

John 10:22-42

Tell Us Plainly

At this point the Lord Jesus Christ is approaching the end of His public ministry. He has been in Galilee and Judea for nearly three years and has been teaching publicly throughout that time.

The eight-day feast of Dedication, now called Chanukah (or Hanukkah), the feast of Lights, was not one of the feasts prescribed in the Mosaic Law. The Jews instituted it during the inter-testamental period

What are the Jews saying in verse 24?

They are saying that their failure to believe is His fault, in spite of the fact that Jesus has been clear in His teaching and has been doing miracles among them for three years. They're blaming Him for their inability to believe.

In actuality, Jesus has revealed the truth to them and they don't like it. Jesus knows their hearts (John 2:24-25). They aren't earnestly seeking the truth.

When the people ask Jesus to tell them if He is the Messiah, how does He respond? He basically says, "I did tell you by the miracles. The miracles prove who I am." (verses 25, 37-38). Christ's works, the miracles alone, should lead men to faith in Him. It is as simple as that. One purpose of miracles is to authenticate the person doing them. He is from God.

Why did the Jews reject the testimony/miracles of Jesus? The Jews generally reject His testimony because they are looking for a different type of Messiah. The ultimate reason they do not understand Jesus is that they are not of the sheep the Father has given to the Son. This condition does not excuse their unbelief, but it explains it.

From the human standpoint, we become His sheep by believing; but from the divine standpoint, we believe because we are His sheep. In the Bible, divine election and human responsibility are perfectly balanced.

What is the message of verses 27-30? The security of the sheep is in the hands of the Shepherd. The security of the sheep doesn't depend upon the sheep. Our eternal security is not a performance or behavior based reality. The Shepherd is the only One who can sever the relation between the sheep and the Shepherd. The behavior of the sheep doesn't determine the response of the Shepherd.

Jesus had previously said that part of the task that the Father had given Him to do was to preserve all those whom the Father gave Him (John 6:37-40). This is one of the clearest promises of the believer's security stated in God's Word. It is also a clear statement of the fact that eternal life comes to us as a gift, not as wages we earn.

Verses to consider:

- "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14).
- "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:3-5).

Verses 30 and 31 The scenario repeats itself. There is no doubt that these Jews understand who Jesus is saying that He is.

Note: In verse 32 Jesus says, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father." Jesus is all about glorifying the Father. He doesn't say "I have done many miracles." We should be all about glorifying the Father!

How do the Jews respond in verse 33? They understand exactly what Jesus is saying. He isn't claiming to be "like God." Clearly the Jews understand that Jesus is claiming equality with the Father as deity. They are willing to skip over the issue of whether His works backed up His words, they are so intent on His destruction. They prepare to stone Him for blasphemy.

What does that say about them? Their hearts are hard. They are blind to the truth. They are unable to respond correctly.

"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Verses 34-35 Jesus is quoting from Psalm 82.

- The phrase “You are gods” (verses 1, 6) is used of the judges of Israel. They were Israel’s judges and rulers who were functioning as God’s representatives/deputies and so were in that sense little gods.
- It was a title of honor because they acted as God in their role as judges, and in God’s name they exercised authority and power.
- Jesus is saying, “Now I, too, have been sent into this world by God the Father and I, too, have a special job. I exercise authority and power, just as the judges of Israel did. If the word ‘gods’ can be used of mere men (verse 7 states that they were mortal beings) because of their function as judges—then how much more should I be called God? Just look at the miracles/power I exercise.”

Note: Jesus held a very high view of Scripture. He quoted it (or referred to it) often.

Verses 36-38 Jesus is making the point here that it’s inconsistent for the Jews to claim the Old Testament as their authority and then to disregard something that it said because they did not agree with it.

Jesus is threatened with imminent death in verse 31 and again in verse 39. Yet they do not kill Him. Why not? His time has not yet come. God has a timetable for Jesus’ life.

Application: My time to die is in God’s hands. There is no such thing as a premature death.

- “All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be” (Psalm 139:16).
- “Man’s days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed” (Job 14:5).

How does that play out in our lives? Christians should have no fear of death.

Verses 41-42 How is the testimony of John the Baptist still producing fruit? The people are still talking about/remembering him. This incident most likely occurred 1-2 years after the death of John the Baptist.

Application: Based on the model of John the Baptist, how can I ensure my testimony lives on (not just after death but after leaving an area, etc.)? Give intentional thought to your workplace testimony. How should you conduct yourself? How do you want to be remembered? Be intentional. They will know us by our love. Show people you care—with no agenda.

We want people to be able to say such things as these about us:

- He was involved in ministry/God’s work, faithful to God’s calling on his life, focused on the mission God gave him.
- He was willing to be different—stand out.
- Peer pressure didn’t faze him.
- He pointed people to Jesus, and Jesus did not disappoint them.

John the Baptist made it his business to speak of Christ—first, last, and always. May we do the same.

MEMORIZE: John 10:27-28