

John 10

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 December 2023

Preacher: Roger Phipps

[0 : 00] Okay, John 10, chapter 10, let's look at verse 22 and 23. This is just going to be a springboard to get us started.

Then we're going to have an introduction that I fear is going to be too long, but I'm sorry about that. Now, I was going to ask someone to read it, but I know we're recording, so I'll go ahead and read it. And it was, by the way, this morning, most of my reading is going to come from King James Version. So, oh yes, shocking, isn't it? King James Version, the one that I can understand, you know, the 1900 translation.

The original King James, by the way, I can't even read, and I know I can't pronounce it. So, John chapter 10, starting with verse 22.

It was at Jerusalem during the Feast of the Dedication, and it was winter.

[1 : 16] And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. You see that? The Feast of the Dedication. Which one is that? Okay, good.

Okay. Now, by the way, some of our brothers and sisters here are responsible for this lesson. So, just, you can try to decide who that might be. There's a celebration mentioned. What is it? The Feast of the Dedication.

Now, I'm going to ask another question. That seems like it's not related, but it really is. What's a holiday? That's where we get the word.

A holy day. What does that mean? Literally, it's set apart. Now, when you use the word holy day, holiday, well, not when you use it generally, because I know how we use it generally.

[2 : 35] But, literally, when we use the word holiday, we're not just talking about any day we set apart. Let's look at the United States during our lifetime right now.

Now, we call Independence Day a holiday, don't we? And, in a technical term, it is because it's a day we set apart to recognize our declaration to the world that we're becoming independent from England.

But, normally, normally, a holiday isn't just any day I set apart, like I've made a schedule to go to the doctor.

Usually, a holiday refers to a day set apart to God. Right? Do we understand that part? For a reason.

Now, is the Feast of Dedication a holiday? Why not?

[3 : 49] Okay, we're going to get into that. Some of these are trick questions, so don't be offended, Adam. Yeah, it is a Jewish holiday.

Is it a prescribed holiday? There are six holidays prescribed in Leviticus chapter 23 for the law. There are six prescribed. One of those, by the way, and this is incidental, only one of those prescribed days is a fast.

Think about that when you talk to some brothers and sisters that kind of push you on fasting. The rest are feasts.

All of them are celebrations of feasting, except one. What day was that, by the way? Yom Kippur, which means the Day of Atonement.

[4 : 53] Because on that day, Israel was to afflict their soul for their sin. And that was with the, and then there was several, there were several prescribed sacrifices and rituals done throughout that, but I don't want to digress too far.

Two celebrations, two celebrations are not prescribed in Leviticus. One of those, do you know what two they are?

Off the top of your head. Well, okay, Hanukkah, which, by the way, was going to be another question. That's this feast.

Hanukkah literally is the Feast of Lights, but that's another, there's another reason they do that. But the Feast of the Dedication, we'll get back to.

The other feast that is not prescribed in the law is from Esther. Purim, which literally means the Feast of the Lots.

[6 : 10] Do you recall why they did that? Why is it called the Feast of Purim, or the Lots? Because of Haman.

So, that's why the Jewish children run around with these little dolls of Haman, and hang him around, you know.

Well, hey, what was Haman doing? He wanted to kill the Jews, and he threw a lot. He threw lots to see which day it would fall on that they were to destroy Israel.

So, that one's not prescribed in the Jewish law. God did not institute Purim. So, this is all preliminary to where we're going.

The next one, the next one is the one we're dealing with. Hanukkah, or the Feast of the Dedication. That's not only not in the law, that's not even in the Bible.

[7 : 29] Okay? Now, let that sink in a little bit, because you know someone who says, you should, Christians shouldn't celebrate Christmas.

Because, it's not in the Bible. Now, you've never met anybody who said that? Have you ever met a Seventh-day Adventist?

That's why they don't. So, and there are some who, there may be some Christians who say, well, I don't celebrate Christmas because it's become so commercialized.

Or, I don't celebrate Christmas because it's based on pagan holiday. And others with him, the elders of Israel during that time.

You know, you remember the name Judas Maccabeus? Why do you remember that name? Because he revolted against the Grecian government.

[8 : 41] specifically because Antiochus Epiphanes had polluted the temple by sacrificing a pig.

On the altar. That broke the camel's back, as we say, didn't it? Maccabeans, the Maccabean revolt was what happened.

And the feast of the dedication literally is the rededication. It's when he found priests who had not defiled themselves and had not gone with the Grecians.

And those priests rededicated the temple and the utensils and the altar. And that was the day upon which they dedicated the altar. So, that's what the feast is that he's walking in the temple on, on this particular day.

The feast of the dedication. It became known as the feast of lights later because of a, what do you call it?

[9 : 54] A story that has some foundation in that it was rededication, but it's not true.

It, or isn't verified. And that was, they couldn't find oil for the menorah. They only found one cruise of oil for the menorah.

And they lit the light, you know, the lights had to be lit continually before the Lord in the holy place by the altar.

And there wasn't enough oil that was consecrated. Consecrated, dedicated, holyed, sanctified.

Those are all the same root word, by the way. So, they hadn't enough sanctified oil. This is the, this is the legend, if you will.

[10 : 56] They hadn't enough sanctified oil. And God miraculously kept the oil burning for the eight days it took them to sanctify it. Now, by the way, I searched in Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Fun reading, by the way. The oil is only supposed to be pure beaten olive oil. There's nothing in there about sanctifying the oil for the candles.

Now, there is something in there about a specific oil that is the anointing oil for the priest. And in fact, that's why Aaron's two sons were killed.

Because they used, they used common or vulgar or regular oil for anointing.

God said no. And by the way, just to get an idea of our, of our, where we are in Christ.

[12 : 04] That we can stand before a holy God. When God slew, and God did it, God killed Aaron's sons.

And God said, Aaron, you may not leave the sanctuary. You have the oil of God upon you. You can't mourn your children.

You can't go bury them. We stand before this God in Christ. That amazes me. He is not a God to be trifled with. He had certain, he said, you will treat me as holy. So, that's a long preliminary.

So, here we are at the temple. Go to verse 1 then, if you would, please. As you're thinking about this. Jesus is in the temple at the, at this feast of dedication.

[13:11] A holiday is a day that's specially set aside, right? Now, what about in this dispensation? The dispensation of grace.

How are we to treat the days? Here's where those trick questions come in. Christmas? Easter? Every day is a holy day. Easter? What about special days? I mean, we have set aside, what are we going to do next week in the evening? We're going to celebrate. Are we wrong? Now, we're not right or wrong because we're doing it. I'm the only one that that counts for.

Right? Well, this is right because I do it. Or that's right because I say it's right.

[14:23] No, it's either right or it's wrong. So, how does the Christian in the dispensation of grace view the days? Every day is a holy day.

Why do you say that? Well, you see, he said that because of Romans chapter 14.

Now, in Galatians, you'll remember this. In Galatians, it says, but now, Galatians chapter 4, by the way, where God through the Apostle Paul is talking to the Galatian church who is trying to become very Jewish again.

They're kind of going back to practices of the law. And here's what he says. But now, after you have known God, or rather been known by God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Ye observe days and months and times and years. I'm afraid for you, lest I have labored over you in vain.

[15:43] Now, does that mean that it's wrong for the Christian? Think about it. Is it wrong for the Christian to observe special times?

See, next Sunday night, Sharon and I just signed up today.

We have every intention, Lord willing, if we're alive and kicking, we're going to be here to share with you. And we're going to eat food, and we're going to sing carols, and we're going to basically celebrate.

Now, Easter Sunday, or Resurrection Sunday morning, we're going to do the same thing, aren't we? We're going to gather together as a body of Christ, and we're going to share food, and we're going to rejoice in the Resurrection.

Now, are we wrong in doing that? So, what makes it wrong? Why does Paul say this to Galatians? So, we think about that.

[17:00] Now, in Romans chapter 14, to which Roger alluded, Paul says, well, God says through the Apostle Paul to the church, he says, look, the person who is strong in faith eats anything that's set before him.

And he's talking specifically of meat that may have been sacrificed to a pagan, on a pagan altar, or sacrificially killed to a demon, to a pagan god.

And he said, hey, you can eat anything in the shambles with no qualms. Just don't ask questions. Don't ask questions. If you go to a guy's house, and you sit down with him to eat, and he offers you meat, go ahead and eat it.

Don't ask. If he says, this meat has been sacrificed to Jupiter, then you might have to deal with, why, you know, what's that going to do?

Now, I'm a vegetarian that night. But he said, as long as, it doesn't matter, right? Now, he said, as far as some, the person weak in faith eats only vegetables, because he doesn't want to eat meat that may have been sacrificed to an idol.

[18:30] He said, the person who's strong in faith looks at every day the same. Every day is a holy day. Every day is God's day. Everything I do, the mundanities of life, are to be done to the glory of God.

There is no hierarchy in work, is there? That's what it means. There is no, there is no, well, this guy's really godly because he does this, and this guy's not so godly because he only works with his hands.

Right, right.

That comes at the end of the chapter. So, he's saying the strong in faith can observe, you know, they don't have to observe a special season.

The weak in faith is the one that may put special emphasis. And this is the context where he uses, let every man be confirmed in his own mind.

[19 : 51] You've heard it used out of context that you shouldn't judge for anything, let everybody be their own judge of conscience. That's bunk. That's not what God said.

That's not what he said in Romans chapter 14. He said not to doubtful disputations. That means not to things that are splitting hairs, that really have no weight.

That has nothing to do with morality. It has nothing to do with perversions. It has nothing to do with horrible actions.

It doesn't mean that, well, the strong in faith can go steal and murder, and the weak in faith don't. That's not what this says.

So, the point of it is, for the Christian, for the Christian, if the holiday is a celebration, celebrate it.

[20 : 56] But if the holiday, where you get into trouble is if you say, this holiday has to be celebrated because I want a special blessing from God for celebrating this holiday.

That's where, by the way, the title for Christmas came, the Christ Mass. It was first celebrated, at least recorded, in about 335 B.C.

or not B.C., but A.D. So, where the Christian will get into trouble on holidays is if I start believing that I get a special blessing because I observed it.

Or, I get into trouble when I look down my nose at somebody who doesn't observe it. He said, don't despise your brother who doesn't eat.

Don't despise your brother who observes those days. And to the person who doesn't eat and does observe, he said, don't you go judging your brother who doesn't.

[22 : 20] That's where I get into trouble with holidays. Now, just a word, because we've been in Mark chapter 7, and Jesus said to the Jews, what?

Many such, I'm glad Nathan's not in here. Yo, many such observances you do.

You use the traditions of your elders to obstruct what God actually says in the law. So, he's not saying there that traditions are wrong.

In fact, traditions are important. They're extremely important for your family. How many of us actually never think back to our childhood and how our family did something?

It's important. It gives you a sense of belonging. It gives you a sense of continuity. And it, and we see now what's happening in our society as we're throwing away traditional things.

[23 : 38] It goes hand in hand with the decadence, doesn't it? That, that's part of what it takes to sustain a society. If you're going to live together, you have to have some things in common.

Divisiveness never helps sustain a society. So, it, what Jesus says to the Jews, the, specifically, those Pharisees about the baptism of the hands and the pots and pans and all that kind of thing, wasn't that he didn't even say you shouldn't baptize him.

Specifically, he says, you should not use that as an equivalent of the word of God. So, I shouldn't use, I shouldn't use singing carols and, and decorating the house and that kind of thing as equivalent to God's word, right?

Now, by the way, the, is the incarnation, which is what we celebrate at Christmas, is it important? Why?

Yeah, because of what's going to happen at, year, 33 years later. Yeah, okay. No.

[25 : 10] Well, I do, because, but, no, no, you don't, you don't, but, but specifically, they were baptizing their hands.

They, they, it wasn't just about cleanliness, although that was involved, but that, the word there is baptismus. It was a baptizing and that's what they did to their pots and pans.

Now, boy, this is a long introduction. By the way, on that, the, the, was the baptism totally wrong?

Did they, did God call for any baptisms for the Jews? Yeah, the priests had to be baptized. What do you think that great labor was in front of the altar? It was called the brazen sea?

they were to baptize themselves before they could minister. They were to baptize many, all of the burnt offering sacrifices were to be baptized.

[26 : 21] See, they had to, they had lots of baptisms. Now, the, the theory behind the baptism of the pots and pans was these are dedicated to God.

but here was the problem. Their hearts weren't with God. It was a ritual. It was a ritual. And there can be a stumbling block to my Christian walk, can't it?

It's when certain things become ritual but my heart's over here. even the commanded things of God, he said in Isaiah, he said, bring to me the sacrifice no longer.

It stinks. That's a pretty big deal. He said, your new moons, your festivals, which he prescribed, are an abomination.

They make me sick. I'm weary of carrying them. that's a pretty descriptive term when you think about God who created, isn't it? Why?

[27 : 31] Because you honor me with your mouth, but your heart is far from me. And that's Old Testament.

under the prescription of the law, they were supposed to bring the sacrifices, but God said, your sacrifices stink.

I hate them. So, now maybe we'll actually get to the lesson. The incarnation is important.

I do have to be careful how I look at holidays, but I shouldn't judge based on setting aside. I need to be careful with that.

The danger comes if I think that a certain observance is going to get me to heaven or going to make me a better Christian. That I have to be careful of.

[28 : 37] Which is where most of us depart pretty radically with the Roman church and even some of the Lutheran teaching.

This whole means of grace thing you have to be careful with because if you're not baptized and you're not Eucharisted correctly at the appropriate time, you might not make it.

you might not make it. So I have to be careful about that. But usually, well not mine, but your problem won't come there, is looking down my nose at somebody else for their decision on it, isn't it?

Saying either in a judgmental fashion or a despising fashion. So I have to be careful with that in my own mind. That's where Romans 14 says let each man be confirmed in his own mind.

But I, then Paul does go on and he makes this statement. Look, and now, buckle your seatbelts because Paul said this, but he said the kingdom of heaven is not in meat and drink.

[30 : 00] Yeah, Paul did use those words. It's a metaphorical kingdom. Okay? Let's not get ruffled. I know we're dispensational, but he said the kingdom of heaven is not in the meat and the drink and the days and the years.

It's in peace and edification. salvation. So, Paul ends it with, I have determined this, I will not in any way do anything that will cause my brother to stumble.

I will do, I will make my freedom subject to that brother with whom I'm associating at the time.

if he has a problem with this, I'll refrain. Just as an example, we have even done this with people who are edgy as, I am, I'm happy that I believe that Joe and Margaret were saved and they're in heaven.

But they were in an Amish group. you know, that could go either way. Baptismal regeneration and all that.

[31 : 31] But, when we went to visit them, Sherry didn't wear slacks.

You know, she wore a dress. I didn't, I have no qualms with, in the summertime, dressing in a t-shirt and shorts, but, not if I was going to their house.

Now, that's what I mean. That's where you look at somebody and you say, that would be offensive to them.

They don't, that would be offensive. Now, Sherry couldn't grow her hair out and wear a covering. Okay. But, you know, we did the least offensive thing we could do.

So, one more thing, and then we've got to go. I just wonder, on the point about dressing and being the thing. I rode a bike for years down the country, and I rode a black bike, and I wore black shorts, and had a white shirt on it.

[32 : 52] And I'm telling you, the response I got from people was, I couldn't understand it. They were so friendly to me, but I was one of them. But it took me a long time to realize why they were so friendly to me.

It's because I was black with white. That's all I wore. White was the best thing to see, by the way, if you ride in a bike house and down the road. White shows up there when the ones are red.

So I had a white top off. And they were so friendly to me, and that's finally why I realized it. They kind of looked at me like one of them. They rode white, it was black, and white.

White houses white. I'm sorry. No, that's okay. That's okay. I'm not saying we should become, though, we should not become legalistic.

I mean, my brother who lived in Elkhart, Indiana. So you had everything from Schwartz and Trubber Amish, steel wheels, open buggies, to Amish who could ride bicycles.

[33 : 58] you know, some, the strictest won't ride on rubber. They will not ride on rubber. There's something about the spirits of the air.

Anyway, and then to black bumper Mennonite, and then Mennonite that could have any color, you know, no chrome. That's another matter.

don't go paint your car because you're going to Elkhart. So, John chapter 10.

Now, we're going to start in early on. So, open your Bible, clear to the first verse, and we're going to run through this much faster than I thought because it took all the time in the prelim.

Look at verses 1 and 2. I say to you, this is Jesus speaking, he that enters not by the, help me, the door, but climbs in some other way, he's a thief and a robber, he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the, okay, so, we have the door and the shepherd there in verses 1 and 2.

[35 : 19] Now, verse 3, or verse 4, we're going to jump down. He, who is that? That's the shepherd, right? He putteth forth whose sheep?

Okay, now, what do these sheep do? Verse 4, they follow him because, okay, so they follow him. So, whose sheep does the shepherd call?

His own. Whose sheep follow him? Or whose sheep does he put out and they follow him? His own. That's going to become important as we get down. Let's jump down.

I'm sorry we're doing it this way, but I took too much time. Verse 7, then Jesus came to them, or said unto them again, verily, verily, I say unto you, what?

I'm the door. Now, look back up there in verse 1. The door. Who's the door? Jesus. He's going to mix this metaphor up, and he's going to use it, he's going to bang to and fro on this metaphor, but keep these in mind.

[36 : 32] Okay, jump down then. You'll have to keep the context. Verse 10, verse 11, what's he say? I'm the good shepherd.

Look up there in verse 2. What? Shepherd, shepherd. He's going to keep this theme running. So, what's this good shepherd do?

Oh, wait a minute, wait a minute. This is a hint, isn't it? This is a hint. This, by the way, as Sherry pointed out, is why the incarnation is important.

that baby in a manger is not to be revered because he's a baby in a manger.

this is the creator of John 1, 1. In the beginning was the, and the word was with God, and the word was God, and the word, later on, we will see the word became and dwelt among us, and we beheld the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

[37 : 50] this is why the manger is important, because of what he did on that cross and on that resurrection.

He laid down his life, and we read then later in the New Testament, we see that he imparts his righteousness to me.

He who knew no sin became sin for me. That's the amazing grace. That's what makes Christmas important, and he had to be the Son of Man, otherwise the sacrifice wouldn't have done.

So he says in his word. But let's keep going. Do you have a comment? I was going to say he was born to die. He was. He was. For this reason came I into the world.

So. I think that's for that reason the cross is almost as good a symbol of Christmas as the wind of change. Yeah, but it wouldn't fly, would it? No, it wouldn't.

[39 : 05] But don't worry. Put the crash out there. That's as good as John 3.16. It doesn't hurt anybody. And shame on the people who say don't put it in public places.

For crying out loud. Anyway. That wasn't part of it. So, yeah, don't get started.

Right. Okay, verse 11. What's he say? I'm the good shepherd. What do I, who do I know? And who do they know?

Okay. And as the Father knows me, even so know I the Father. And I lay down my life, there he says it again, for the sheep.

Now, he says something that's a little cryptic here. Verse 16. What's he say? I have other sheep not of this fold.

[40 : 08] I'm going to go get them too. Right? Now, who are these other sheep? Huh? Could be?

We, we don't really know that for sure, because he doesn't really explain that, does he? Now, I pulled a few verses.

of course, I want it to be Gentiles, but it doesn't matter. I know that he saved me, didn't he? He died upon the cross, and he imputes his righteousness to me in spite of my sin.

While I was yet his enemy, Christ died for me. He didn't die for me because I wanted him to.

C.S. Lewis put it, had a pretty good view of when he became a theist, when he changed from atheism to believing in God.

[41 : 18] He said, I was probably the most dejected convert in all of England. He didn't want to believe. He didn't want to believe.

Exactly. Exactly. In fact, even to his disciples, Jesus said, you didn't choose me, I chose you.

And he goes on, and I've already digressed enough. Okay, so it could be the Gentiles, probably. I tend to believe it's the Gentiles.

Charles Ryrie, who I know is right, believes it's the Gentiles. it could be Samaritans, at least to his audience, you know, because they didn't, the Pharisees especially, didn't have much to do with Samaritans.

So, but we do know that in Ezekiel, God said, look, I'm going to call them all out of the Gentiles.

[42 : 25] My people are going to be scattered all over the place, but I'm going to call them all out, and there will no longer be a divided Israel. There'll be one people again. So, this division that we're reading about in Kings and Chronicles, that's going to end.

That's going to end. In fact, if you're an Israelite, if you were an Israelite, you wouldn't even have to worry if you couldn't trace your lineage.

God hadn't lost you. God hadn't lost one molecule he created. He knows where everything is. That boggles my mind.

Every hair. He knows when that hair fell. He knows where it went. What? Anyway, so, verse 17, I do need to get into this.

Therefore, death my father loved me, because I lay down my life, that I might, what? Now, wait a minute. I'm going to lay down my life so that I can take it up again.

[43 : 36] Now, keep going. What's he say? Verse 18, who's going to kill him? No man takes my life.

I give it willingly. Now, here's an important part because this is deity. He said, I have the authority to lay it down and I have the authority to pick it up.

life. If you look back in John chapter 5, he makes this clear again. For as the father hath life in himself, if you're looking for it, it would be verse 26 in chapter 5, so hath he given life to the son to have life in himself.

That is independent existence. Jesus, God, the triune God, does not depend upon his creation for his existence.

He exists quite separately from his creation. It doesn't mean he doesn't interact in his creation, it just means he doesn't depend upon it. I have dependent life.

[45 : 04] I don't have the authority to lay it down and pick it up. When my life, when this body quits working and it lays down, it's going to be God who has to restore it.

I don't have that. Jesus does. So he says, look, no man can really take my life from me. I have to give it up. And he is talking about his physical body.

I give it up. Now he uses Rome to take it. He uses the Jews to take it. But he picks it up by himself. And thank God that empty tomb is the culmination of that cradle or that manger.

God that's where we're going. That is a wonderful thing. That is a wonderful thing. That the God who can do this has done it for us because he chose to.

[46 : 14] So, now, verse 26, why don't they believe? they're not his sheep.

And that goes back to what we read in verse 4. And verse 28, he says, and to these sheep that are mine, I will give eternal life and they will never perish and nobody can take them from me.

I have to rush through, sorry about rushing through, but we have to end here because those cookies are one eaten. Have a wonderful day.

By the way, go light your fourth candle if you have your menorah because I think we're right in the middle of Hanukkah and it's in the winter.
Have a great day. Thank you.