

Title: **-S-** Nothing can take us out of Jesus' hand

Object: Yo-Yo

Scripture: "I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand." (John 10:28)

Do any of you have a yo-yo? Do you know how to do any tricks with your yo-yo? I brought my yo-yo this morning. I thought I would give a little demonstration. I'm not really very good, but I can do a few simple tricks. The first thing that most people learn how to do is just your basic "up and down." I'm sure that all of you can do that. Next, I'll do the "out and back." As you can see, it is very similar to the "up and down." My next trick is called the "sleeper." Do you see how the yo-yo stays down at the bottom and spins? When I am ready, just a slight tug pulls it right back up into the palm of my hand. For my final trick I will do "Around the World." This one is a little bit more difficult and sometimes I mess up. Ready? Here goes! Oh wow! I really messed up on that one, didn't I? Well, no problem. I'll just pick up my yo-yo, rewind it, and then I'll be ready to go again.

Did you notice that every one of my tricks started and ended exactly the same way? Each trick began and ended with the yo-yo in the palm of my hand. Jesus said, **-S-** "I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand." When we give our heart to Jesus and place our life in His hands, we know that we are safe and that nothing can snatch us from His hand. Oh, we may have our "ups and downs." We may even stray away at times, but just a little tug will pull us right back into His hand. Even when we really mess up, like I did on the "around the world" trick, He picks us up and dusts us off and

there we are, right back in the palm of His hand. Isn't it great to have the assurance that Jesus has put us in the palm of His hand and that nothing can harm us or take us from His hand!

Dear Jesus, we thank you for holding us in Your hand and for giving us the promise that nothing can take us from Your hand.

READING – Psalm 95

-S- True Words from the True Christ

August 31, 2014

John 10:22-42

Sermon #61

PRAYER

Our study this morning of verses 22 to 42 in John chapter 10 brings to a close the Apostle John's recording of Jesus' public ministry. -S- For more than three years Jesus had traveled throughout Israel preaching the gospel, calling people to repent and return to God, and confronting the Jewish religion that had become a false religion. Jesus had taught His disciples and prepared them to do the same once He had returned to heaven. During His ministry Jesus had performed countless miracles, the Bible only records some, and these confirmed that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah. -S- Jesus' teachings, works, healings and miracles clearly demonstrated that He was the Christ and as Jesus said, "that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." (v.38) These false and self-serving Jewish leaders rejected Jesus Christ as predicted in the Old Testament. The prophet Isaiah wrote of Jesus' rejection, -S- "Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, to the despised One, to the One abhorred by the nation, to the Servant of rulers (49:7) ... -S- I gave My back to those who strike Me, and My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting (50:6) ... -S- He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him." (Isaiah 53:3)

The Apostle John began his writing of Jesus' public ministry in chapter 1, verse 35 and concludes it here in chapter 10 with yet another confrontation between Jesus

and the Jewish leaders. This dialog can be broken down, like a play, into five short acts -S- the confrontation, -S- the claim, -S- the charge, -S- the challenge and -S- the consequences.

-S- Act 1 - The Confrontation

Read along with me in John chapter 10, verses 22 to 24, -S- “At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; ²³ it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. -S- ²⁴ The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, ‘How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.’” John’s notation that the time was during “the Feast of the Dedication” tells us that it is two months after Jesus had healed the blind man following the Feast of Tabernacles and the confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees that ended in verse 21. The Feast of Dedication was instituted late in the Old Testament period after -S- Judas Maccabeus defeated the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes in 167 B.C. -S- Three years earlier Antiochus had captured Jerusalem and desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig on the altar and erecting a statue of Zeus. Jews were not allowed to practice the Sabbath and other Jewish religious rituals during the Syrian occupation for three years the worship of God was banned. With Judas Maccabeus victory over Antiochus came renewed celebration. Can anyone tell me what the -S- Feast of Dedication is called today? It is known by two names. It is called -S- Hanukkah or the Feast of Lights. This gives us the time of year and where this confrontation fell into the Jewish year.

-S- The Jewish calendar begins in April with the Passover commemorating the final plague in Egypt , -S- in May was Pentecost – this came 7 weeks after the Passover to celebrate the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai. -S- October celebrated the Feast of

Trumpets and Day of Atonement followed five days later by the Feast of Tabernacles. **-S-** In December there was the Feast of Lights or Hanukkah. **-S-** The year ended in March with the Feast of Purim celebrating the deliverance wrought by Esther.

In verse 23 John tells us it is **winter** or December and Jesus is walking in the **-S-** **portico of Solomon**. Winter is the rainy season in Israel and the portico would have offered protection from the rain and the wind. The portico was located on the east side of the temple and overlooked the **-S-** Kidron Valley. The portico was a common site for people to pray and where rabbis taught their students. **-S-** John is also using, (as he did in chapters; 3 Nicodemus coming in the night, 13 Judas dishonesty and 18 Peter's denial), **winter** as a metaphor for the Jewish leaders spiritual state – it represents their spiritual coldness and death.

The hostile Jewish leaders accost Jesus. The verb “**gathered around**” in verse 24 means to surround or to encircle. They demand of Jesus saying, **-S-** “**How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.**” They were not seeking an honest or truthful answer, their questions were an attempt to trap Jesus because their only desire was to arrest Him and put Him to death. The truth was the Jewish leaders saw Jesus as a threat to their power and their privileged status. This is why Jesus publicly rebuked them for their hypocrisy. They thought if Jesus publicly declared Himself to be the Messiah they would be able to arrest Him. Jesus answers them as He answers people today.

-S- Act 2 - The Claim

We read Jesus' response to the Jewish leaders who lived in spiritual winter beginning in verse 25, **-S-** “**I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in**

My Father's name, these testify of Me. ²⁶ But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; **-S-** ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the

Father are one.” **-S-** Jesus had spent the last three years teaching and telling everyone who He was, He had performed miracles to verify what He said about Himself was true – He was the Messiah, He was the Son of God, He was God come in the flesh. **-S-** Jesus says, “*you do not believe*” twice showing that the problem with their lack of belief was not due to lack clarity of the truth He presented, but that they were spiritually blind and dead and they had not been called by God. The leaders lacked repentant hearts and in reality hated the truth because they loved sin. Today it is the same most people hate the truth for it exposes their sin that they love.

Divine sovereignty is a difficult concept to understand – how people are spiritually dead until God calls them, yet they are responsible for not believing. **-S-** Jesus says to these people “*you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.*” **-S-** The truth of divine sovereignty and human responsibility is beyond human reasoning and understanding. However, there is no difficulty shown in the Bible with God having any problem with this tension, this is because God has an infinite mind and knowledge. **-S-** The Bible nor God tries to bring these two tensions together or explain them so people will understand. **-S-** Judas Iscariot's treachery is a perfect example. He lived with and was taught by the Son of God for over three years, yet he did not believe. His betrayal of Jesus was part of God's plan for the salvation of those He calls - yet Judas was responsible for his crime and sin of betrayal. Those

that God calls will heed His call, they are held responsible to live in faith and obedience until they enter into glory with God and true believers do so. **-S-** Living in faith and obedience is the reality for true believers.

Jesus' words here gives six realities – realities in the life of true Christians.

1. **-S-** Believers are Jesus' **sheep** and the Good Shepherd protects His flock. **-S-** **"This is the will of Him (God) who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day."** (John 6:39)
2. **-S-** Christ's sheep hear **only** His voice and follow **only** Him in living their lives. **-S-** **"A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."** (John 10:5)
3. **-S-** Christ's sheep have eternal life. **-S-** **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."** (John 3:16) A true believer cannot lose their salvation.
4. **-S-** It is Christ who gives eternal life to His sheep. Believers were spiritually dead and were unable to do anything to aid in their salvation. **-S-** **"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."** (Ephesians 2:8-9)
5. **-S-** **"No one will snatch them (Christ's sheep) out of My (Jesus') hand."** **-S-** Not false prophets or preachers and not even Satan or demons are powerful enough to take Jesus' sheep.
6. **-S-** Christ's sheep are held in the hands of both God the Son and God the Father. **-S-** **"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."** (John 10:29)

The eternal security of believers is secure. Jesus said in verse 30, **-S-** “I and the Father are one.” Both the Father and the Son guarantee believers eternal salvation. The Holy Spirit serves the Father and the Son, and protects and guides believers for this purpose.

Enraged by Jesus’ words **-S-** “The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.” (John 10:30) When the Romans took over control of Israel they withheld from the Jewish leadership the authority to punish people by executing them, only the Romans could carry out capital punishment. This mob provoked by the Jewish leaders was ready to deify Roman authority and kill Jesus. Jesus stands firm to their threat and speaks truth once again.

-S- Act 3 - The Charge

-S- Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?” The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.” (John 10:32-33) Jesus, as God, has calm even when those who want to kill Him are enraged. But, **-S-** Jesus does not change His claim to be equal with God; instead Jesus forces them to deal with the miracles that only God has the power to perform. The “good works” gave visible and tangible proof of Christ’s oneness with God. **-S-** The evidence showed that it was not Jesus who was a blasphemer, but the Jewish leaders were the true blasphemers of the holy God. Their minds were made up and the truth had no impact on them. They were lost in their love of sin and by their sin they were held captive to Satan and were spiritually dead. This is also true of people all around us. You can preach the gospel, you can show them the truth of God’s Word – but unless God has called

them - their hearts will remain of stone filled with a desire for sin.

The Jewish leaders end their insults of God the Son by saying, **-S-** “You, being a man, make Yourself out *to be* God.” Jesus was not a mere human, but God in the flesh, who proved His deity over and over throughout His life, but especially in the last three years. By beloved hear the truth of the Word of God, **-S-** “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant (*slave*), and being made in the likeness of men. **-S-**⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **-S-**¹⁰ so that at the name of JESUS EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:5-11) This Word is proven true, but to believe one must hear with both their mind and heart – for it is written, **-S-** “Son of man (*speaking of Jesus*), you live in the midst of the rebellious house, who have eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear; for they are a rebellious house.” (Ezekiel 12:2) Again, Jesus responds to the Jewish leaders with directness and truth, but without anger.

-S- Act 4 - The Challenge

Reading beginning at verse 34, **-S-** Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I SAID, YOU ARE GODS’?³⁵ If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), **-S-**³⁶ do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I

said, 'I am the Son of God'? ³⁷ If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; **-S-** ³⁸ but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

-S- Jesus at this point does not say, "Wait a minute you misunderstood me, put down the stones." He knew when He said in verse 30, **-S-** "I and the Father are one" that these Jewish leaders rightly understood what He said. Jesus knew how serious these Pharisees were about the scriptures, so He addresses these men by quoting from the Old Testament. **-S-** Jesus speaks of the "Law" which is referring to the entire Old Testament, which these men were so proud of their ability to know. Jesus reminded them that God referred to others as "gods" which was a rebuke to Israel's unjust judges because they ruled as His representatives. **-S-** "They (Israel's unjust judges) do not know nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. Nevertheless you will die like men and fall like any one of the princes.'" (Psalms 82:5-7) **-S-** The Jewish leaders could not dispute that the judges had been called "gods" because "the Scripture cannot be broken." **-S-** Jesus was arguing that if unjust and evil judges could be referred to as "gods" how then could the Pharisees think it was inappropriate for Jesus to say, "I am the Son of God." **-S-** The scriptures and the history of His ministry prove that Jesus was the One "whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world." Jesus had proven He was the Messiah. **-S-** The Jewish leaders then and as most people today are not willing to accept the truth of Jesus as the Christ because they are spiritually blind and enslaved to their sin. However, denying the truth comes with problems and difficulties that last for eternity.

-S- Act 5 - The Consequences

We finish our reading of scripture this morning with verses 39 to 42, **-S-**
“Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp. ⁴⁰ And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. ⁴¹ Many came to Him and were saying, ‘While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.’ ⁴² Many believed in Him there.” As the Pharisees had already shown their true nature in prior confrontations with Jesus they again turn a blind eye to the truth and respond by “seeking again to seize Him.” They wanted to arrest Jesus and end His threat to their power, but His hour had not yet come. **-S-** Jesus walked out of their midst and went “beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing.” While Jesus was there many came to see and hear His teaching. They said, **-S-** “While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.” John the Baptist did not perform any miracles, but they knew what he preached was true. John spoke truth concerning Jesus and what John spoke came to be proven true. **-S-** Those who traveled beyond the Jordan were seekers of truth and they found it in Jesus. So, “Many believed in Him there.”

-S- Jesus’ public ministry ends with many coming to know that He was the Christ. At the same time the stonehearted Jewish leaders had no desire for the truth and were condemned. Today, people turn from Christ for many reasons including; pride, ambition, because of people who claim to be Christian but behave in the most unChristian ways, churches that deepen hurts in people lives instead of freeing them from sin through Jesus. Then there is science that is desperately afraid of God. Our American society does not want to be confronted with its sin. For these people - we can pray for them and lead lives that show Christ, but we

cannot save them – only God can call them. **-S-** “Just as it is written, ‘GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY.’”

(Romans 11:8) **-S-** Only those who are drawn to Jesus in repentance and faith will come to know the truth of who Jesus is. These will be given the “right to become children of God.” (John 1:12)

-S- My beloved, as children of the living God are you living faithful to Him who saved you and sharing the gospel with anyone who has ears to hear? **-S-** I have chosen to spend my life “LOVING THE LORD MY GOD WITH ALL MY HEART, AND WITH ALL MY SOUL, AND WITH ALL MY MIND, AND WITH ALL MY STRENGTH and to LOVE MY NEIGHBOR MORE THAN MYSELF.” (Mark 12:30-31 translation by Bill) As verse 28 and 29 tells us, **-S-** Jesus “gives eternal life to believers, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father’s hand.” I live in the hand of God. How about you? You have choices before you – what will you choose? I pray you will choose to live for Jesus within the shelter of His hand.

If anyone would like prayer after the service both Pastor Rick and I are available – please come to one of us.