

Safe In The Hand Of The Good Shepherd

April 17, 2016

John 10:22-30 -- *“Then came the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah / Lights) at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. (porch) The Jews gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”*

There are two stray cats that live in woods behind the church and on the back porch of the parsonage. Those cats and I have an understanding, they keep the mice out of the basement of the parsonage, and I feed them. So each morning and each evening, if they are not on the porch waiting for food, all I need to do is call their names – “Goldie” and “Grey”, and by the time I have some food out of the bag, they are either coming to the porch or already on it. They know my voice.

This Morning Jesus says,

Vs. 27 - **My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.**

John Chapter 10 is The Good Shepherd chapter. Jesus repeats Himself twice directly by saying, **“I Am The Good Shepherd.”** (10:11; 10:14) Various times in this chapter, Jesus refers to the Shepherd – Sheep relationship.

Why would Jesus need to repeat Himself?

Sheep are not always the most intelligent. They wander off and get lost. They are easily killed by wild animals.

People do not always remember everything that they are told, and sometimes when they are told something, they need to hear it a number of times before it sinks-in.

At the time of Jesus, there was this group of people who had heard Jesus and seen His miracles various times, and it did not sink in that Jesus is The Christ, that is The Savior of the World.

Vs. 24 - **The Jews gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.”**

And Jesus replies to them:

Vs. 25 - **“I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me,**

Jesus gave sight to the blind, healed the sick, drove out demons, raised people from the dead and fed thousands of people with a few small fish and loaves of bread, and yet these Jews who saw the miracles, did not believe in Jesus as the Savior Who was to come to save mankind from hell.

Instead of believing in Jesus, we are told in **John 10:31**, **“Again the Jews picked up stones to stone Jesus.”**

Instead of believing in Jesus - instead of standing back with jaws dropped in awe and amazement, they wanted to kill Jesus.

Why do these Jews not believe in the Lord Jesus?

Vs. 26 - but you do not believe because you are NOT my sheep.

Jesus then continues by saying:

Vs. 27 - My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

What a blessing that you are sheep of Jesus!

What does it mean for you?

Vs. 28 - I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

Instead of the fear of Hell, you can look forward to the blessings of heaven because of the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross, and because He conquered sin, death and the devil for you.

Because you have been brought to faith in Jesus, the forgiveness of sins which Christ won on the Cross has become yours.

Even though we are Christ's sheep while on the other hand the Jews who rejected Him are not His sheep, does that make us better? - NO! We have all been born with the same sinful nature, the same rebellious attitude, the same sinful nature that is hostile to God, since the fall into sin.

It is only By God's Grace and Mercy and Love that you are believers in Christ.

And so, you are SAFE in the Hand of Jesus.

Do not Jump out of the protecting hand of Jesus. Do not be lead astray by the temptations of this world and this life.

If I were to call those stray cats, but then would not feed them, how long before they would stop coming?

Jesus never has an empty Call. He Calls us through the Gospel in Word and Sacrament.

Christ's Call is Never Empty, but is full of Salvation which He has won for us.

The Lord Jesus Christ, Who is God Almighty, Who is The Good Shepherd, Knows you by NAME.

AMEN