

Teaching Points

We pick up with a group of Jews ready to stone Jesus for His claims to equality with Yahweh. He told them that He is one with God the Father (v. 30) and they responded as if He had spoken blasphemy. Their response would have been appropriate under any other circumstances. It's blasphemous for a man to identify himself as equal with God almighty. The problem here is that the man making these claims is, in fact, God. **Jesus is the God-Man.**

Discussion Question: What is blasphemous about a man claiming to be equal with God?

Thoughts: God is infinite, eternal, holy, and perfect. Man is finite, fallen, and sinful. These two are not compatible. If a fallen human claims equality with God - it implies that God is less than perfect. In order for a mortal man to be God's equal - God would have to be tolerant of sin and willing to fellowship with evil. This diminishes His glory as the high and holy One who is completely separate from sin and darkness.

The Jews were right in identifying a sinful man's claim to equality with Yahweh as blasphemy. But they were dead wrong in their identification of Jesus as a sinful man! The incarnation is an incredible miracle. God put on flesh and came to save us. The story of Jesus Christ is the story of a man being equal with God - without any hint of blasphemy. Truly God and truly man. What a Savior!

In His defense, Jesus makes two appeals.

1. He appeals to His miraculous works. ***"Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?"*** (v. 32). ***"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."*** (Vs. 37-38)

This is not the first time Jesus has appealed to His miracles as proof of His divinity (see John 5:36). This is a recurring theme in John's gospel. The works that are recorded in this book are "signs" that point to the divine nature of Jesus. According to Jesus, His miracles alone were sufficient proof for the Jews to recognize His divinity. They were self-attesting demonstrations of His power as well as heavenly affirmations from God the Father. What greater confirmation could there be?

The appeal is simple. If Jesus performed miraculous good works in the name of God - then why would they have any reason to reject Him? There was no evidence that He did anything in cooperation with the devil or his demons. In fact, everything pointed to the opposite reality. Jesus clearly demonstrated His equality with God by performing

the very works of God! (In other words, works that no man could do unless God was with Him (see John 9:33)).

2. He appeals to Scripture. ***“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 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’?”***

This reference is a bit tricky. Psalm 82 contains two references to “gods”. The context points to these “gods” being human magistrates. Psalm 82 seems to be a complaint that these “gods” (magistrates) were unjust.

All authority comes from God. So, those human magistrates who judge human affairs are exercising an authority bestowed on them by God Himself. Yahweh calls these men “gods” because they are in positions that represent Him and they act with an authority derived from Him.

Jesus references this Psalm in order to make a simple point. If Yahweh called human magistrates “gods” (even those unjust magistrates) then why was it blasphemous for Him to refer to Himself in similar terms? Or, to put it differently, if those unjust judges occupied positions that represented the power and authority of Yahweh, **HOW MUCH MORE** does Christ? **He spoke and acted as God’s representative - more than any “god” or judge in the Old Testament.**

Here’s the bottom line: Christ clearly manifested divine power and authority in His earthly ministry. The works that He did were plain demonstrations and affirmations of His messianic identity.

After speaking these things, verse 39 says that ***“...He escaped out of their hand.”*** There is an interesting contrast here. In 10:28-29 Jesus just got done saying that nobody can snatch His sheep out of His hand. But here in 10:39, He easily escapes out of their hand. Do you see the difference? **God’s hand holds us with an unbreakable grip - but the hands of men are easy to escape from.** Jesus has no problem holding on to His sheep. He also has no problem delivering from the hand of evil men.

And now we close chapter 10 with a few references to some of the major themes in John’s gospel. In verses 40-42, we read about “signs” “truth” and “belief”. These are all central to John’s purpose in writing this gospel. All these concepts are grounded in the person and work of Jesus. He is the one who performed great signs. He is the one who speaks truth - and is Himself the truth. And belief in Him is the means by which we inherit eternal life. (See John 20:30-31)

Prayer Focus

Spend time worshipping Christ as God incarnate!

Meditate on His goodness, power, and authority - especially seen in the wonderful works He performs.

Remember that He still performs good and mighty works in our lives today. Pray with great hope and expectation from this wonderful Savior!