

The Great Debate

John 10.22-42
October 25, 2020

Introduction

- Presidential Debates
- The scene in John 10.22-42 is a debate of much higher stakes

Explanation of the Text

Plain talk -- What do you need to believe? – vs.22-26

- Festival of Dedication = Hanukah
- “the portico of Solomon,” a traditional place for teaching and debate (see Acts 3:11; 5:12).

Perish or live. Eternal life is... vs.27-30

1. Predicated upon relationship -- ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.
2. A gift, not a reward -- ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish;
3. Cannot be stolen or lost -- no one will snatch them out of my hand, ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.
4. Established in the authority of Christ -- ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

The Pharisees answer their initial question – vs. 31-33

- Irony? Jesus came to give them life, but their agenda is to take his.

The Proof is in the Pudding – vs. 34-39

- These are Jesus’ last words in the Gospel to “the Jews,” and it is striking that after all the recrimination that has gone on through five chapters, he can still end with an open invitation to believe—plus the hope “that you might learn and know that the Father is in me and I in the Father” (v. 38b).

The Purpose of the Gospel – vs. 40-42

- The two sojourns at “Bethany across the Jordan” stand like bookends to Jesus’ public ministry. After the rejections and attempted stonings at the Tent festival and the Rededication in Jerusalem, Jesus returns to here faith and discipleship began. Unbelief is not the end of the story.

Implications of the Text

1. You’ll never argue someone into the kingdom of God.
 - a. Apologetics – a defense of the faith
 - b. Isaiah 6.6-10; Ephesians 4.17-19
 - c. Pray for the lost, that their hearts would be changed, that their eyes might see; but know this: only God can do this
2. Those who have put their faith in Christ are secure.
 - a. Can you lose your salvation?
 - b. Romans 8.36ff. Ephesians 1.13-14
 - c. Rest assured: no one and nothing is greater than God
3. There is no disputing who Jesus is.
 - a. The reason why he was crucified
 - b. Romans 1.20; Matthew 27.54
 - c. Live confidently; you are a child of the King
4. Jesus saves.
 - a. The Jews want to kill Jesus; Jesus retreats, but he doesn’t hide. Jesus still engages in ministry
 - b. The whole reason the Gospel is written is to inspire faith – John 20.30-31
 - c. Receive without reservation; drink deeply from the spring of eternal life

Conclusion

This passage is set on a debate stage with a political and religious backdrop

Jesus establishes that he is the Messiah, the giver, sustainer, and protector of eternal life,

This scene ends with a message of life over death and foreshadows the seventh sign which settles the debate over Jesus’ authority and identity once and for all.