JESUS TAUGHT: "I AM THE SON OF GOD"

I just want to introduce one issue preeminently, paramountly, above any other thing, would be to get people to know that he was the Son of God, that if you singled out of all his teachings and all his messages, the teaching side of his messages, the thing that is the most important for his hearers to believe and know and understand is this concept that he is the Son of God. Now every other truth that he will teach would begin with that. But if people would believe that then they would be on the path to salvation.

Well, if we would start out then with that perspective and concept, that in all his teachings and in every act that he does, every parable, every miracle, every performance, every ordinance, all that he does, what Christ really has in mind is to get over first the concept that he is the Son of God; and secondly, some particular principle of the gospel. If this is true, which I think it is, and we could start out with that kind of a perspective, then we would start laying and evaluating all that he says and all that he did to see how this teaching or how that performance or how this miracle has the effect of bearing witness that he is the Son of God. This is the one thing that he can teach that is different from what any other prophet ever taught. There has never been a prophet who ever came who could not teach by inspiration and direction from him, all the doctrines that are available, who could not perform all the ordinances that are available, who could not say everything that needs to be said in a way of truth to get people to have peace here and an eternal reward hereafter, but here is one distinctive thing about Christ, and that is that he can teach that, "I am he," that "I am the Center, I am the Creator, I am the Savior." I think this flavors and influences and is woven into everything that he teaches, all that he does. So that is one perspective for us.

Now a second perspective that we need to have, I think, is how the Jews would react to that kind of teaching. Let us put ourselves in the position of the Jews now, and this will give us an idea of the problem that faced him when he started out his ministry, to announce his Divine Sonship. Well, what attitudes and feelings did the Jews of that day have towards the fact that there should be a redeemer, the Son of God?

Comment: It was in their scriptures.

BRM: It was in their scriptures.

Comment: They were looking for him.

BRM: They were looking for him. You can just so develop historically that the whole feeling and ferment and attitude of the times was that now is the time for the coming of a redeemer. They had been talking about a Messiah all through the ages and the feeling was such that they all expected a Messiah to come. And so when John the Baptist comes, they say, "Art thou he?" And when Jesus comes, they said, "Are you the Messiah?" And they began to question that every time a preeminent personality arose that taught something about families, they would think, "Is this the Messiah? Is this the man that will sit on

David's throne and save us?" So for one thing, they were thinking of a Messiah. Now what else is in their cultural climate and arrangement?

Comment: I have some questions. Now there is no question in my mind but what they were expecting a Messiah, but did they expect this Messiah to be God's son, their God, the God . . . (inaudible)?

BRM: I think they probably were partially confused about that. They had these scriptures that said he was going to be God's son. They knew he was going to sit on the throne of David, they knew he was going to be a redeemer. How fully they visualized that he would be His son, I do not know.

Comment: Were they expecting him to come a great man of power?

BRM: Sure, they were expecting him to come and to be a ruler, to sit on the throne of David and to throw off the robe of Job and to . . . (inaudible).

Comment: They never wanted him to be. They asked him if he was because he was not doing the right thing.

BRM: Well, he was not doing what they wanted him to do.

Comment: Can people . . . (inaudible) . . . from Joseph . . . (inaudible).

BRM: Some of them were, probably some of them were. You would think that they would be, in general, because they revered the throne of David and wanted a ruler to sit on that throne. You would think that there is the heir apparent, a pretender, so to speak it, what we call them today, would be known to the people, everybody knows who the pretender in vain is, the man who would be there if Samuel were not there. We think that people generally would pretty much know what their royal lineage was. It should be him because he had what they wanted according to the genealogy that apparently would have been Joseph, he would have been the natural king.

Comment: Do you think that they expected Jesus or the Messiah to be heroic himself?

BRM: This is equal to the . . . (inaudible) . . . You say, you ask these questions and you could not, I do not think, answer them for the generality of the people. Now what we forget for one thing about the Jews is that they just were not Jews except in a very general sense, like people are sectarian Christians in a general sense. They were all sects. There were Pharisees and Sadducees and Ebinees and how many others, I do not know, which were comparable to the sects of Christianity. So it is like saying, what do the Christians expect? Well, if you start defining them, what do the Lutherans expect and what do the Baptists expect and what do the Holy Rollers expect? And they have all got different concepts. What do the Seventh Day Adventists expect and so on? So it is not uniform, in that Jewish culture is broken up into sects with some overall concepts that the generality

of them were anticipating. And one overall concept was that the Messiah would come. They were taught the different ideas in the different sects as to what was going to be involved. The radical contrast is that these are Pharisees and the Sadducees; the Sadducees, for instance, not believing in angels and in a resurrection and in a preexistence and so on, and the Pharisees believing in angels and in a resurrection. Very basic differences and yet they are all Jews. Well, if somebody had came among the Jews in the social circumstance that then prevailed and had started to say, "I am the Messiah, I am the Son of God," what would have happened? Now this will give us an idea. Who can answer that? If we were a congregation of Jews with the background and the beliefs that they had in that day and somebody came in here and said, "I am the Redeemer," what would we have done? What would our reaction have been? And this will show what problem presented itself to Jesus when he came to get over this concept that he was the Son of God. What would we have done if somebody had said that to us?

Comment: Well essentially, if he were a carpenter, why I probably could have asked him.

BRM: Especially if he were a carpenter? What would you have done if he were a foreman?

Comment: If he had come in a great deal of power and glory why of course you would not, but if he is coming as an ordinary individual I would.

BRM: If he were a great general you might have had a different idea?

Comment: Possibly so.

BRM: Well?

Comment: Don't you think a good analogy would be like the people today accepted Joseph Smith is saying the prophet, or President McKay and general authorities today, even on this level, they sort of stomp at them. And if someone came saying he was the Messiah, it would be even exaggerated from what had actually happened.

BRM: That is good. That is precisely, in one respect, what would have happened. There would have been disbelief and disunity and sobbing and so on. But there is something more than rejecting the prophet in this event.

Comment: That they would come to the point, "Maybe he is, maybe we had better find out."

BRM: All right, there would be some who would say, "We had better test his claim."

Comment: Well, I think of the preliminary to this Messiah and he was to be their liberator and he could show the firm evidence of it, especially if they did not take up arms and go with him . . . (inaudible).

BRM: Probably they would have rather gone to military standards. Well, I think right here probably is the key of what would have happened. If this matter, all of this would have been involved, a real part of it would be this matter of blasphemy. There are some things that prevailed and were uniform in their society. In effect, some things on which all sects, parties, and denominations among them were united. And they were pretty well united on the matter of blasphemy. This was an outstanding thing in their minds, that if somebody committed blasphemy he was worthy of death. Now they could not impose the death penalty because this power had been withdrawn by their Roman overlords. But they thought they ought to be able to impose the death penalty and they felt like doing it. And this feeling was so intense in the social structure, their hearts of the generality of them that even though they knew they could not impose it they would go ahead and try it sort of almost mob rule. But he had these several instances in which they picked up stones, stoned Jesus when he said things that in their view of thinking was blasphemy. All right, blasphemy consists of what? Well, it consists of profaning sacred things, in general. But in particular, and this would be the highest form of blasphemy, it would consist in making yourself God or the Son of God or the Messiah or Redeemer when you were not. So that if somebody came among them and said, "I am the Christ. I am the Messiah," and said it in so many words, the instinctive automatic reaction of the whole social structure would have been, "Crucify him, stone him." They would not have said, "Crucify him," until the Romans got him because that was their method of taking life, but they would have said, "stone him," which was the Jewish method. This was the reaction of their culture, which is a little more severe and thus the reaction that the people generally would have . . . (inaudible) . . . false prophets. I think night saved the prophets and that it will be implicit in some of these passages that we are going to read here this morning. He takes the problem that he could not come out and say to them, "I am the Son of God" bluntly and in so many words, without running into difficulties and maybe more problems for him and his ministry than the announcement would have benefited when he made it to an unworthy group.

Well, in that kind of a social structure and setup, let us talk about that heading that I put as number one in this outline, "How to Teach the Divine Sonship." Now Jesus is here, he has the objective to make the proclamation, "I am the Son of God," and he has got some special restrictions on how he will do it that are imposed by his hearers, the social climate, the people who beseech the nature of things make it more difficult than if someone in our society were going to go out and say that. We would not pick up stones and start stoning somebody if he came down here to BYU and got out here on the campus and said, "I am the Son of God." But if we would have been Jews, that is what we would have done. Now there is Christ's problem. What is he going to do to get the concept over which is the key concept of his ministry that he is the Son of God and further his work more than infinite. If you were he now, what would you do?

Comment: Teach by example.

BRM: Yes, I think you would teach by example. You would certainly do that.

Comment: The Bible asks him why do you teach in parables and so forth and he says, "I teach this way so that those that will hear can hear and those of you that will not, they will not stand accused for no reason. They will not come out against me until I have fulfilled my mission."

BRM: Now are there any parables that center down on the fact that he is the Son of God? There are some parables, I guess, with which that is implicit. But the parables are not the strong affirmation of his divinity. Parables do more to hide concepts than they do to clarify it.

Comment: One thing he did is every group close to him about it was told to keep it a secret.

BRM: Well, he did that. The possible things that he could do was certainly, among others, he could bear his own personal testimony. He could say in plain words—this is a possible thing for him to do-he could say in plain words, "I am the Son of God." And he did that on selected occasions. He could say in plain words such things as this: "My father is greater than I," in a setting where it is apparent that he is talking about God. Well, that is one thing he could do. But the problem with this is he is limited in being able to say it without having Watts or Josias or Milwaukee all over him. You think we could back here 2,000 years removed, and we think, oh, the fact that he came out and said he was the Son of God, why would that have stirred up the whole community? Well, the social climate was such that if he had done that to the masses of people it would have been like lighting a match to something and the whole group would have spurred up to commit murder, and so on. You think, "Well, how can that be?" Well, this sort of thing happens in this social climate. How can it be that they arrested Israel in Detroit or in Los Angeles within the next few days unless Moses gets tied up in some . . . (inaudible) . . . social culture that half a billion dollars worth of property is destroyed, there are these great mob actions. Well, that is the way things are, and that is sort of an analogous thing. We have a social climate that permits something today and they had a social climate that permitted something back there. So his opportunity to bear testimony of himself is limited and he has to say they are either my fruits.

Now you say he could have lived by example. I think he could have lived by example . . . (inaudible) . . . an indication. Now certainly one thing he could have done was perform certain works that only the Son of God could do. And maybe this example business would come under that. He, for instance, could live with faultless conduct, a sinless life, in effect. Now the fact that he complied in every respect with the whole law along with miracles that he performed ought of itself to indicate that he is set apart and distinct from other men. All right, that is a good thing. What else could we do?

Comment: Well, I am wondering about this . . . (inaudible).

BRM: They saw him as a blasphemer and they saw him as a violator of the restrictions of the Mosaic code. So they had to weigh this problem of his faults of conduct or his different life in the balance. But when you get the more wavy method, such as a man

exhibiting love and charity and integrity and so on, even the Jews ought to be able to recognize that here is a man who knows . . . (inaudible) . . . prophet and he is living uprightly to know it.

Comment: Yes. I wonder, was . . . (inaudible) . . . specifically about this . . . (inaudible)?

BRM: I agree with you that it would be a little difficult. Maybe this is the hardest way for him to get the concept over, this example business, because millions of people do not encourage example.

Comment: I would like to suggest there is something else here besides what Jesus said and what he did; that there is a tremendous testimony that he is the Son of God and that is what he did. And that was radiated from his very person, which to those who beheld him, which in some cases induced a sense of guilt, from which they would shrink. And therefore they have either got to shut him up or get rid of him or else believe him, either one.

BRM: That seems pretty good to us and I think you have got something there. That is sort of like a magnetic personality that no one can stand up to. Well, Joseph Smith, so the accounts say, was somewhat like that. He had this dynamic, forceful personality and they rejected or they accepted.

Comment: I do not think personality, though. I am hopping back to Alma, for example, "Now my brethren of the church . . . (inaudible) . . . Have ye received his image in your countenances?" This is what—the divinity of Christ, the divine nature of Christ which was part of the atmosphere of his person, the glory of the Son which may be . . . (inaudible) . . . obviously there but was there.

BRM: I would surely take that as far as anyone who is spiritually inclined is concerned. But whether that is obvious to the high priest and generality of people.

Comment: How would you interpret Isaiah 53? Now the impression there is that this divinity was veiled.

BRM: That he is like every other man, that they had to have Jesus to identify when he was crucified and so on. And I think it was veiled except for the spiritually enlightened at this time, so that he could walk through that congregation and did not play the part so much that they identified him as different, the generality of them.

Comment: Well is this a scriptural . . . (inaudible) . . . says that he has no apparent beauty?

BRM: Yes, that is exactly it, he said men should desire. He looked like other men. He is like other men in outward appearance. Well, here is something that we ought to envision more than we do as a witness that he is the Son of God. And that is the fact that he

performed miracles. Now we will talk about his miracles in a separate way, or two. There are some selected miracles. But for right now, let us say this: there is something about Jesus performing a miracle that is different than when any other person ever performed it. Now what would that be? The fact of the matter is he did greater miracles than any prophet has done, I guess. No one ever waited until somebody had been dead four days before he raised him up from the dead. But in a way, it was the magnitude of some of them. The winning miracles that he performed that somebody else had not or could not and he did not do some things that some prophets did that are more dramatic than anything he did do except for Lazarus. He did not move a mountain like a couple of prophets have done, he did not change the course of rivers like a couple of prophets have done, he did not have a wall of water on the right and on the left like Moses had done, but there is something about the miracles of Jesus that set them apart from all the miracles that any prophet ever performed.

Comment: He performed them by his own power rather than in the name of . . . (inaudible).

BRM: Yes, this is very important. He did not say, "In the name of Christ," he said in his own name so he set himself apart in that way. Now what else did he do?

Comment: (Inaudible.)

BRM: Yes, I will take a notation on that in just one second, that he was forgiving sins in connection with them. But when he performed miracles, the thing that sets him apart from all other miracles is he did them in his own name instead of in the Lord's name. And he coupled the performance of the miracle with the testimony that he was the Son of God. So he is saying, "I am the Son of God," and then he is performing the miracle that no one could perform unless God be with him so that the miracle becomes a witness that what he said was true, that his testimony was true. Now I do not know a better illustration than this. Here he is in Capernaum, probably in the home of Peter, this is one we referred to before. They lower the man down through the ceiling; take the tile off the roof because they cannot get the sick man in. I think I am thinking correctly. Is that not the occasion where he says this man on the litter, the paralytic, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." And they begin to quibble among themselves, What kind of a fellow is this that forgives sins? Only God can forgive sins. This man is blaspheming because he says, "Thy sins be forgiven." And so he says to them, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power to forgive sins, he sayeth unto the sick of the palsy . . . Arise, take up thy bed [and walk]." The man gets up off his bed and walks away. Now you see what he did deliberately? This is the way miracles—a lot of them are performed. He does that in performing miracles. But he does it in a special way so that out of it will grow the witness, "I am the Son of God." Now it is just one thing to heal the sick of the palsy. But it is guite another thing to start it out by saying, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." So that the problem is confronting them, is this the Son of God? Here is a man who has assumed the prerogative of Deity. And now to prove that he had the prerogative of Deity, he says, "Arise, take up thy bed [and walk]." Well, that is one miracle. That is implicit in a lot of miracles. And the issue where Jesus is concerned is that if you can link his testimony with the miracles that he

performed, you and I have this conclusion that the miracles are testifying that he is the Son of God, which is the same thing in his case.

Well, here are some other things that he did. He taught certain doctrines. This is how he could declare his Divine Sonship. He could do it by teaching doctrine. And the manner in which he taught them would be a proclamation of his divinity. Now any prophet could come and teach any of these doctrines, but nobody taught them like he did, that is, using the first person. The prophet teaches doctrine and he centers it in Christ, but Christ comes and he teaches doctrine and he centers it in himself. He said, "Men will be resurrected through me." Now he has not said he is the Christ and he has not said he is the Son of God, but he said, "I will bring to pass the resurrection." Now any prophet would say, "Christ will bring the resurrection of man." But he says, "I will do it," so that he teaches the doctrine and implicit in the doctrine, the way it is taught, is this proclamation. The prophet Peter said, "Christ will go the Spirit World and preach the gospel to them that are there." But Jesus comes and says, "The Son of God will go and preach in the Spirit World and the dead will hear my voice." And he does it in such a way that he centers the fact that the teachings he teaches the doctrine in such a way that he sets himself apart from every prophet and centers it in him. He teaches the Atonement. A prophet will say, "The Son of God will come and work out the Atonement." But Jesus says it differently. He says, "I will be lifted up. I lay down my life for the sheep." He personalizes every doctrine. A prophet teaches the Second Coming of Christ as an abstract thing, so to speak. But when Christ comes and does it, he associates these things with himself. So what you get if you start looking through doctrine for this thing, you find a difference in doctrinal teaching and the effect of the difference is to say, "I am the Son of God."

Now let me give you one more and then we had better take some illustrations. And this meant a very great deal more to the Jews than it really means to us because our minds do not operate quite like theirs operated. He could use symbolisms to them that were far more forceful than those like symbols would have been to us. You remember one of Nephi's semi-derogatory comments about the Jews? He is saying that he taught his people in plainness, in which no man could err, but that the Jews did not do it that way. He said he had not taught the Nephites, his people, after the manner of the Jews because their manner was a way of darkness and the effect is to hide what was known. And he said the Jews understand the prophecies. In other words, the Jews knew these symbolisms. Well, they had so proved themselves that their whole life was such that they looked at symbolism, and if we are going to understand the full impact of that we have got to get ourselves in their position. But when Jesus came and said such things as, "I am the Bread of Life," now we could begin to evaluate that and come up with what it means. That, incidentally, is where we will be tomorrow on that subject, "I am the Bread of Life." But when he said that to the Jew who had this educational background to working symbolism, that meant, "I am the Messiah," as you will see tomorrow in that discussion. He says to the Jews, "I am the good shepherd." We will read in a minute how confirmative and express that is really in meaning, "I am the Son of God." And yet he has not said the words. He says, "I am the light of the world." Well, they knew what he meant when he said, "I am the light of the world," because their symbolisms and their culture and their teaching was . . . (inaudible) . . . the light and the life of men would come true

with the Redeemer. "I am the resurrection and the life." What does that mean? Does that say, "I am the Son of God"? Well it really did to the Jews because it is a symbolical way of dramatizing that life and immortality came through him. "I am the resurrection," I bring the resurrection to pass. We call it personifying. He is personifying the resurrection in him. "I am the resurrection because it is available through me. I am the light because eternal life is available through me." Well maybe we could amplify this, I do not know, but at least there is an introductory way of approaching how Jesus would go about teaching his Divine Sonship. And what I think we ought to get out of this respect is an idea that we, as we look at the gospel, will be doing it with a view to seeing how he taught of his Divine Sonship.

I remember a good many years ago when I was a young missionary, I got hold of the book that still in print, still a famous book and it is *The Man Nobody Knows*, by Bruce Horton. I sort of think it is the type that it was a year or so . . . (inaudible) . . . either that or it is a book nobody knows will teach truth. Well, I read this book and I have not read it since it has annoyed me ever since. But a good part of the thesis of the book was that Jesus never claimed to be the Son of God. This was a thing that was tacked onto him by his disciples . . . (inaudible) . . . but in any event, that is the thesis that people have in the world. Most of them do not think he was literally the Son of God, and a lot of them think he was not making the claim. Now what I think we need to do as Latter-day Saints is be aware of the situation that existed in the day that he said what he said and did what he did. And let our perspective be such that as we read everything in the gospels, we seek to know and learn how each individual thing actually is a witness that he is the Son of God. And this is not hard. This becomes easy to do when we channel our thinking and our investigation right. And so it becomes obvious that all that he is doing is so geared and so worthy and so arranged as to bear the chief testimony that he wants to bear.

Now we will take some illustrations. This is wholly just samples of his personal claim to Divine Sonship. And these pages I have written on the board, they are our study assignment. Let us really get it on the general principle of how he would teach his Divine Sonship. Any question anyone would like to raise about that?

Comment: The Jews recognized all of these symbolisms which he used and that he knew they would recognize them. It is just like coming right out and saying that he is the Son of God, isn't it? It is like tapping the rod.

BRM: Well, that is a good point. We will now proceed. We can take that as our first one. We will read some illustrations. And let us take first—we cannot read all of these. Let us just deliberately first take an illustration that evaluates the very question that you just raised. And it is page 482. Now just as a matter of interest, let us take the setting in which this is given, what Jesus did; he and his disciples remained in Jerusalem. And they found a man who was born blind, blind from his mother's womb. And Jesus healed the blind man. This is the ninth chapter of John. So here are 50 verses or so that John devotes to what happened incident to the healing of this blind man. And as you will recall, there was a lot of conversation back and forth and a lot of hubbub and a lot of turmoil. And they brought the blind man before him and they interrogated him and they went and got his

parents and they interrogated him and this was a dramatic thing. This is so that in effect, the whole city, this part of it that was aware of what was going on, had their attention centered on the fact that a man who had been born blind now saw. And all the rulers of the people and the scribes and the professors, so to speak, were studying this to find out how it was. I mention this because for all practical purposes, Jesus just went and sought out an occasion to open the eyes of a blind man so that all this social ferment would occur and the center of all attention would be on him. Now, in effect, he was seeking out the headlines. He did something to get in the headlines, to get everybody thinking about him. And then with all of them, so to speak, gathered together and attention centered on him, he preached the sermon on the good shepherd. Now let us be realistic. What he was doing was getting a congregation. He was going to make about himself being the good shepherd.

All right, page 482 in our text. Let us just begin to skip down here and pick out some phrases. Look down at verse nine. "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." You know what that is. Well, a prophet

does not talk this way. A prophet says Christ is the door, not, I am the door. The 11th verse. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Verse 14, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." Then he brings his Father in, "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father." Well, this is the beginning now of this sermon. We will pick up a few more phrases in the sermon. But put yourself in the position of these Jews now, and here comes somebody and he says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Now what does that mean to you as a Jew? This is symbolism. "I am the good shepherd." What does it mean? Does it mean "I am the Son of God?" Is this something they are going to stone him for because he is blasphemous? Well, this is a tremendous teaching of those. This is just so superlative that it makes you marvel how anyone could devise a teaching approach that is comparable to this. If we were Jews I will tell you what this means to us. If somebody says, "I am the good shepherd" and the first thought that passes through our mind is that David the king whom we revere said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Or as we would be saying it, "Jehovah is my shepherd. The good shepherd is the Lord Jehovah." Now the whole Jewish complex of thinking was that Jehovah is the chief shepherd. That is what we would have thought. And immediately there would have come into our minds such things as this because our whole religion was centered on the Messiah and our interest was in that line of prophecy that we would have got from Isaiah's time. I quoted it on 485. "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." The modern Messiah is going to come. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Well, put yourself in the position of the Jews. "I am the good shepherd," it means but it does not say, "I am the Lord Jehovah." Now your question is if they knew that it meant that, why would he tell them the way he did? Well let us continue down the sermon and read the answer. Page 486, verse 15b,

And I lay down my life for the sheep . . . Therefore doth my Father love me, because [I lay it down] 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.

Well, he is saying things that implicit in which are the fact that he is the Son of God. But he did not say he was the Son of God. And he did not say that he was Christ. Now over on page 488, and here, somewhat, is our thought. It is a solution to our thought.

And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

You see, he has done all this and they say, "Well why don't you say in so many words whether you are the Christ or whether you are not." "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not." I just got through saying to you within the last five minutes, earlier in this sermon I am the good shepherd and that I lay down my life. "I told you, and ye believed not. the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." Now this is . . . (inaudible) . . . those headings in a way. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." That is where the period ought to be and the verse ought to begin then, "As I said unto you, My sheep hear my voice." He is quoting himself further in the sermon.

And I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.

"Well, why don't you tell us whether you are the Christ?" "I told you over and over and over and over again. I said I am the light of the world, I am the good shepherd, I am everything." "Yes, but you did not use the words 'I am the Christ.' Well why didn't you use the words 'I am the Christ'?" Well the reason is that he started out this sermon by saying the words, "I am the Christ," we would immediately have picked up stones to stone him and we would have driven away and he could not have completed the sermon." But he completes the sermon by starting out to say he is the Christ, using symbolism. But now we are up to the point where it says, "Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him." It is so plain to them that even they now know that although he still has not said he was the Christ, that they knew all along that is what he was saving. "Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" So he is saying again, my Father and I am the Son. "The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." Now he still has not said, "I am the Christ," but there was not any question in any Jew's mind about what he was saying. He made himself God. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou

blasphemest; because I said," he is quoting himself now. Either he must have said it verbatim or he is giving a supplement quotation, "I am the Son of God."

Well, what a teaching technique this is. If he just comes into that congregation and said, "I am Christ, I am the Son of God," a lot of people would have ignored it. If somebody came out here on the BYU campus and said, "I am the Son of God," we would laugh at him, but . . . (inaudible)? And if they had not ignored it, what they would have done would have been to immediately pick up stones to stone him because what he said was blasphemy. But he did not do that. Now you talk about a teaching technique. What he does is come and open the eyes of a blind man. And he gets everybody on the BYU campus assembled together talking about the fact that here he opened the eyes of a blind man. And all the professors arrive to investigate the matter and they bring in the blind man's parents and they have had a great hubbub. And the field house is now full and everybody is there and the inquiry is being made. And so he has got a congregation. He would have had an empty field house if he had not done something to get them there. Now he has got them there and so with his congregation, in the light of the miracle that he performed, he still does not say he is the Son of God bluntly. He says, "I am the good shepherd." Now they really knew what that meant but they wanted to stone him. And they would have been a lot happier about stoning him if he had come out and said, "I am the Christ," which he did not. So he has to tell them, "I told you." And eventually they are going to get the message.

Comment: At what point does this occur in his mission? Is this just at the end, just prior to the time for him to be . . . (inaudible)?

BRM: No, this is—I do not know.

Comment: Before Lazarus is raised from the dead?

BRM: Oh yes, this is before Lazarus. I do not know. I have not anything here in this text to put my finger on it, but half of his teaching is yet ahead that we have recorded. Half of his recorded teachings are still ahead. The feast of dedication . . . (inaudible) . . . that is something we have to refer down.

But here, on with that connection, this is not an isolated thing. This is one of the most dramatic. This is a wonderful illustration of how he operated within that overall framework. But the fact of the matter is that and it is one of the best—but the fact of the matter is we could take just one right after another, early in his ministry and later in his ministry where, for all practical purposes, he is doing the precisely same thing in end result. He creates a dramatic situation out of which we cannot escape the conclusion that he is proclaiming that he is the Son of God. Now this one—I see our time is almost gone —this is the one where he said he was the light of the world. If I remember correctly, what he did was to get himself there in the temple in the midst of the great ceremony where they were lighting the candles or the lamps and chanting the words of Isaiah that announced that the Messiah would be the light of the world. And as they chant the Messianic prophecy with the center of attention being on that, he comes forth and says, "I

am the light of the world." Well now this is perfect. You just cannot get teaching situations. In this book he just proclaims his Divine Sonship in so many words, almost, and continues on in this one, he talks about the children of Abraham. Here is one of the best ones that ever was written. And this is the one where he comes right out and it is the climax of these preceding ones that he is talking about Abraham and he says, "Before Abraham was I Jehovah." Now that is plain language. He just comes right out, "Before Abraham was I Jehovah." Then we have this matter of a man born blind. Here is the matter of living water, here is one at the well of Samaria and this was at the very beginning of his ministry. And he said to the woman, "I that speak unto thee am he." When Messiah comes he will tell us all these things, "I that speak unto thee am he."

Here is one about living water. Now I say these are just samples. And my hope is that out of this particular approach to the subject, that what we will do is have a concept in our setting that if we value things correctly, we will just be able to say time and time and time again, not twice, not 20 times, not 100, but just throughout the whole New Testament, there is something that we can sift out almost every time he speaks. So in order to claim some of these, we come up with the conclusion that it had to be said when he said it at the end by someone who is the Son of God, who is set apart and distinct from all of the prophets.

Well, we have had a couple of illustrations. We did not spend the time on them we should have, but here is an approach to the study of the gospel that will do as much to enable us to get things in perspective the way they ought to be. And then you hope, aside from the obvious things, that you have to have the Spirit of the Lord when we study.

Well, tomorrow we will take one of these illustrations, symbolical in nature and evaluate it. It is the sermon, "I Am the Bread of Life."