



TALKS FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS TRANSCRIPT

John 10:22-30: A Strong Statement about the Eternal Security of the Believer

"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."

Background Notes

Verse 22 tells us that "it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter." From John 7 to this point in chapter 10, the events all took place around the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, in the autumn. Two months have elapsed. It is winter in Jerusalem. You may not have realized that they do have winter in the Holy Land, but they do. Their winters are certainly not like the winters here in New England, but it does snow occasionally in Jerusalem. In fact, it has snowed in Jericho, which is one of the lowest and warmest cities in the world!

The Feast of Dedication celebrated the cleansing of the Temple that took place in the second century BC. The Temple had been desecrated when the Syrians occupied Israel, but after they were defeated under the leadership of the Maccabees the Temple was cleansed and re-dedicated. The Feast of Dedication is also known as the Festival of Lights, or Hanukkah. This Feast was not one of the feasts ordained by God under the Mosaic Law, and this is the only place in the Bible where this festival is mentioned.

In verse 23 we read that Jesus walked in the Temple, in Solomon's porch. Solomon's Porch was similar to a Greek stoa; it was a covered walkway along the east side of the Temple complex. Don't get the idea that this spot goes back to Solomon's time -- the Babylonians destroyed Solomon's Temple. The place where Jesus walked was part of the Second Temple, or Herod's Temple, but this structure was called "Solomon's Porch." It was a place where the people gathered to listen to religious discussions, and it was here that the Lord once again addressed the Jews. The Jews wanted Jesus to declare plainly that He was the Messiah. The Lord replied that He did tell them plainly, but they wouldn't believe! Furthermore, Jesus said, how much more evidence do you want? "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"(v25).

Background/ Teaching Points

1. Those who are not sheep do not believe, because they are not sheep.

That sounds like double talk at first, but that is essentially what Jesus told the unbelieving Jews in verse 26: "But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you." Notice what He didn't say. The Lord didn't say, "You are not my sheep because you don't believe." That was true enough. Rather, the Lord said, "You don't believe because you're not my sheep."

In this statement we definitely have an indication of the sovereignty of God in calling a person to salvation. We're saved because God chose us. Now the Bible also teaches is a person is responsible to come to God for salvation. God sovereignly chooses us, but at the same time we have the responsibility to choose God.

Both points are true -- and they are not contradictory truths! How they harmonize is beyond our finite comprehension, but they don't contradict one another. The Bible doesn't say in one place, "God chose us" and in another place, "God didn't choose us." That would be a contradiction. Or if the Bible said in one place, "You're responsible to choose God," and in another place, "You're not responsible to choose God" -- that would be a logical contradiction. But we don't have that in the Bible. The Bible does teach that God chose us, and also that we have a responsibility to choose God, and that is not a logical contradiction! It is beyond our finite comprehension, but we don't have infinite minds. It's beyond our finite comprehension, but it is definitely taught in Scripture.

Both of these truths are seen side by side in John 6:37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out." In that one verse we have both of these truths side by side; they are not contradictory. And here in John 10:26, the "sovereignty of God aspect" of salvation is in view: "But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep."

2. The eternal security of the sheep lies in the strength of the Shepherd, not in the weakness of the sheep.

"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."

These are some of the greatest verses in the Bible teaching the eternal security of the believer! Once you are one of Jesus Christ's sheep, you are in His flock forever! If you are saved, you can't lose your salvation.

Notice the first clause of verse 28: "And I give them eternal life." If you're a believer, you have eternal life. The Lord didn't say "you will have eternal life when you die" – He says you have it now! And if you have eternal life now, you have it eternally! It's eternal life.

The second clause of verse 28 says, "and they shall never perish." You may backslide, but you will never perish. This statement is very strong in the Greek language – they will indeed not ever perish!

And the third clause of verse 28 says, "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." This means that if you are saved, no person can take you out of the Lord's hands. Satan can't take you out of the Lord's hands. You can't fall out of the Lord's hands! You can't jump out of the Lord's hands. And no way does the Lord have "exception clauses" in His mind when He said that His sheep are safe in His hands! The eternal security of the sheep lies in the strength of the Shepherd and not in the weakness of the sheep.

3. The Father and the Son are distinct Persons of the one true God.

"I and My Father are one"(v30). What did the Lord mean by that statement? Certainly He meant that He and the Father were one in mind, and one in purpose, and one in action, and one in power, etc. But the fact that the Jews took up stones to stone Him (v31) would strongly indicate that they saw this statement as another claim to deity. They recognized that when Jesus said, "I and My Father are one" He meant not only one in mind, purpose, action, and power -- but also one in essence or nature!

That is certainly what the Bible teaches in the doctrine of the Trinity. God the Father is fully God, and yet a distinct Person of the one true God. God the Son is fully God, and He is a distinct Person of the one true God. And the Holy Spirit is fully God, yet He is a distinct Person of the one true God. Not "three Gods" -- one God! And the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are not three "modes" of the one true God -- that's heresy. They are three distinct Persons in the one true God. That's orthodox theology: God is one in essence, but three in Persons. So "I and My Father are one" means that the Father and the Son are One, but they are distinct Persons of the one true God.

Practical Application

Do you have the "Good Hands" life insurance policy?

As you probably know, there is a major insurance company that advertises, "You're in good hands" with their company - right? Well, those good hands are not perfect. In fact, some people have fallen out or jumped out of those imperfect hands! But here in verses 28-29 we read of "Perfect Hands" -- the hands of the Lord Jesus and the hands of the Father! If you're in those hands, you're really in Good Hands! You are safe and secure forever.

Have you ever been dropped by an insurance company? The "Good Hands" will never drop you! The perfect hands of God will never drop you. Colossians 3:3 says, "For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

Maybe you've never invested in the Good Hands life insurance policy. The Good Hands policy guarantees eternal life insurance! Maybe you're still trusting in a life insurance policy of your own making. No one is born with the Good Hands insurance policy. You must become an owner by accepting Christ as your personal Savior. Do you have the "Good Hands" life insurance policy?