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The Frustration of the Faithful

Text: John 10:24-29; 16:29-32

 Feast of the Dedication—(John 10:22, 42), i.e., the feast of the renewing. It was instituted B.C. 164 to commemorate the purging of the temple after its pollution by Antiochus Epiphanes (B.C. 167), and the rebuilding of the altar after the Syrian invaders had been driven out by Judas Maccabaeus. It lasted for eight days, beginning on the 25th of the month Chisleu (December), which was often a period of heavy rains (Ezra 10:9, 13). It was an occasion of much rejoicing and festivity. Our text takes us to one of those feasts.

Jesus sometimes spoke so ambiguously, that it seemed He was committed to code, rather than clarity. Reference some of the parables: “The kingdom of God is like...” The listener is expected to be so astute that he/she gets what Jesus is talking about. Mark 4:34 says that Jesus never spoke without a parable. A bit of hyperbole, but we get the point. One of those speaking occasions took place in or on Solomon’s Porch. It was a large version of a porte cochere such as we have here at the front entrance of our building. Located on the eastern side of the temple precincts, it was a covered area with a panel ceiling of cedar which spanned 49 feet. It had white marble columns that were 38 feet tall. Acts 5:12 says that believers used to hang out in Solomon’s porch.

1. **The demand for clarity (10:24).** The sense of the Greek verb (airo[*ah’ee-ro*]) is *How long will You keep us in doubt? How long will You hold up our soul?*
2. **Jesus’ explanation of their confusion (10:25)**

 **a.** Their failure to grasp Christ’s words(25a). He told them, in 7:28-29, that He knew God and was sent by God. He told them, in 5:17-19, that God was His father. In 8:58, Jesus told the Jews that He existed before Abraham.

 **b.** Their failure to grasp Christ works(25b). Jesus did works in His father’s name. Cf. 2:23; 3:2; 7:21, 31; 9:16).

1. **The value and critical importance of a relationship (25, 26, 29)**. Several relationships are spoken of here.

 a. Proclaimer and believer (10:25; 16:30)

 b. Shepherd and sheep (one tuned to the other...by voice; cf. 10:1,8)

 c. The holder and the snatcher (cf. 10:10).

**Illus.**

So vividly do I recall walking with my toddler and holding his hand. I did not let *him* hold *my* hand. I held *his*. That way, he couldn’t let go.

The believer is secure because *God* does the holding. If we held *God’s* hand, our security would be questionable because of *our* unreliability. Thanks be to God, our staying in the Father’s hand has all to do with the *Father’s* grip and not *ours*.

Here is the frustration: we see the Christ and hear His words and are aware of His miracles(works) and still soooooooo many do not believe!

Here is the frustration: Christ is plainly revealing Himself as the Savior we need and we, the needy, keep turning a deaf ear to His teaching and keep turning Christ away.

Oh, faithful followers of Jesus, behold the Christ. Hear His words. See His works. Walk His way!!

Oh, seeker. Listen to what Jesus is offering you. Respond to Hi. Are you looking for clarity? It is in Jesus. Are you looking for calm during this pandemic? It is in Jesus.

Amen