

Theme: Our security in Christ and in life is not a matter of our ability to hold onto Jesus, it is a matter of his power to hold on to us. Any other hope will assuredly fail.

Background: The end of his “public” ministry; his final public discourse.

Introduction: What may be the most encouraging passage on assurance in the whole bible.

I. A Direct Question – Are You the Christ?

A. The setting (22,23)

1. Feast of Dedication – a brief history
 - 332 BC – Alexander the Great conquers the Persian empire
 - Strong Greek influence over Jewish life, culture for next 165 yrs
 - 165 BC – Judas Maccabeus rededicates the temple
2. Themes: Purification, re-dedication, restoration – all appropriate for ministry of the Messiah

B. The challenge – “Are you the Christ?”

1. Challenge for Jesus?
 - Jesus has avoided using “Messiah/Christ” in public settings
 - But has declared it in private (John 4:25,26; 9:37)
2. Challenge from the Jews (24)
 - Stop keeping us in suspense (“don’t annoy us anymore”)
 - “Are you the Christ?”

II. A Clear Answer (25)

A. I *have* shown you

- a. The works I do bear witness
 - John 2:6,7; 2:23; 4:50; 5:8; 6:1-14; 6:19,20; 9:1-7
- b. Answering John’s disciples (Luke 7:20-22)

B. I *have* told you

1. In the past. I AM...
 - a. The bread of life (6:33; 6:35; 6:50,51)
 - b. The light of the world (8:12; 3:16ff)
 - c. The good shepherd (10:11)
 - d. The way of salvation (6:44)
2. Here and now!
 - a. I *give* eternal life! Divine prerogative (28)
 - b. Divine unity (30)

ASIDE: Understanding verse 30

1. Jesus maintains a distinction between Father and Son
 - But Jesus does what the Father does; The Father does what Jesus does.
2. This verse is the source of many controversies regarding Jesus’ *nature*
 - a. Jesus is one in purpose with the Father
 - b. Jesus is one in nature with the Father
 - c. Jews clearly understood Jesus to be saying much more than “one in purpose”

III. A Divided Response

A. Radical rejection

1. Blasphemer! “Stone him!” (33)
 - a. The “works” of Jesus are not the issue
 - b. His words are the problem!

NOTE: It is no different today.
2. Jesus responds: Your law says,... (34-36)
 - a. Psalm 82
 - We are “sons of God” as his firstborn (Exodus 4:22)
 - b. “...scripture cannot be broken”
 - You can’t ignore it or reject it because you don’t like it
 - c. He is fulfilling the Word of God (36)
 - He is consecrated by the Father – set apart!
 - Sent into the world – as God’s perfect emissary

NOTE: This is not a “proof text” for his divine relationship with the Father. He is showing them the weakness of their argument.
3. You are not my sheep!! (26)
 - Complete rejection follows (37-39)

The only alternative?

B. Complete acceptance/confidence (27-29)

1. My sheep!
 - They hear
 - They are known
 - They follow
2. His gift!
3. The guarantee
 - a. Never perish!!
 - b. Never lost! Perfect security!
4. Truly and eternally “saved”
 - Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:15; Matthew 20:28; Isaiah 53:11
 - Chosen before the foundation of the world

IV. The Question Before Us

- The very same one that was before the Jews

A. No middle ground

- We deal with Jesus on his terms, not ours

B. Jesus divides – no question about it

1. There is not partial rejection
 - We can’t pick and choose the words we would keep
2. There is no partial acceptance
 - If you would have the gift, you *must* follow him