

John 10:22-42

At this point, Jesus 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.

What were the Jews saying to Jesus (v. 24)? They were saying that their failure to believe was His fault, in spite of the fact that Jesus had been clear in His teaching and had been doing miracles among them for three years. They were pointing their finger at Him for their inability to believe, in essence saying, “If you won’t tell us who you are, how do you expect us to believe in you?” In actuality, Jesus had revealed the truth to them and they didn’t like it. Jesus knew their hearts (2:24-25). They weren’t earnestly seeking the truth. They were looking for any excuse to condemn and eventually kill Him.

How did Jesus respond to their questioning (v. 25)? He basically said, “I did tell you by the miracles I did. The miracles prove who I am.” Christ’s miracles alone, should help lead men to believe in Him. It is as simple as that. One purpose of miracles is to authenticate the person doing them. He is clearly the Christ.

Why did the Jews reject the testimony/miracles of Jesus (v. 26)? The ultimate reason they did not understand Jesus was a lack of spiritual perception and faith.....“*But you do not believe because you are not My sheep*” is a simple statement of fact about their conduct. This condition did not excuse their unbelief, but it explained it.¹ Their problem also reminds one of the ultimate mystery of God’s election (cf. 6:37).²

From the human standpoint, we become His sheep by believing; but from the divine standpoint, we believe because we are His sheep.

What are some of the messages of vv. 27-29?

- The relationship between Shepherd and sheep is not conditional based on the sheep’s behavior. The behavior of the sheep doesn’t alter the loving care of the Shepherd. Like the sheep, our eternal security is not conditional based on our behavior or performance.
- Not only is the believer in the hand of Christ, he is in the Father’s hand as well. This is a twofold guarantee of safety and security. Thus we can see that it is impossible—even for one of the sheep—to wriggle out of the Good Shepherd’s grasp. No one will snatch them from God, and no one can do so either.

This is one of the clearest promises of the believer’s eternal 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. (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9).³

We do not live the Christian life in order to become a Christian or in order to retain our salvation. We live a Christian life because we are Christians. We desire to live a holy life, not out of fear of losing our salvation, but out of gratitude to the One who died for us.

How are Jesus and the Father one (v. 30)? He was not saying that He and the Father are the same Person. The Son and the Father are two Persons of the Trinity. Instead He was saying they have the closest possible unity of purpose. Jesus’ will is identical to the Father’s regarding the salvation of His sheep. And yet absolute identity of wills involves identity of nature. Jesus and the Father are One in will and One in nature for both are God (cf. 20:28; Philippians 2:5-6; Colossians 2:9).⁴

How did the Jews respond to Jesus’ claims (v. 31)? They understood exactly what Jesus was saying. He wasn’t claiming to be “like God.” Clearly the Jews understood that Jesus was claiming equality with the Father as deity. They were so intent on His destruction that they were willing to skip over the issue of whether His works backed up His words. They prepared to stone Him for blasphemy.

How did Jesus respond to the Jewish threat (v. 32)? He confronted the Jews with the absurdity of executing a man for doing a miraculous healing. Jesus’ miracles testified that He was doing divine work. However, the Jews did not think this through, but responded that it was not for His works—but for His words—that they were going to kill Him. He reminded them of the miracles He had done and said that His works did indeed back up His words.

In response to their charge of blasphemy for claiming to be God, Jesus quoted from Psalm 82 (vv. 34-36). What points was He making?

- The Old Testament phrase “You are gods” ([Psalm 82:1, 6](#)) is used of the judges of Israel. They were Israel’s judges and rulers who were functioning as God’s representatives and so in that sense they were “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 ([Psalm 82:7](#) states that they were just 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.”

The Jews gloried in their possession of the Old Testament and they claimed the inerrant Old Testament as their authority, yet they refused to submit to its authority over them in this case, because they did not agree with something that it said. They were guilty of cherry picking the parts of the law they liked. The law was not designed to be a smorgasbord.

What did Jesus say about His miracles (vv. 37-38)? Jesus next identified the evidence that His critics should consider, namely, His “works,” including His miracles (v. 25). The Jews should have learned from them and realized that He was doing the same kinds of good works that God the Father did. The miracles of the Lord were the works of His Father.⁵

These miracles were given for their learning so that by pondering their significance they might recognize Jesus’ oneness with the Father (the Father is in Me, and I in the Father).⁶ Nicodemus had recognized this for he said, “No one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.” (3:2).⁷

Jesus was threatened with imminent death for blasphemy (v. 31, 39). Yet they did not kill Him. Why not? His time had not yet come. God had a three year timetable for Jesus’ ministry and life and it would not be altered.

Application: My time to die is in God’s hands. I will not die until my work on earth is done. There is no such thing as a premature death for a Christian.

- “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 a practical sense in our lives? Christians should have no fear of death.

Why was Jesus’ ministry received much more favorably on the other side of the Jordan river (vv. 40-42)?

This was the area which had been the location of John the Baptist’s activity (1:28). Jesus’ ministry here was received much more favorably, probably because John the Baptist had prepared the people there by pointing them to Jesus. John, even though dead, was still producing fruit in people’s lives as they remembered his witness. Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that he said was true and many people trusted Jesus as Savior. By contrast, the hostile Jerusalem crowd had seen His signs and yet disobeyed.⁸

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

¹ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on John, 2023 Edition (published by <http://planobiblechapel.org/soniclight/>), 293.

² Edwin A. Blum, “[John](#),” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 311.

³ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on John, 2023 Edition (published by <http://planobiblechapel.org/soniclight/>), 294.

⁴ Edwin A. Blum, “[John](#),” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 311–312.

⁵ William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1529.

⁶ Edwin A. Blum, “[John](#),” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 312.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.