

10/10/2021 - John 10:22-42 - "A Disconnected Heart"

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[0 : 00] So, let's get back into John's gospel and see what John has to say this morning.

And the title of the sermon is called A Disconnected Heart, and it's in regard to the passage that we just previously read of an interaction going on between Jesus and the Jewish people.

And we're entering in, at this moment, church, into the seventh major discourse in this gospel.

And that's significant for a variety of reasons, but the most important reason is because the number seven, according to Jewish tradition, all throughout the Bible, is that it is a symbolic number.

It is a number that signifies that there is some sort of completion taking place, the number seven.

And with that, it means that it's a completion of a divine mandate, we'll put it.

[1 : 20] So, while you might be a baseball fan, it wouldn't mean that the seventh inning stretch would be an indication that it would be a time to worship, to over-spiritualize a seventh inning stretch.

You still have a couple innings to go. You wouldn't say that if you're going up to seven years of marriage, that all of a sudden your divine mandate's done and you can go back in the fishing pond and find another lad or lassie, right?

No. You still have additional years. Year eight, year nine, year 20, year 30 is still going to come.

Now, we don't want to over-spiritualize that which God doesn't.

And the number seven is significant only according to his word. And so, we see according to his word in Genesis 1 that there's seven days of creation.

Within those seven days of creation, the seventh day was to be held and set apart from the other ones in Deuteronomy 5.12. We see that animal sacrifices in Exodus 22.

[2 : 34] Animal sacrifices had to be at least seven days old to be used. There's seven weeks between Passover and Pentecost.

We see the leprous Naaman bathe in 2 Kings in the Jordan seven times. Joshua, we can all talk about this.

Joshua marched around the city of Jericho seven times. And there were seven priests that sounded the seven trumpets.

Yeah. And the number seven is used over 50 times symbolically in Revelation, in the book of Revelation. And that's just a couple that I could fit on the page.

I know you don't want to learn. The message isn't about the number seven today. There's seven divisions of the Bible. There's seven titles for Jesus Christ in Hebrew.

[3 : 32] There's seven spiritual gifts. There's seven colors of the rainbow. All of this being important to observe. And so here, we're entering into the seventh major discourse in the Gospel of John.

Gospel of John has been packed with sevens as well. Seven signs. Seven miraculous signs in the Gospel of John. Seven I Am statements in the Gospel of John.

And here, the seventh major discourse. The significance. What is John completing? Is something that we should be asking ourselves when we see something like this.

He's completing this rising tension. That has almost reached the pinnacle within his book. Which will be in Lazarus' testimony of who Jesus is.

This is entering into the tipping point of what John has been trying to communicate to us through these intense conversations with the Jews.

[4 : 43] And today, we'll be wrapping up his thoughts in this seventh major discourse. And while I'm bound to the text, I spent about 30 seconds saying, man, it would be cool to have seven points in this passage.

But it's not there. And I'm not going to make something be there that isn't there. Nor should any preacher. And you're probably saying, thank God he doesn't have seven points. We'll be here long past dinner. And that's the truth. But what I did find in this passage is two major disconnects.

Two major disconnects. And we're going to see that today. And those two disconnects are the Jews' conviction of who their Savior is and the constructs of what they do.

And we're going to be relating to the issues of the heart now. We've gone through a couple sensory issues with the blind man talking about spiritually being blind.

[5 : 49] Last week was about spiritually being deaf. Now we're talking about a heart that's spiritually disconnected and dead. And so by the end of our time, I hope that we can evaluate our lives and surrender all that we have to Jesus Christ once we're done observing this passage.

Let's pray before we go in and we will ask God for help. Let's pray. Father, thank you for your word. Something that is absolutely, positively true. And Father, help us this morning to weigh in not upon what we think the Bible says or what we want it to say with our seven points that we would love to get out of the Bible.

But help us to subject our lives at this point to the authority of your word. Father, we pray for you.

And that when we look at the Bible through that lens and with that disposition, we are convicted.

We are confronted. but we can find the greatest encouragement for our souls that our flesh long for. Father, speak to your church this morning.

[7 : 08] Give me the words to speak to them. And we pray that you are magnified and glorified in this church. And we praise in Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. The first disconnect is the conviction. Disconnect one.

Conviction of the Savior. Take a look. If you're new with us today, I see some new faces. If you're new, just keep your Bibles open. Keep your finger on the text.

We're working through it. Verse 22 says, At that time, the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem.

It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the colonnade of Solomon. Now, there's an unknown span of time between verse 21 and 22, our passage last week and our passage this week.

[8 : 10] We know that it's significant. There is a span of time we see a season mentioned in this text. And it's important to know when you're reading, especially the Gospel of John and many of the synoptic, other synoptic Gospels, is to understand when a setting is being laid out, it's important.

It's an interpretive guide of what the context is trying to communicate. Why is it during the Feast of Dedication? Why did John find this important to note?

These kind of questions should pop into our heads when we read God's Word. Now, the Feast of Dedication, this was during the intertestamental period.

This was probably around 164, 165 B.C. And this was a time where Judas Maccabeus, he was also known as Judas the Hammer.

Judas the Hammer came in, and he took back the temple of God. He drove out a Syrian king who offered pagan sacrifices, and he polluted the temple worship of the Jewish people.

[9 : 24] Judas the Hammer. And this feast was observed for eight days long. Now, you can scour through your Old Testament pages, I assure you, you won't find God instituting this feast as like the Feast of Tabernacles, for instance.

The Feast of Dedication was something that man created in order to memorialize that which God had done in the past. And it's still celebrated today.

It's known as Hanukkah. It's eight days long, and it's a feast. It's an eight-day-long feast that signifies this moment in time that was so significant, it was almost like the second exodus for God's people.

But we should see something significant developing and unfolding. Look in your text. Jesus, being the Son of God, during the Feast of Dedication, taking place in the city of God, Jerusalem.

It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple. This kind of refers back to the introductory statements in John's Gospel, that the Word became flesh.

[10 : 41] It dwelt among us. And here you have the Word of God dwelling among God's people during this time which commemorated something that God had done in the past that was purging, that was noted for purging God's temple of religious corruption.

And so at this time and place, John continues in the dialogue, recording the dialogue. He says, the Jews, in verse 24, the Jews gathered around him and said to him, how long will you keep us in suspense?

If you are the Christ, tell us plainly. It's kind of soft in our translations of what's actually taking place here. It kind of sounds like, well, they gathered around the table and everything.

What's actually taking place according to its original language and according to the emphasis of this passage, they were encircling him sort of like you would see in maybe a Grease movie of the guys circling around with their cars or the outsiders of just coming in and coming in and circling in and hiding the crowbar behind their back.

They're encircling him with hostile intent and they say, how long will you keep us in suspense? And again, what's being translated here is that it's kind of awkward.

[12:12] It actually says precisely, how long will you take away our life? Try reading that one on your own and understanding what's going on. What's taking place is that it's less of suspense.

It's more so annoyance that these Jews have as we reach this dialogue. And they want him to cut to the chase. Are you the Christ?

Tell us plainly, Jesus. No more bread to the 5,000s. No more light. No more doors or shepherds and all these stories.

Tell us plainly, are you the Christ? Christ. In and of itself is a difficult word to use apart from Jesus Christ.

Christ is not to be known as Jesus' last name. It was not. Maybe that's the first thing you're putting in your notebooks this morning.

[13:19] Christ refers to his title. And this is important. It refers to his title. It refers to his office.

This. Normally, when we get our titles in this life for any jobs, it comes with a job description. Right? I'm lead pastor.

I get this job description. Do as we say. Right? No, I'm just kidding. It's not like that in this church.

We get a job description with titles. If you're a manager, there's a managerial job description.

If you're a caretaker, if you're a nurse, you have a job description. Are you the Christ? They want to know his job description.

They want to know his purpose. What they're asking is concerning his office and his title. What is your title? In other words, we want to know what you plan to do is what they're asking him.

[14:19] The Jewish people, I think somebody just fell off their seat back there. I know. It's wild, isn't it? The Jewish people here knew that a Christ would be coming, but they were missing the mission and the purpose of this Christ, of this job description.

They wanted a Christ for their job description. They wanted a Christ to aid them in their own agendas. And for that reason, Jesus veiled multiple times his public identity of being Christ the Savior of the world.

Because the popular view back then was that the Jews wanted a warrior. They wanted a Judas, the hammer, to come on their behalf against the Roman Empire.

So he hid it. And in verse 11 of chapter 1, don't we remember that he came to his own and here he is in Jerusalem at the feast of dedication and his own people did not receive him.

Look at what's happening as we're in this seventh discourse. They celebrate Judas the hammer, but they're unwilling to celebrate Jesus the lamb.

[15:47] the lamb save their traditions. The lamb will save their soul. And the unfolding mission has little to do with the reigning victor over Rome, but to be as Isaiah writes, to be as a suffering servant of Israel, that is where this victor will reign.

And so Jesus answers them in their confusion, their, I guess they could, you could say that they're recruiting right now for their own gain.

And 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, but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.

I was just talking to a guy from another country, not necessarily a believer, but believes that Jesus was a man, but that he was just a prophet.

He was just simply, he was not divine. He was not God, essentially. And something like this should ring true in our witnessing to other people. Because he says, the works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me.

[17:11] We can articulate who Jesus is, but what he's saying is, what I have done on this earth verifies my identity. When we're witnessing Jesus Christ, this is important to note.

Because non-believers who reject Jesus as God need to look upon the same evidence that he's calling these unbelieving Jews to look. He says, essentially, look at my works.

Ask one of the wedding guests at the feast in Cana, in that wedding celebration in Cana from John chapter 2. Ask the son of the royal official in John chapter 4.

Ask the handicapped man that was bound to a chair for 38 years in John chapter 5. Ask just one of the 5,000 men who I fed, not to mention the women who weren't counted and the children who weren't counted.

Ask just one of them who I am. Ask one of the disciples who saw me walk upon the water in John chapter 6. Ask the former congenital blind man, the man who was born from birth, a sign that nobody has done who I am in John chapter 9.

[18:29] And it's almost like he didn't even say it, but it's knowing what we know from our point in redemptive history, we know the best is yet to come. And they will be witness of that work.

In other words, my work served to draw my sheep, verify my identity, to provide the witness needed to testify who I am and why I have come, why I am here.

That's the purpose of John's writing about all of these miraculous works. Those works serve as a purpose of verifying who he is, that he is truly the son of God.

You can look at that verse in John 20, verse 30. And if you are not a part of my sheepfold here, you're blind. Your ears are deaf. Your heart is dead.

And he says, he continues, echoing the context from last week, he goes into verse 27 saying, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.

[19:32] I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 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 and the father are one. You want to know how absolute truth, you want to know how I believe absolute truth exists?

Because God's word says it exists. You want to find absolute truth? It's right in front of us in God's word. Concerning unbelief, you hear my voice, you don't hear my voice, I don't know you, you won't follow me, you're eternally condemned.

Your father is a devil. Concerning belief on this side, they hear Jesus' voice and Jesus knows them and they follow.

They are given eternal life and secure in Jesus' hand. They are united with their father in heaven through Jesus Christ. And here we see that salvation and security truly rest in the hands of God alone.

[20:49] I love how verse 17 of Romans 10 says, so faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ.

They are given eternal life. They hear his voice. The work of God in our salvation begins with God as his voice is cast out into the ocean.

And we know that when his net is cast out upon the ocean, it will not return void. Isaiah 55, 11. Predestination, election.

Yes, God opens the eyes and the ears of the spiritually blind. And he opens the spiritually deaf blindness.

Human responsibility? Yes! Sheep respond by hearing his voice. I love how Spurgeon was asked how he could reconcile the apparent contradiction between predestination and human responsibility and those two truths.

[22:03] And he replied, I have never reconciled friends. Divine sovereignty and human responsibility have never had a falling out with each other.

I do not need to reconcile that which God has joined together. And Spurgeon even confessed, where these two truths meet, I do not know.

Nor do I want to know. They do not puzzle me since I have given up my mind to believing them both. The good news of the gospel is that those who God saves are secure within his persevering power.

And to quote R.C. Sproul, he says it perfectly, we are secure not because we hold tightly to Jesus, but because Jesus holds tightly to us.

Come what may, famine, pain, persecution, we know if we are secured in Jesus' grasp, we are equally secured in the Father's grasp as well.

[23 : 18] Our security, our salvation rests in the hands of God. And if they are in the hands of God, they are in the hands of Jesus. Jesus, this is good news because even though we are prone to wander, as the famous hymn says, even though we're prone to drift in our faith, we could even lose our very life, but still God's grasp remains upon us through our faith in Jesus Christ.

This is really good news for us. And so their conviction was a little bit disconnected. disconnected. They weren't understanding that good news at this point and coming to faith in him.

We see a second disconnect being that of constructs. Disconnect to the constructs of tradition.

Verse 31, it picks up that the Jews picked up stones again to stone him.

They want to kill him. And Jesus answered them, I have shown you many good works, and the father of which of them are you going to stone me? And the Jews answered, it is not for a good work that we are going to stone you, but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.

You hear what they're seeing? they're not seeing the irony in their own message, their own statements.

[24 : 56] That being, how could it be that God became a man? Their question was concerning, how does a man become like God?

And Jesus made an unmistakable reference to his oneness, and that's important for us to note in this passage, I'll explain in just a minute. But this was a punishable offense, according to Leviticus 24, that anyone who claims that they're God, that's blasphemy, and they're blind to God's progressive revelation, what God has promised, what God's job description was.

And they had the sights on the Feast of Dedication, the rule book that they had, their traditions and rules. And Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law? I said, you are gods.

If he called them gods to whom the word of God came, and scripture can't be broken, do you say of him whom the father consecrated and sent into the world, you are blaspheming because I said I am the son of God?

Now just real quick, at face value, this can seem like Jesus has found, like, you know, Jesus being God, has found the loophole that he kind of put into his law to get out of being killed here.

[26 : 13] God is a man. He is a man. He got a little crafty to find that loophole to avoid that death sentence. But I'm telling you the truth, he is not finding a loophole, but what he is doing is a figure of speech.

speech. What we see, and many false religions that claim that Jesus was simply a good man, a prophet, will turn to John chapter 10 verse 34 and say, your Jesus even claimed that he wasn't God.

And they will point to this as a superficial meaning. But what's going on is actually deeper under the surface. what he's doing is packing this scene, enriching it with historical theology, biblical theology of what God has been doing.

Jesus references here Psalm 82 where he says, is it not written in your law? I said you are gods. And this was a psalm that referred to human judges.

And these human judges, many of them, as we can see throughout the pages, even as we spoke about last week, Ezekiel 34 talks about that rebuke to the kings of those days.

[27 : 29] These people who were given this divine function, that they were set apart to be in this authoritative position, yes, according to the law, they would be lower case g gods.

They would be referred to as gods because of that divine function of judgment. And so what's going on here is both the Jews and Jesus are making judgments.

And so according to their standards, they're accusing him of something that they have no room to move because by even judging, they are also calling themselves little g gods, essentially.

Right? So what's going on here is a lesser and greater than going on. It's a reference to being less than and greater than, basically saying, in other words, if you unbelieving Jews are attributing the title lower case g gods, how much more appropriate to attribute the title to the one who actually is God?

God. Isn't the irony of many accusations centered upon Jesus being a man making himself God?

[28 : 50] As if Jesus worked himself into his divinity, his divine nature. As if Jesus was, his whole point was being born upon this earth and being simply a man.

But the central point that Jesus is emphasizing and that if you don't believe in Jesus Christ as your savior, as the Messiah today, Jesus is emphasizing that his works display that God has become man.

Why is this important? Galatians 4:4 tells us why. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoptions as sons.

God has reached into history to dwell among his people and he's dwelling among his people in the temple at Jerusalem right now.

And he is coming to call his sheep home. to call his sheep to faith. And Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law because he was placed under the law in his humanity.

[30:17] A work that no man can do, only God. And that is the source of our very faith in Jesus Christ. That's what it means to be a Christian.

And he says in verse 34, if I am not doing the works of my father, then don't believe in me. But if I do them, even though you don't believe in me, believe the works that you may know and understand that the father is in me and I am in the father.

Believe in the works, he says. Believe in something. The type of validation needed for Jesus and the early apostles were important.

And signs and wonders were prominent in laying the foundation of the church and especially important to the unbelieving Jews. This would verify Jesus' divinity and if his divinity, verifying his authority.

This would verify the apostles' authority in the early church. And a verse like this should be understood in the long stretch of biblical theology, basically looking at the macro narrative that's taking place among all of these pages.

[31:33] It shouldn't turn our church service into a magic show and allow us to say that we need to verify, validate our message for people to believe.

No, it's already been done and it's been recorded and Jesus is done displaying miracles. The miracle that we see in the church today is a miracle going on within all of our hearts of a sinner coming to faith in Jesus Christ.

If the works serve to prove his identity and salvation rests in the hands of God, then we as a church should be primarily concerned with our words that are pointing to his works right here.

right? We point no further than the Bible. I think I need to make a case for anybody who is just on the fringe line of coming to Jesus Christ.

We have gone through seven major discourses and if you're still sitting in your seat and you do not believe, what are you waiting for?

[32:50] I'm not up here for my health at all, but I'm here for you. I'm a steward of his word to tell you what Jesus has told them, that if you have faith in Jesus Christ to come, believe in him, that he's not just a man who became God and all this stuff, that it was actually the creator of the universe being Jesus who came to earth to save us.

This is something to hope in. Come to Jesus Christ. Learn from the Pharisees and the Jewish people's mistakes. Don't sit there another week without coming to faith in him.

So how'd they do in all of this as the passage sort of wraps up? Verse 39, again, they sought to arrest him and he escaped from their hands.

Wolves don't follow sheep, but sheep will hear the voice of the shepherd. And look with me in verse 40. They'll even cross the sea to follow their shepherd.

He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first and there he remained. And many came to him and they said, John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true and many believed in him there.

[34:30] All I plead to you today is the truth of that same gospel. considering the aim of the insistent interrogation of Jesus Christ from the unbelieving Jews, they wanted a political hero to wrap their arms around and say, all right, buddy, you can fight for us.

Their salvation, they were God's people. They were chosen, right? They had it in the bag. They did not have any sin that they needed to be saved from.

They had all of it in the bag of what God has provided in the past. But you see what's happening in this narrative. You have two components at hand.

You have convictions of why Jesus came, and you have the constructs of how they respond based upon those convictions. And one thing about convictions and constructs is that convictions will drive all the constructs in our lives.

You want to know how an organization like Big Like Apple began? It began with a conviction. It began with a mission that they believed in.

[35 : 49] So for these Jews, the conviction was that of Judas the hammer during the Maccabean reign. They wanted a political victor. And so the constructs that they built upon that, they protected and guarded their traditions, what they do, and their temple of who they are.

And the rededication of the temple was great in a symbolic sense that God's promise to his people to provide for his people still remains.

But what God has promised to do for his people wasn't just about giving them a new altar. It was to entirely replace and renew the temple.

Sacrificial system and all. The convictions that Jesus is drawing is not Judas the hammer, but Jesus the lamb, a soul victor, not a political victor.

And the constructs will equally build traditions in our lives. We'll build our own temple as we are building that on the foundations of the apostles and prophets where Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone as we are all his temple.

[37 : 06] The same is true. Because of Jesus' work of redemption, our lives should reflect constructs driven by that conviction. salvation. Listen, the gospel is a message that powerfully realigns our mindset that life will come and go.

Our financial situations will rise and fall. our various circumstances are only but temporary.

It's a vapor. But what God has promised to do, this powerfully redirects our attention on things that matter. This redirects our attention off of politics.

I think I need to say that again. This redirects our attention off of a comfy home. This redirects our attention off of a comfy career.

It's a call to rid ourselves of false worship. Something that challenged me in this passage, which I believe challenges all the readers, is do the constructs of your life, based on your convictions of who Christ is, what he has done, do the constructs of your life reveal that Jesus is not welcome within your own life?

[38 : 47] Just as the context of this passage. If the constructs of our lives are not built around gospel-centered conviction of our hearts, it is not God who we are living for, it is ourselves that we're living for using God's name, just like the Jews.

Now, I'm commissioned to tell you, according to my job description, commissioned to tell you that salvation needs to be prioritized in your life today.

It needs to be a prioritized topic today, a topic that says, not my will, but yours be done, but yours be done. A topic that says, I must decrease so that he can increase.

It is a heart check. We're done talking about the blind eyes, the deaf ears, we're talking about a heart check. And if you are not building the things within your life around the person and work of Jesus Christ, might it be time to cast out those things that don't belong within the constructs of your life?

How many of us are fervent in inventorying our lives and identifying those things that truly don't belong and casting them out because Jesus is clearly not in it?

[40 : 12] And if we don't, it's equal to casting Jesus out of our lives, being idle in this construct evaluation.

Church, let us as temples of the Holy Spirit, God's temple that's being built up, known as his church, let us evaluate, rededicate our temple, our entire being, our body, soul, mind, our pursuit solely upon God alone.

Many will cross the sea for a promotion. Many will cross the sea for a new job, maybe a new co-worker, sometimes in my case, sometimes a new neighbor, or, you know, sometimes we'll go to great lengths of crossing the sea for these things that are just so earthly bound of recognition, money, fame, but are we so quick to cross the sea to follow Jesus Christ without an agenda of his usefulness to you but rather the opposite, your usefulness to him.

That will change everything in your life, living with that conviction, saying, God, what can I do to serve you today? Maybe this is what the appeal that Paul provided at Romans 12 once said, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual

worship.

May the same be true of our lives as we follow as Jesus' sheep. We say we are his church in this place. we are his sheep.

[41 : 57] We are a sheep of his pasture. What do your constructs say about your conviction? What is the condition of your hearts?

A text like this can challenge us. Choose this day whom you will serve and do it all for the glory of God alone. Let's pray. Let's pray.