

Exegetical Notes, John 10:22-42

“Believe in Me Because of the Works”

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen, Pastor, Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kylies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

charleshjensen@aol.com

John 10:22-42

Verses 22-24

Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter,²³ and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade.²⁴ The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

- The Feast of the Dedication was celebrated in mid-December. It was the feast set aside to celebrate the rededication of the Temple following its desecration in 165 B.C. The feast is now called the Feast of Lights or Hanukkah. Jesus was in the Temple on this occasion for this celebration.
- Jesus was walking in what was called Solomon’s Colonnade, a pillared structure which was thought to date back to Solomon’s Temple, but which did not.
- The Jews who were there asked Jesus to tell them if he was indeed the Messiah, the Christ. “Christ” is the Latin title equivalent to the Hebrew title, “Messiah.”

Verses 25-30

Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me,²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not my sheep.²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

- In answer to their question, Jesus told them that he had clearly answered that question. The fact is that he had not specifically used the title “Messiah” in reference to himself. However, he had made the answer to their question clear in what he said and what he did. He did not answer the question specifically at that time because it was not yet “his time.” Had he used the title specifically, the Jews would surely have stoned him.
- Jesus claimed that they did not see who he was through his teachings and his work because they were not his “sheep.” See John 10:1-21. But, he said that

his sheep did know who he was through his teaching and through the things he did. His “sheep” would be given eternal life because they believed in him.

- He then declared that his sheep were safe and would not be taken away from him by anyone because they had been given to him by the Father.
- He then declared that he and his Father, he and God, were in complete unity with each other, they were one! He declared that he was in complete agreement with God and that God completely agreed with him.

Verses 31-33

Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, ³² but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?” ³³ “We are not stoning you for any good work,” they replied, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”

- Those among the Jews who did not believe he was from God picked up stones with the intention of stoning Jesus to death.
- Sarcastically, Jesus asked them for which of his good works they were intending to kill him.
- They told him that they were not executing him for good works but for blasphemy. See Leviticus 24:16. He had called himself equal with God by declaring that he and God were in complete agreement with each other when he was nothing more than were they, human.

Verses 34-38

Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are “gods”’? ³⁵ If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be set aside— ³⁶ what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’? ³⁷ Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. ³⁸ But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”

- Jesus’ reference is Psalm 82:6, “I said, ‘You are gods’, you are all sons of the Most High.” The Psalm is condemning the unjust rulings of Israel’s priests and judges. It means that the rulers of Israel have power over the people as if they were gods, and that they are regarded by the people as “sons of God.” Jesus’ point was that if the Scripture referred to the leaders of Israel as gods and the sons of God why were they condemning him for saying that he was God’s son, too.

- He then called upon them to believe in him because he was clearly doing the work of God. That he did God's work showed him to be in agreement with God.

Verses 39-42

Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

⁴⁰ Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. There he stayed, ⁴¹ and many people came to him. They said, "Though John never performed a sign, all that John said about this man was true." ⁴² And in that place many believed in Jesus.

- They still rejected Jesus' argument and intended to stone him, but Jesus walked away from them.
- Jesus then left Jerusalem and went to the village of Bethany, not the one where Lazarus lived but the Bethany where John had been baptizing. This village was "across the Jordan River." Its exact location has been lost.
- Many people came to find Jesus in this place. Many of them knew the ministry of John the Baptist because this was where John had been. They saw in Jesus someone greater than John because of the miraculous signs Jesus did. John had not done miracles.
- While the leaders of Israel rejected Jesus and would not even consider the signs he did as proof of who he was, many people were convinced that Jesus was the Christ because of the works he did.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Believe In Me Because of the Works*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by *Cornerstone Fellowship* & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)