

## **JOHN 10:22-30**

### **BELIEVING IN CHRIST**

In the Apostles' Creed when you say that you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, you're saying that you believe that Jesus **is** the Christ and **is** true God, begotten of the Father from eternity. That's the core issue of our text. Jews gathered around Jesus and wanted to know if He was the Christ. Jesus tells them that He has already told them, but they didn't believe Him. Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ?

For starters we may wish to go back and see what Jesus told them, because He said that He had already told them, and they didn't believe Him. Yet, in order to even understand what Jesus tells us, we first need to know what is meant by the term, "the Christ".

The Christ is a title. Many people today think of it as Jesus' name, and so they may casually say that they believe in Jesus Christ. Yet, the question is, if Jesus **is** the Christ, and do you believe that Jesus is the Christ. This title of Christ is a Greek word, Messiah is the Hebrew word, and they both mean the "Anointed". To be the Christ One has to be anointed with the Holy Spirit without limit to be for the people their Prophet, Priest and King. People do fulfill all three of these roles. Some people are prophets. Some are priests, and some are kings – worldly rulers. However, the Anointed One is all three, anointed by God, with the Holy Spirit, to be all three, for all people

Is Jesus this Christ? Earlier in the Gospel of John it is said that, "He whom God has sent utters the words of God, for He gives the Spirit without measure" (3:34). Last week when we looked at the first article of the Apostles' Creed we looked at Jesus being sent by the Father. Today we see that this Jesus who was sent by the Father was given the Holy Spirit without measure, and was anointed by the Father. Acts 10:38 says it clearly, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power."

If you truly confess that Jesus is the Christ then you're saying that you trust in Jesus as your only Saviour from sin, death and the devil. You believe that He gives you eternal life. Believing in Jesus is more than just knowledge of all the Scriptures that point to Him as the Christ, but it's trusting in Him as the Christ. Back in John chapter three it says that "whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him" (v. 36).

This is the critical point that Jesus is trying to convey to the Jews who questioned Him, and which I also wish to convey to you. Twice Jesus says, "you do not believe", and for those who do not believe in Jesus as the Christ, there's no eternal life.

Thus, for the importance of believing in Jesus as the Christ and having eternal life Jesus points to three things: His works, meaning all of the various miraculous things that He did, His voice, meaning all of His teachings, and His Father – the giver of eternal life. These three things all point to Jesus as the Christ, and enable people to believe.

Now, Jesus did many miraculous things. One chart I found lists thirty-six miracles. I'm not going to list them all, but rather I'm going to look at Jesus' words from verse twenty-five. "Jesus answered them, 'I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name bear witness about Me.'"

When did Jesus tell them? That was back in John 5:36. There He said, "the testimony that I have is greater than that of John [the Baptist]. For the works that the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about Me that the Father has sent Me." There again Jesus goes back to the fact that God the Father sent Jesus.

This is what we focus on. There are many works of Jesus that you could turn to for the strengthening of your faith such as: "All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made" – John 1:3. However, for us the importance of the works of Jesus is that we **believe** that Jesus is the Christ, sent to give us eternal life through the forgiveness of our sins, because without forgiveness there is no life.

This can be summed up for us from a work of Jesus as seen in the Gospel of Matthew. There Jesus said, "that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—He then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." (9:6). Jesus healed a paralytic. That was a work that Jesus did, but He did it for a purpose, which was to point to His ability and authority to forgive sins.

Jesus had told the man that his sins were forgiven, and yet just telling someone that their sins are forgiven might seem meaningless. Anyone can say those words, but only God has the authority for those words to have meaning. "The scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, 'Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?'" (Luke 5:21). So Jesus healed the paralytic to show that He was God alone, that He was the Christ, and that He had the authority on earth to forgive sins.

Later on in His ministry, back in our text, Jesus is now saying, "I told you, and you do not believe." They had example after example of Jesus doing the works of the Father, but they didn't believe. In a similar way, I too give people example after example from the Word of God, but many don't believe.

Then Jesus says some of the most frightening words of the Bible, frightening to those who believe the words, and yet if you believe the words you don't have to be frightened by them, not for yourself at least, but you might find them frightening for others. Jesus said, "you do not believe because you are not part of My flock."

Are you part of Jesus' flock? Are you listening to His voice? Are you following Him. If you are, then Jesus gives you eternal life. If you're not listening, believing and following, then you don't have eternal life. Frightening words indeed.

In the Creed you're confessing that on the third day Jesus rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father. You're confessing that you believe that Jesus purchased and won you from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death.

This is what it comes down to. What was Jesus sent by God the Father to do? It wasn't just to do all sorts of miraculous works – healing people and feeding thousands with a few loaves of bread. Jesus was sent to forgive sins, and He was sent to do this through His own flesh and blood.

If we want to look for things Jesus told the people before our reading that point to Him as being the Christ He did feed the thousands, but then He also taught them afterwards. Jesus said to the crowds, "Do not labour for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you" (6:27). "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day" (6:40). "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh" (6:51).

"After this many of His disciples turned back and no longer walked with Him. So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that You are the Holy One of God." (6:66-69).

Jesus is the Holy One of God, the Christ. Those who are not of His flock don't believe in Him, and He lets them walk away. Those who do believe in Him are given that belief by God the Father, and Jesus gives them eternal life. Jesus gives you life through His flesh which died on the cross for you, and rose from the dead for you, so that you may have the forgiveness of sins that He delivers to you now through His flesh and blood in Holy Communion. Here Jesus gives you eternal life, and no one can take that away from you. Thanks be to the Father. Amen.