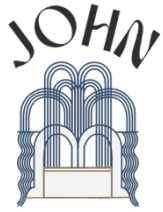


An Exposition of the  
**GOSPEL OF JOHN**



## “Reasons to Believe”

*John 10:31-42*

**Theme: By examining the Word of God and observing the work of Christ, sincere sinners come to faith in Him.**

**Introduction:** There are few things more frustrating than trying to help someone see what is plainly true, only to see them refuse it—not because the evidence is lacking, but because their hearts are unwilling. We have all experienced that in one way or another. A parent warns a child. A doctor pleads with a patient. A friend points out danger. The facts are clear. The evidence is compelling. Yet pride, stubbornness, fear, or love for sin blinds the heart from embracing what is right before them. That is exactly what we encounter in John 10:31–42. **[READ TEXT]**

Jesus has not hidden Himself in ambiguity. His words have been clear. His works have been undeniable. His miracles have displayed divine authority. His life has radiated holiness. He repeatedly demonstrated that He is exactly who He claimed to be—the Son of God, one with the Father. Yet, instead of worshiping Him, the Jewish leaders pick up stones to kill Him.

The tragedy of this passage isn't that the evidence for Christ was weak; it's that sinful hearts can stand in the full sunlight of divine revelation and still prefer darkness over light. These men heard the greatest Teacher who ever lived. They witnessed miracles no one else could do. They saw perfect righteousness embodied before their eyes. Yet, they hardened themselves against Him.

But in striking contrast, the chapter ends with a different response. Beyond the Jordan, away from the hostility and hypocrisy of Jerusalem, ordinary people listened sincerely. They recalled the testimony of John the Baptist. They considered the works of Christ. They observed the harmony between God's Word and Christ's life. And the text says, *“Many believed in Him there”* (John 10:42, NASB95). That is the dividing line in this passage—and ultimately, the dividing line for every person. What will you do with Jesus Christ?

This passage reminds us that faith is not irrational or blind. God has provided testimony; He has spoken through the Scriptures. He has confirmed His Son through mighty works. Christ's miracles explained His message, and His message explained His miracles. Together, they form a compelling witness to His divine identity.

And so, the theme of our passage this morning is this: **“By examining the Word of God and observing the work of Christ, sincere sinners come to faith in Him.”**

As we walk through this text, we will see three compelling reasons to believe in Jesus Christ:

- I. **He Exhibits the Works of God's Obedient Servant – 10:31-33**
- II. **He Exceeds the Worthiness of God's Ordinary Servants.**
- III. **He Executes the Witness of God's Other Servants.**

## I. **He Exhibits the Works of God's Obedient Servant – 10:31-33**

### A. **The Accusations by the Faithless – vv. 31, 33**

1. Jesus' statements in the previous section concerning how He and the Father were united in the guarantee of the salvation of all who come to faith in Christ Jesus were so clear and inarguable that the Jews took great offense at His claim to be God's Son when He said, *"I and the Father are one."*
2. This was not merely a vague claim of agreement, cooperation, or shared purpose, but a declaration of essential unity with the Father.
3. There is no doubt that they could clearly understand what Christ was conveying – they had received the correct message from Him.
4. However, instead of bowing before the majesty of His glory, *"the Jews picked up stones again to stone Him."*
5. They accuse Christ of blasphemy – *"For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."*
6. Such a response reveals the tragic hardness of unbelief.
7. Their hatred and hostility toward Christ were rash and unfounded – driven solely by His holiness and moral perfection – and this because of their sinfulness – cp. **1 John 3:12**.
8. Their outrage unintentionally testifies to the clarity of Christ's revelation.
9. Sinners find His claim unacceptable because accepting it would force them to bow before Him as Lord and give up their self-rule.
10. Fallen humanity does not naturally oppose Christ because He lacks goodness, but precisely because He embodies absolute holiness that confronts man's rebellion against God – cp. **John 7:7**.
11. Their reaction to Jesus was not a righteous opposition to evil, but an evil opposition to righteousness.

### B. **The Affirmation by the Father – v. 32**

1. However, lest we doubt Christ or give credence to those scornfully accusing Him, Jesus responds by challenging them to justify their accusations – *"I showed you many good works from the Father, for which of them are you stoning Me?"*
2. The boldness of Jesus' challenge shows there was no truth to their claim of His blasphemy - They couldn't point to a single sinful act, false teaching, or corrupt deed in His life. Their hatred was driven not by justice, but by

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hardened unbelief – cp. ***John 15:24-25***.

3. The Father’s imprimatur is evident throughout Christ’s life—His actions, miracles, and teachings were characterized by moral excellence and authority—an authority that is clearly divine—cf. ***Matthew 3:16-17***.
4. Christ’s miracles were not random displays of power meant just to amaze crowds; they served as signs confirming His divine identity and aimed to foster faith – ***John 20:30-31***.
5. The works that Christ performed showed that He and the Father are one – therefore, He is not a blasphemer.
6. These men should not be trying to stone Christ – based on the works He had done among them – they should be bowing low and worshipping Christ.
7. Their response exposes the terrifying power of unbelief: sinful men can see overwhelming evidence of divine truth and still harden their hearts against God. Instead of honoring Him, they try to crush Him.

## **II. He Exceeds the Worthiness of God’s Ordinary Servants – *10:34-39***

### **A. The Purpose of God’s Servants – v. 34**

1. The Jews were determined to have Christ charged and condemned because of His claim to be the Son of God.
2. They indicated that Jesus’ statement in v. 30: *“I and the Father are one”* was *“blasphemy because ... [He made] Himself out to be God.”*
  - a) *The neuter form of “one” (εἷς) emphasizes one divine essence rather than one person.*
  - b) *Jesus was not claiming to be the Father, but to share fully in deity with the Father.*
3. Jesus’ reply ought to have been powerfully disarming – *“Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’?”*
4. Basically, Jesus argues that their accusation of blasphemy is invalid because there is a precedent they already accepted – the idea that God’s servants are sent by God in a representative role for human judges and rulers who have delegated authority from God.
5. These servants of God were referred to as *“gods”* – compare ***Psalms 82:6***.
6. If Scripture can use such titles for imperfect human authorities without blasphemy, how much more fitting is it for the sanctified and sent Son of

God to identify Himself as the Son of God?

7. This is explained in many places in the New Testament, where God gives His authority to human leaders to ensure the stability of the universe - cf. ***Romans 13:1–2; Matthew 16:19.***
8. Having been entrusted with divine authority, God’s leaders are under great accountability to accurately represent Him.
9. God’s authority is never given as a license for self-exaltation, tyranny, or corruption. Leaders who hold God’s authority must mirror His justice, holiness, truthfulness, and compassion – which is the purpose of Jesus’ citation.
10. He did this perfectly, unlike those being criticized in Psalm 82.
11. Jesus uses this passage not to diminish His deity, but to reveal the absurdity of the Jews’ accusation.

## **B. The Preferment of God’s Servant – vv. 35-36**

1. Having appealed to the Law, which those before Him accept without reservation, Jesus now seeks to ask why, ***“If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 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?’”***
2. If you call mere moral men ***“gods,”*** you should show great respect to me as **the One** sent by God.
3. It had *only* been the written Word of God that had come to the judges (in written form), but Jesus Himself, in person, the Word of God incarnate, had come to them.
4. If regular servants of God are called ***“gods,”*** shouldn't the Messiah also be called so?

## **C. The Proving of God’s Servant – vv. 37-39**

1. Jesus’ superiority over “ordinary” servants of God and His right to be called the Son of God are reaffirmed through His actions.
2. He says, ***“If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe in Me”***
3. This shows how clearly His ministry revealed the glory of God – He could present such a challenge to hostile men without fear of contradiction or failure.
4. On the other hand, ***“... 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.”***

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5. Basically, he challenges them to think about the ministries of any other servant of God – Moses, Elijah, Samuel, and others – and see if there’s anyone who shows greater proof of God’s presence in them and through them – cp. **John 1:17; 6:32**.
6. Jesus’ claim of superiority over all the “heroes of the faith” caused these unbelieving Jews to become furious, fueling their desire to kill Him – **“Therefore, they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.”**
7. This was the last time Jesus was in Jerusalem before His arrest, which occurred about 3-4 months later. (*It is now December 18-25, 32 AD, and the arrest and crucifixion took place in April of AD 33*).
8. **“He eluded their grasp”** – conveys an implication of divine sovereignty over the timing and circumstances of His laying down His life by His own choice – **John 10:17-18** – cp. **John 5:13; 8:59; 12:36**.

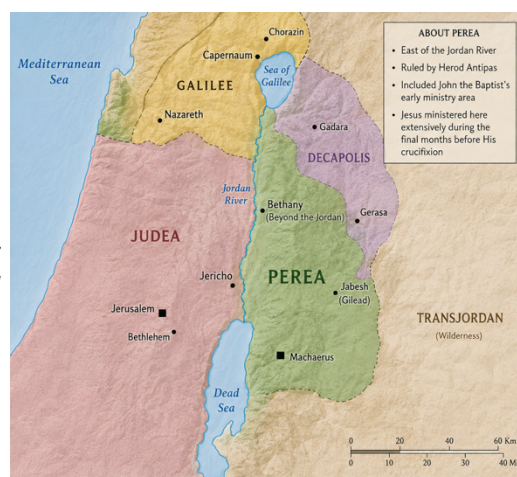
### III. **He Executes the Witness of God’s Other Servants – 10:40-42**

#### A. **The Perfection of His Fulfillment – vv. 40-41**

1. The tragedy of the Jewish people's disbelief truly reached a turning point at v 40: **“And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there.”**
2. As mentioned earlier, He is now simply waiting out the remaining time until it is time to offer Himself as the sacrifice for men’s sins.
3. This marks the beginning of the so-called “Perean Ministry,” which is the work done from a base on the other side of the Jordan immediately before the crucifixion – covering Luke 9:51-19:27.

a) *A great many of Jesus’ most significant teachings occurred during these 3 months in this place.*

b) *These teachings include:*



- (1) Good Samaritan — Luke 10:25–37
  - (2) Rich fool — Luke 12:13–21
  - (3) Mustard seed and leaven — Luke 13:18–21
  - (4) Great banquet — Luke 14
  - (5) Lost sheep, coin, prodigal son — Luke 15
  - (6) Rich man and Lazarus — Luke 16
  - (7) Persistent widow — Luke 18:1–8
  - (8) Pharisee and tax collector — Luke 18:9–14
- c) *Also, significant encounters during these months include:*
- (1) Martha and Mary — Luke 10:38–42
  - (2) Rich young ruler — Luke 18:18–30
  - (3) Zacchaeus — Luke 19:1–10
4. While He was there, ***“Many came to Him and were saying, ‘While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.’”***
- a) *That is, John did not perform authenticating miracles to prove he was from God; however, his proclamations and prophecies about Jesus as the Son of God are being shown to be true.*
  - b) *We might add that not only what John stated was being fulfilled, but the prophecies of God’s servants from hundreds of years earlier were also finding perfect fulfillment in Christ.*

## **B. The Product of Faith – v. 42**

1. Ultimately, hearing the word of God from John and Jesus, along with the validation through Jesus’ works, led these people in Perea to faith.
2. The people in this region could compare John’s prophetic claims about what the Messiah would do with Jesus’ life lived out before them.
3. They heard Christ’s words, observed His conduct, watched His miracles, and recognized a clear harmony between the prophetic witness and the person standing before them.
4. We are told that ***“Many believed in Him there.”***
5. Without the bias of hostility and the condemnation of religious hypocrisy that troubled the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem, sincere people who examine the Word of God, the Works of Jesus, and the clear agreement will come to faith in Him.
6. They sincerely listened to the Word of God, studied the works of Christ, and saw the harmony between them. His miracles verified His message. His message clarified His miracles. Combined, they created a powerful testimony to His divine identity.

**So What?**

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1. In what ways do I resist the authority of Christ because of my desire for self-determination?
2. Does the perfect holiness of Christ make me uncomfortable or provide me hope? ... why?
3. What distractions or sinful desires most compete for my loyalty to Christ?
4. How can I guard myself from becoming spiritually familiar with Jesus while remaining personally unmoved by Him?

**Theme:** By examining the Word of God and observing the work of Christ, sincere sinners come to faith in Him.

**REASONS TO BELIEVE**  
 ————— John 10:31-42 —————

**THEME:** By examining the Word of God and observing the work of Christ, sincere sinners come to faith in Him.

**I HE EXHIBITS THE WORKS OF A SERVANT OF GOD 10:31-33**

<p><b>A. THE ACCUSATIONS BY THE FAITHLESS vv. 31, 33</b></p> <p> The Jews understood Jesus' claim, "I and the Father are one," and took offense. They picked up stones to kill Him.</p> <p> They accused Him of blasphemy: "Because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." Their hatred was rooted in unbelief, not justice.</p> <p> They saw His works but refused to bow. Accepting Him would require them to surrender their self-rule.</p>	<p><b>B. THE AFFIRMATION BY THE FATHER v. 32</b></p> <p> Jesus challenged them: "For which of My good works are you stoning Me?" They had no legitimate charge.</p> <p> The Father's imprimatur was evident in His miracles and teachings—filled with divine authority.</p> <p> His works were signs authenticating His divine identity and meant to produce faith.</p>
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Their response was not righteous opposition to evil, but evil opposition to righteousness.

**II HE EXCEEDS THE WORTHINESS OF "ORDINARY" SERVANTS OF GOD 10:34-39**

**A. THE PURPOSE OF GOD'S SERVANTS – v. 34**

Scripture calls human rulers "gods" because they exercise delegated authority from God. If imperfect men can be called "gods," how much more is it fitting for the sanctified and sent Son of God to be called the Son of God?

**B. THE PREFERMENT OF GOD'S SERVANT – vv. 35-36**

The written Word came to those judges, but the Word of God came in person—Jesus. If you call mere men "gods," you ought to defer to Me, the One sanctified and sent by the Father!

**C. THE PROVING OF GOD'S SERVANT – vv. 37-39**

"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe in Me. But if I do them, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." His works reveal His unique unity with the Father and His superiority over all other servants of God.

Jesus' authority, works and identity are uniquely divine.

**III HE EXECUTES THE WITNESS OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD 10:40-42**

**A. THE PERFECTION OF HIS FULFILLMENT – vv. 40-41**

Jesus went beyond the Jordan to where John had first baptized and stayed there. Many came to Him and said, "While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true."

John's testimony—and the prophecies of God's servants—were being perfectly fulfilled in Jesus.

**B. THE PRODUCT OF FAITH – v. 42**

Hearing John's witness, observing Jesus' life and works, and seeing the prophecies fulfilled, many believed in Him.

When sincere people examine the Word of God and the works of Christ, and see their harmony, they come to faith.

**THE WORD**  
God has spoken (Scripture & Prophecy) + **THE WORKS**  
Christ has acted (Miracles & Ministry) = **THE RESULT**  
Sincere sinners come to faith in Him.

*"These have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."*  
— John 20:31