



The Good Shepherd Loves His Enemies

Pastor Jon Duncan

Kick Start:

How did God speak to you through this message?

Main Point:

Out of His great love for His enemies, Jesus offers the religious leaders one last gracious invitation. “Believe the works, so you may know and go on to know more fully that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” The only way to eternal life is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, to believe He is God in human flesh. If there was still a chance for them, there is a chance for you.

Introduction:

The book of John presents signs of Jesus that are meant to point to who Jesus is and what He came to do. John states His purpose in telling us about these signs: *“These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”* However, instead of more faith, there is unbelief and more conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders. What does Jesus do in the face of unbelief? Out of love, Jesus still speaks the truth about Himself. Jesus confronts unbelief.

Message Outline:

I. Not believing the Christ

The Feast of the Dedication celebrates the rededication of the temple in 165 BC, three years after the temple had been desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes. The feast was celebrated as a reminder of God’s faithfulness in preserving the temple. The true and greater Temple has come; however, the Jews remain blind or choose not to see who Jesus really is. They surround Jesus to entrap Him with a loaded question that would result in His arrest and execution by the Romans. Jesus exposes the nature of unbelief as seen in their refusal to receive what Jesus has revealed about Himself. His works had offered more than enough evidence to verify His claim to be the Messiah. The Pharisees had chosen to not believe, and they alone were responsible for their sin of unbelief.

John 10:22-30

Talk About It:

1. What are some truths you notice about the relationship between belief and belonging?
2. How can life’s distractions impact your view of His care and guidance in your life? In what ways can we better recognize Jesus’ voice amid life’s distractions?
3. What does “never perish” in John 10:28 mean for a believer’s everyday life?
4. What do these passages teach us about Jesus’ approach to confrontation?

II. Not believing the Son

Angered by how Jesus makes Himself equal with God, the Jews want to stone Him to death for what they think are blasphemous words. Jesus didn't panic and didn't run; He stopped them with the power of His word. Jesus challenges them to point out any wrong He has done which they can't. The fact is, Jesus has shown them many good works from the Father. They refuse to believe He is the Son of God and accuse Him of blasphemy because He makes Himself God. To answer His accusers, Jesus quotes from Psalm 82:6 and reasoned, *If earthly judges are called gods because they represent divine justice, do not I, who comes from heaven and am consecrated by the Father for My Messianic task, have the right to this designation? Make a diligent study of My works in order that they you may accept Me by faith.* Again, the Jews are offended by Jesus' claim to be equal with God the Father and they sought to arrest Him, but he escaped from their hands.

John 10:31-42

Talk About It:

1. In what ways can believers today prepare to face opposition similar to what Jesus experienced in John 10:31?
2. In what ways can believers today act as representatives of God, similar to the "gods" mentioned in Psalm 82?
3. Jesus states Scripture cannot be broken. How does believing in the Bible's infallibility shape the way you respond to its commands and promises?
4. When have you doubted parts of Scripture, and how did you deal with those doubts in light of God's truthfulness?
5. How does recognizing the hate and rejection endured by Jesus deepen your appreciation for the salvation He made possible?
6. Jesus removed Himself from harm's way and crossed the Jordan. How does illustrate Jesus' strategic withdrawal for His ministry's success?
7. What is one lesson from John 10 that has challenged or encouraged you? How can you apply it to your life this week?

Conclusion:

Jesus moves on from the religious leaders and no longer engages with their determined, willful, and fixed unbelief. It's scary when God seemingly says "enough." God confirms the final answer of those who do not want His Son to be their Savior. The gospel is speaking to you, and every time you resist it and resist the Spirit of God working in your heart, it's like another nail in your coffin—one step closer to no more opportunities. It makes no difference what you've done. There is no one too sinful or too far gone for God to save. Let today be the day you BELIEVE.

Make It Practical:

Are you a part of the Good Shepherd's flock?

By Chuck Swindoll

At some point in your past, you should be able to recall a time when you repented of your sin, acknowledged your utter helplessness to save yourself, and then received from God the gift of eternal life through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on your behalf. The Bible teaches that this decision is the beginning of a lifelong process of transformation. As the years pass, the sheep faithfully follow their Shepherd and they become more and more like Him. In His discourse with the religious experts, **Jesus described four qualities of God's sheep I John 10**. His purpose was to show that none of the religious experts bore any evidence of these qualities and therefore should be regarded as outsiders.

First, God's sheep are sensitive to His leading (John 10:27a).

If you were to travel the world and hold an informal conversation with Christians in different countries and from different cultures, you will eventually hear them describe a common experience: the inner prompting of the Holy Spirit leading them to do certain things or to go certain places. I'm amazed by the similarities in the descriptions of people living on opposite sides of the globe.

Second, God's sheep are eager to obey His commands (10:27b).

Sheep follow their shepherd because sheep without a shepherd die; they fall prey to wild animals, they wander into danger, they fail to find food and water, and they succumb to the elements. Obedient sheep live.

A genuine believer wants to obey; he or she is motivated by love, not fear. Furthermore, genuine believers soon learn that obedience allows them to enjoy life to its fullest.

Third, God's sheep are confident (10:28).

Domestic sheep and sheep in the wild behave very differently while grazing. Wild sheep remain ever vigilant against predators; they chew with their heads up, constantly scanning their surroundings for danger. Domestic sheep graze with their heads down, popping up only when a noise draws their attention. When sheep have a good shepherd, they feel secure; they don't live in constant fear.

Believers rest in the confidence that Christ has done everything to secure their eternal safety for them. Because He is completely faithful, we may rest in the confident assurance that we will be preserved from evil until evil no longer exists.

Fourth, God's sheep are secure (10:29).

This is a fact, not a feeling. Regardless of how insensitive, how disobedient, or how fearful the sheep choose to be, their place in the flock is secure. This is not to suggest the believer's behavior is irrelevant or unimportant. People who willfully resist spiritual growth and who evidence no change in their values or behavior need to seriously question their spiritual condition. However, eternal security—like salvation itself—is not based upon the goodness of the believer. We are just as incapable of holding onto salvation as we were of earning it in the first place.

While holding tightly to the fourth quality, let me encourage you to cultivate the first three as you continue following the Lord. Remain sensitive to His leading, obey Him with all diligence and without hesitation, and rest in the confidence of His power to protect you from all evil. After all, He's the Good Shepherd, so following Him is for your own good.

Prayer Points:

- Thank you for our gift of your salvation. Help us to live it out by hearing and following you more intently
- Give us a greater understanding of your Word and help us to cherish it
- Help us to have a heart like yours when we face opposition
- We pray for the specific people in our lives who are far from God. We ask you to open their hearts and give us opportunities to share Jesus with them.
- Help us to live and serve with eternal purpose, be courageous in our witness, and faithful in what ask of us
- Pray for the needs of the group.