

## **Tell us Plainly** **John 10:22-30**

22 Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. 23 And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. 24 Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. 26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. 30 I and My Father are one." NKJV

When we come to verse 22, John has skipped about two months from October to December. That is why John tells us what part of the year it is. Jesus has probably been in Perea where he will return to after this passage. V-40.

Jesus will not come back to Jerusalem until the spring at Passover when He will be betrayed and crucified.

The feast that is mentioned was what we call Hanukkah. This holiday was not taught in the Biblical record but was celebrated since the days of the Maccabees when a supposed miracle occurred. They did not have oil for the lamps but they burned anyway for a week.

But in John's gospel, he links these two discourses almost seamlessly. We might think that the last half of John 10 followed withing hours or days from the first. They probe Him to get Him into trouble but Jesus takes them back to the discussion of the sheep and the Shepherd that He had given a couple of months before.

I. Tell us plainly; Did Jesus speak as plainly as He could have?

- A. "Now this pressing query of theirs was seemingly good; they pretended to be desirous to know the truth, as if they were ready to embrace it; but it was really bad, and put with an ill design; for, if he should tell them plainly that he was the Christ, there needed no more to make him obnoxious to the jealousy and severity of the Roman government. Every one knew the Messiah was to be a king, and therefore whoever pretended to be the Messiah would be prosecuted as a traitor, which was the thing they would have been at; for, let him tell them ever so plainly that he was the Christ, they would have this to say presently, Thou bearest witness of thyself, as they had said, ch. 8:13." MHC
- B. They were looking for Jesus to incriminate Himself, they did not care about His claims.
  - 1. "It was an instance of their impudence and presumption that they laid the blame of their doubting upon Christ himself, as if he made them to doubt by inconsistency with himself, whereas in truth they made themselves doubt

by indulging their prejudices. If Wisdom's sayings appear doubtful, the fault is not in the object, but in the eye; they are all plain to him that understands. Christ would make us to believe; we make ourselves to doubt." MHC

II. Men are naturally unbelievers.

- A. Faith is a sign of the work of grace done in the heart.
- B. These leaders, although religious, still did not believe.
  - 1. Maybe it was their pride that kept them from admitting they were wrong.
  - 2. It could be that they could not face their friends and family if they were to inquire sincerely into Jesus claims.
  - 3. No doubt these are those who Paul described as blinded by Satan.
    - a. 2 Cor 4:4 Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. NLT

III. Had He told them that He was the Messiah?

- A. Not emphatically, unmistakably.
- B. But how his that other could find Him out and they could not.
  - 1. Was it not their prejudices, their hard hearts that kept them in the dark.
  - 2. They could not see what they had determined not to see.
- C. What was the real problem, His statements or their lack of faith?
  - 1. If they had really wanted to know the truth they would have already found it.
  - 2. John 7:17 If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. NKJV
  - 3. Kind of reminds me of what happened in Glen Rose TX when some creationists were excavating human footprints in the same limestone as dinosaur foot prints. Some big shot scientist came and never looked at the evidence but instead with his back turned to the digs recorded for the media that he had not seen anything here that would change his mind about origins.

IV. He had told some very plainly?

- A. The woman at the well in John 4
  - 1. John 4:25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who

is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." NKJV

B. And He had told them plainly enough.

1. "The struggle was between their convictions, which told them he was Christ, and their corruptions, which said, No, because he was not such a Christ as they expected." MHC
2. "It is not for us to teach God how he should teach us, nor prescribe to him how plainly he should tell us his mind, but to be thankful for divine revelation as we have it." MHC
3. I love the story of Lew Wallace, a well known atheist, who set out to write a romance of the life of Christ and to paint Jesus in quite human terms. He ended up writing Ben Hur.
4. Or better the story of William Ramsey who set out to prove the Bible wrong, and decided that Acts was the easiest book to do that. After over a decade of study and research he wrote St Paul the Traveler and Roman citizen in which he claimed there were not errors in Acts any where. He went on to write at least 15 more books proving the veracity of the Scriptures in those places that the sceptic had attacked them.

V. What one grand testimony did Jesus have that said He was the Messiah? His Works.

A. The signs that Jesus had freely shown were not enough for these unbelievers.

1. The feeding of the 5000 men plus women and children.
2. The feeding of the 4000.
3. Making blind people see and lame men to walk.
4. To cleanse the leper, and cast out demons.
5. None of these thing would turn their stiff neck.
6. Even 4 months from now when Jesus would raise Lazarus after 4 days, would only incite them to want to kill Lazarus and Jesus both.

VI. Unbelief is not a characteristic of His sheep.

A. Because ye are not of my sheep. This had been the point in the allegory of the Good Shepherd. In fact, they were the children of the devil in spirit and conduct (John 8:43), pious ecclesiastics though they seemed, veritable wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt 7:15)." AT Robertson

VII. The danger of unbelief.

A. It is self-blinding and keeps people from opening their lives to the claims of Jesus.

- B. Unbelief is itself a faith, a faith in something other than God.
- C. It gives the false sense of independence.
- D. It leads others to unbelief.
- E. It leads to eternal destruction.

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