

JESUS AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION

John 10:22-42

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Jesus, disciples, and Pharisees

Key-location: Jerusalem

Key-repetitions:

- Confrontation: Jews asked Jesus to tell them if he were the Christ (Jn 10:24); Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus (Jn 10:31); they accused Jesus of blasphemy (Jn 10:33); they tried to seize Jesus (Jn 10:38).
- Father: Jesus claimed to do miracles in his Father's name (Jn 10:25, 37); the Father gave Jesus his sheep (Jn 10:29); the Father is greater than everyone else (Jn 10: 29); no one can tear Jesus' sheep out of his Father's hand (Jn 10:30); Jesus is one with the Father (Jn 10:30, 38).
- Blasphemy: Jews accused Jesus of blasphemy (Jn 10:33); Jesus asked why they accused him of blasphemy (Jn 10:36).
- Works/miracles: the miracles Jesus did in his Father's name spoke about who he is (Jn 10:25); Jesus performed miracles from the Father (Jn 10:32); Jesus did what the Father does (Jn 10:37); Jesus challenged the Jews to believe the miracles that he did so they would understand that Jesus and the Father were one with each other (Jn 10:37-38).

Key-attitudes:

- Pharisees' hostility when they made accusations against Jesus.
- Jesus' firmness when he answered the Pharisees.

Initial-situation:

The third year of Jesus' ministry is divided into two halves. During the second half or the year, Jesus made three trips to Jerusalem to participate in three religious feasts. The first trip was for the Feast of the Tabernacles when there was confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders. On a Sabbath after the Feast, Jesus healed a man who had been born blind. That created another conflict with the Pharisees. Jesus then declared himself to be the Good Shepherd.

Initial-problem:

Jesus went to the temple in Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication. Jews surrounded him, asking, "How long will you keep us guessing? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

Final-situation:

Jews in Jerusalem tried to arrest Jesus. Jesus went across the Jordan River. Many people went to Jesus and believed in him.

BIBLE STORY

After the Feast of the Tabernacles, it is assumed Jesus went to the region of Perea.

That winter, Jesus went to the temple in Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication. Jews surrounded him, asking, "How long will you keep us guessing? Tell us plainly if you are the Christ."

Jesus answered, "I told you, but you don't believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak and show who I am. Because you aren't my sheep, you don't believe me. My sheep respond to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life. No one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than everyone else. No one can tear them out of my Father's hand. I am one with the Father" (Jn 10:22-30).

Again, Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus.

Jesus asked them, "I've shown you many great miracles that the Father sent me to do. For which of these do you stone me?"

The Jews replied, "We're not stoning you because of any miracle you did. We're stoning you for blasphemy. You are only a man, yet you claim to be God."

Jesus answered them, "Why do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? Don't believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do my Father's works, at least believe the miracles. Then you'll understand that the Father is one with me, and I am one with the Father" (Jn 10:31-38).

Again, they tried to arrest Jesus, but he escaped their grasp (Jn 10:39).

Jesus went back across the Jordan River to the place where John the Baptist first baptized people. Many people went to Jesus. They said, "John didn't perform miracles; however, everything John said about Jesus is true." Many people there believed in Jesus.

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did Jesus' words and deeds working together prove that he is God?
2. What promise did Jesus give to those who follow him?
3. Why did the Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus?
4. How did Jesus answer the Jews who accused him of blasphemy because he claimed that God was his father?

5. What implication does it have for you that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and not just a person?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **People often ask spiritual questions for the wrong reasons.** Many who questioned Jesus didn't want to follow him the way he wanted to lead them (Jn 10:24). Many wanted Jesus to declare himself the Messiah for political reasons. They wanted Jesus to be a revolutionary Messiah who would drive out the Romans from their country. Pharisees wanted Jesus to identify himself so they could accuse him of lying.
2. **Jesus protects his followers from eternal harm in the same way as a shepherd protects his sheep.** Jesus promised his followers eternal life; they will never perish; no one can take them away from him (Jn 10:27-28). Jesus gives his followers everlasting safety. Satan can neither steal them from Jesus nor steal their eternal life.
3. **Salvation doesn't depend upon a person holding onto God; it depends upon God holding onto the person.** Therefore, unless God fails, and he won't, the believer in Jesus is safe. Jesus said that no one could tear his sheep out of his hand nor out of the Father's hand (Jn 10:28).
4. **The combination of Jesus' words and actions prove he is God.** Jesus claimed that the works he did in his Father's name give witness that he is the Son of God (Jn 10:25). The works of Jesus in people's lives still give evidence he is God's Son.
5. **Either Jesus is God and the Scripture is trustworthy, or Jesus was a deceiving con artist and the Bible is a book full of errors.** Jesus claimed to be God. The Scripture testifies that Jesus was who he claimed to be. The Jewish leaders attempted to stone Jesus because they did not believe his claims were true (Jn 10:30-33).
6. **Jesus is God.** He declared himself to be God when he said, "I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:30). Jesus and the Father are not the same person; however, they are one in nature and essence.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. **Chant:**
Words in **bold and underlined** are stressed. Stress words by stretching them out instead of increasing volume.

Group 1	Group 2
<u>M</u> y sheep	Listen to <u>m</u> y voice
<u>I</u> know them	They <u>f</u> ollow me
<u>I</u> give them eternal life	They shall <u>n</u> ever perish
<u>I</u> <u>k</u> now them; <u>I</u> <u>g</u> ive them eternal life	<u>N</u> o <u>o</u> ne can snatch them out of my hand
All	
<p>“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” (John 10:27-28 NIV).</p>	

2. **Twitter Prayers** (short, concise prayers):

Invite listeners to pray about the story in “twitter” length prayers. Tell God:

- How they feel about Jesus calling his followers, “His sheep.”
- How they feel about Jesus’ promises that no one can tear his followers from neither his hands nor the Father’s.
- Decisions they need to make as a result of hearing the story.
- How the story helps them face personal life-issues.