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One More Rejection

JOHN 10:22-42

Introduction

1. In the last half of chapter 10 of John's gospel, Jesus' disciple reveals to us a final confrontation of Jesus with the hostile crowd in Jerusalem (vv. 22-39).
2. This section can be divided into three subsections:
 - a. Jesus is the promised Messiah (vv. 22-30)
 - b. Jesus is the Son of God (vv. 31-39)
 - c. Jesus' strategic retreat to the place where it all began (vv. 40-42)
3. In these verses there are some powerful truths which John shares with us.
4. Let's look at what the Holy Spirit inspired him to write.

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I. Jesus the Messiah (vv. 22-30)

A. THE FEAST OF DEDICATION

1. A relatively new institution; not a feast that we find authorized by the O.T.
2. In 167 B.C. the Syrian Antiochus Epphanes, who was king of the Seleucid portion of the empire established by Alexander the Great, overran Jerusalem and desecrated the temple.
3. He set up a pagan altar to Zeus on top of the Altar of Burnt Offering.
4. He gave orders for the temple services to be suspended, the sacred scriptures destroyed, the Sabbath and other feast days to no longer be observed, the abolishment of the strict food laws and the end of the rite of circumcision.

5. When the Jews could stand the oppression no longer they revolted.
6. Under the leadership of a man known as Judas Maccabaeus they overthrew their oppressor, recaptured the temple and reconsecrated it to God on the 25th of Kislev in 164 B.C. (Kislev is the lunar month which approximately coincides with our month of December).
7. The people celebrated the feast for eight days and after it was over decreed that a similar eight-day Feast of Dedication (HANUKKAH) should be held every year beginning on the 25th of Kislev.
8. John tells us that it was this time of the year, “winter,” that Jesus was “walking in the temple in the portico (colonnade) of Solomon” (v. 22).

2a**B. “IF YOU ARE THE CHRIST, TELL US PLAINLY”**

1. The Jews wanted the question of Jesus’ status cleared up once and for all.
2. They wanted an unambiguous statement that would give them an adequate basis for their attack against Him.
3. Not once, to this point, has Jesus declared Himself to be the Messiah.
4. He has, however, revealed His identity in private conversations:
 - a. The Samaritan woman (4:26) — “I who speak to you am He” (“Messiah . . . He who is called Christ,” v. 25).
 - b. The man born blind (9:35) — “the Son of Man”
 - c. His immediate circle of disciples (Matthew 16:13-16; Mark 8:27-29; Luke 9:18-20) — “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

2b**C. “I TOLD YOU, AND YOU DO NOT BELIEVE” (v. 25)**

1. When Jesus said, “I told you,” he was not referring to an explicit statement, but to his works — “The works that I do in My Father’s name, these testify of Me” (v. 25).
2. The works which Jesus did in His Father’s name served as the revelation of

His Father's will and the embodiment of His Father's power.

3. The various miracles which Jesus had done . . .
 - a. the restoration of a man paralyzed for 38 years,
 - b. the healing of a man born blind,
 - c. and soon to come, the resurrection of a man who had been dead for 4 days

. . . along with His teaching spoke volumes about who He was.

2c

D. "YOU DO NOT BELIEVE BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT MY SHEEP" (v. 26)

1. The reason these hearers were so slow to understand was because they did not belong to Jesus' sheep.
2. His own sheep *hear* His voice, He *knows* them, and they *follow* Him.
3. Those who are *not* His sheep do *not* hear His voice, He does *not* know them, and they do *not* follow Him.
4. To His own sheep Jesus promised . . .
 - a. *Eternal life* — "I give eternal life to them" (v. 28a).
 - b. *A life that would know no end* — "they will never perish" (v. 28b).
 - c. *A life that is secure* — "no one will snatch them out of My hand" (v. 28c).
 - 1) The focus here is not on the power of the life itself, but on Jesus' power: no-one can snatch them out of my hand, not the attacking world (v. 12), not the thieves and robbers (vv. 1,8), not anyone.
 - 2) "What this passage teaches is that no foe can overpower God and Christ and snatch believers out of their care" (Pack, p. 176).
5. "My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all" (v. 29a).
 - a. Ultimately, it is the Father Himself who stands behind the preservation of Jesus' sheep.
 - b. Who can steal from God? Who can overpower or outwit the sovereign Father?
 - c. Since God is greater than all things or persons, there is no force or

being sufficient to sever the relationship between the true believer and Jesus Christ.

- d. As Paul said to the Colossian believers “your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). There is no greater security.
6. Jesus makes one final statement which upsets the Jews — “I and the Father are one” (v. 30).
 - a. One in purpose
 - b. One in essence
 - c. One in action — what Jesus does, the Father does, and vice versa.

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II. Jesus the Son of God (vv. 31-39)

A. THE JEWS DESIRE TO STONE JESUS (VV. 31-33)

1. The Jews took Jesus’ words — “I and the Father are one” — as blasphemy.
2. They responded the same way they did on two previous occasions:
 - a. “the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him” (John 5:18).
 - b. “they picked up stones to throw at Him” (John 8:59).
3. The law did teach that blasphemy was to be punished by stoning (Leviticus 24:16) — “the one who blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him.”
4. Unlike the previous situation (8:59), Jesus did not immediately withdraw.
5. Instead, He stayed long enough to confront His opponents.
6. He “answered” them with a question. “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?” (v. 32).
7. In other words, He was not acting in isolation. The good He was doing originated with the Father.
8. The question for the Jews was which of those good deeds was deserving of stoning?

9. “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God” (v. 33).
10. The Jews rejected the thought that they were stoning Jesus for a good work. Rather it was for blasphemy.
11. They argued Jesus was a man, but was making Himself to be God.
12. But, Jesus had not “made Himself” God. As John pointed out in the beginning of His gospel, Jesus is Himself the eternal Word, the Word that was with God and was God.
13. A change did take place, but it was the opposite of what the Jews were claiming:
 - a. Jesus humbly and obediently emptied Himself.
 - b. The eternal Word became flesh (1:14), the Son became man.

3b**B. “HAS IT NOT BEEN WRITTEN IN YOUR LAW, ‘I SAID, YOU ARE GODS?’” (v. 34)**

1. He quoted from Psalm 82:6 — “I said, “You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High.”
2. In this passage God is addressing Israel’s judges, who are corrupting justice in the courts of the land (Psalm 82:1-4).
3. God refers to these judges as ‘gods’ because for them to exercise justice is to step into an area generally reserved for God — “You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God’s” (Deuteronomy 1:17).
4. Jesus reasons that if there are others whom God (the author of Scripture) can address as ‘gods’ and ‘sons of the Most High’ (i.e., sons of God), on what biblical basis should anyone object when Jesus says, I am God’s Son?
5. In verse 36, Jesus claims two things for Himself — He is the One “whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world.”

- a. The word “sanctified” is from a Greek word which means “to make holy,” “to consecrate” or “to set apart”.
 - b. Many years earlier, in Jeremiah 1:5, God had said of His prophet, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.”
6. Jesus’ point is that God has done the same with Him — He has sanctified, consecrated Him, set Him apart for a specific task and sent Him into the world to accomplish it.

Slide 5**C. THE ACID TEST (vv. 37-38)**

“If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.” (John 10:37–38, NASB95)

1. Jesus calls upon them to let His works be the criterion by which he is judged.
2. If He does not do the works of His Father then He is ready for them not to believe.
3. However, if He does do the works of His Father, He calls them to “believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.” (John 10:37–38, NASB95)
 - a. “Know and understand” (“know and believe,” KJV, NKJV) — Same verb, twice over, only the tense is changed.
 - b. Jesus wants them to “come to know” and “keep on knowing” based upon the works they observe that the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father.

5a**D. A FAILED ATTEMPT (v. 39)**

“Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp” (John 10:39).

1. The people attempted to arrest Him again, as they had after the Feast of Tabernacles (7:30).
2. However, as John indicates, “He eluded their grasp” (escaped from their hands, ESV) — as before, His hour had not come (cf. 7:30; 8:20).
3. There may be a subtle truth which John is trying to present: “The ‘hand’ of the enemy is powerless to arrest while the ‘hand’ of the Father is mighty to protect.” (Morris, *John*, p. 529).

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III. A Strategic Retreat (vv. 40-42)

A. “HE WENT AWAY AGAIN BEYOND THE JORDAN” (v. 40)

1. Jesus left Jerusalem and Judea, crossed the Jordan to the east side, “to the place where John was first baptizing” (v. 40).
2. William Barclay, in his comment on these last verses said that Jesus “always armed himself to meet men by first meeting God. That is why He retired to the other side of Jordan. He was not running away: he was preparing himself for the final contest.” (Barclay, *John*, p. 79).
3. There is a significance about this place to which Jesus went:
 - a. It was where John had been accustomed to baptize.
 - b. It was the place where Jesus Himself was baptized.
 - c. It was there that the voice of God had assured Him that He had made the right decision and was on the right way.
4. Just before the end, Jesus went back to the place where it had all started.

B. “MANY CAME TO HIM AND . . . BELIEVED IN HIM THERE” (vv. 41, 42)

1. Even here, on the far side of the Jordan, like John the Baptist, many were coming to Him.
2. They saw a difference between Jesus and John.
3. John performed no signs, but Jesus ministry had been filled with signs (miracles).

4. Everything John had said about Jesus had proven to be true.
 - a. “After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me” (John 1:30).
 - b. “I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God” (John 1:34).
5. The result was that many came to believe in Him.

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Conclusion

1. Jesus promise to His sheep, as we saw in verse 28 is this: “I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.”
2. Where else can you find such a promise, such assurance, such security?
3. This is the promise made to those of us who choose to hear His voice and follow Him.
4. There is no greater security than to know that our lives are “hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3).

7a

5. At the end of this section, William Barclay had this comment: “Jesus is the one person who never disappoints those who set their hopes upon him. In him the dream always comes true.” (William Barclay, *John*, 79).
6. But it is only available to those who Jesus knows as His own.
7. Do you belong to Him? If not, why not come to Him tonight?
8. Let Him wash your sins away and become your great Shepherd.
9. You will never regret it.