to do all God promised, so we can safely entrust our future into Jesus' loving care.

Thinking Further

1. What is the difference between the good shepherd and the hired hand?
2. How did Jesus describe His relationship with His sheep and His Father? What might He mean by this description?
3. What did Jesus say He was willing to do for His sheep? Did He do this for His sheep?
4. In addition to the people He was talking to, who might the other sheep be that Jesus wanted to bring into His sheepfold?
5. Why might it have been important for Jesus to teach that His Father had commanded Him to use His own power when He laid down His life in death and when He took it up again in rising from the dead?