

Thursday, March 26, 2015

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Scripture

John 10:19-42

19 Again the Jews were divided because of these words. 20 Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why listen to him?" 21 Others were saying, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

22 At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. 24 So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." 25 Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; 26 but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. 27 My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. 30 The Father and I are one."

31 The Jews took up stones again to stone him. 32 Jesus replied, "I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these are you going to stone me?" 33 The Jews answered, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you, but for blasphemy, because you, though only a human being, are making yourself God." 34 Jesus answered, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, you are gods'?" 35 If those to whom the word of God came were called 'gods' — and the scripture cannot be annulled — 36 can you say that the one whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world is blaspheming because I said, 'I am God's Son'? 37 If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me. 38 But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father." 39 Then they tried to arrest him again, but he escaped from their hands.

40 He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing earlier, and he remained there. 41 Many came to him, and they were saying, "John performed no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true." 42 And many believed in him there.

Devotional

I was blessed to grow up on a small dairy farm that has been in my family for 200 years. Although I was never much the farmer, I did help to take care of my family's 35 dairy cows. My job was to go out into the fields and call them home each evening for milking. I remember when my parents first had me do

this, the cows did not respond. My dad explained that they probably didn't recognize my voice. As he called them for me, I noticed the way he made the call and how they suddenly came. When I imitated him the next time, the cows came with little problem. They knew the farmer's call and didn't listen to another. It's no wonder they respond to the farmer alone; the farmer is the one who knows them by name and who cares for them each and every day.

As I hear Jesus' words today, I cannot help but remember this episode from my childhood. It is a reminder to listen, on our Lenten journey and always, for the voice of the one who by his incarnation, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension, is leading us through this life, who knows us by name, who provides and cares for us, and gives to us eternal life.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the great Shepherd who laid down your life for your sheep. Though we, like them, are often wayward and stubborn, may we by your grace be attentive and responsive to your call above all else, even with all that competes for our attention and devotion. To you be praise, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.