

Deciding who Jesus really is.

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Preacher: Kevin Murphy

[0 : 00] Good morning, church. The scripture for today comes from John chapter 10, verses 22 to 42. Please follow along in your own Bibles. If you don't have a Bible, do grab one around the stage or at the back near the door.

If you're using our church's Bible, the passage is on page 843. Starting at verse 22, we read, 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. So 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.

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're not among my sheep.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

[1 : 19] 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.

The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of them are you going to stone me?

The Jews answered him, 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.

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 cannot 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?

If I'm not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father.

[2 : 37] Again, they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands. 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 him in there.

This is the word of God. Great. Thank you, Annabelle. Let's pray together as we come to this passage. Lord Jesus Christ, this passage is going to tell us a lot about you.

God, things that probably many of us have heard many times before. We need your spirit to write these things on our hearts, God. We need you to open the eyes of our hearts to see these things that Christians have understood for thousands of years all across in every corner of the world.

God, you have revealed yourself, and we ask you, reveal yourself to us once again. God, for those of us maybe that are not followers of you, we've never surrendered to you, reveal yourself to us.

[3 : 51] Show yourself to us. Help us to see you, that we may believe in you, and understand who you are. God, for those of us that are followers of you, help us to see you again freshly. Help us to worship you, and to adore you.

Lord, we pray these things in your great and wonderful name. Amen. Amen. I don't know if you've ever received a final notice letter, final demand letter.

I confess, I receive these from time to time. And the reason is, I generally am someone that, whenever I get a bill, I want to pay it straight away. I hate having unpaid bills. But now and then, there's something that I want to question, or query, or think, hang on, that's higher than I expected, and I kind of put it aside to go and question it, or query it, or look into it a bit more, and then I forget about it, and then I get another letter, and I think, oh yeah, I must follow up, and then I forget about

it.

And then I get a letter like this, right? Saying, final notice, final demand. I don't know if that happens to anybody else. Maybe I'm the only one. Sometimes, when we've been spoken to many times, we need somebody to kind of get in our face a little bit, and wake us up, and say, okay, I've been talking, now you need to respond.

I can't go on talking forever. What are you going to do? Are you going to respond, or are you going to ignore my words, right? That happens in life, but it also happens with Jesus. Jesus Christ is so gracious, so kind, so wonderful, but he also wants us to respond to his words.

[5 : 16] And so sometimes he says, I've been speaking for many, many months now. I've been speaking for a long time. I want you to respond. How are you going to respond? Now, we're in John's gospel, and this is the final sermon that we're going to be looking at in John's gospel this year.

We'll pick up again in John chapter 11 next April. And the reason for that is because we've come to the end of a section in John's gospel. The biblical writers, when they wrote the books of the Bible, they wrote them in such a way in sections and blocks that we could easily remember or understand what they were saying.

And one of the reasons for that is because in the ancient world, most people couldn't read. Almost nobody had a Bible. Even if you could read, it was way too expensive to have your own copy of a Bible.

No one would afford a Bible. And so the way to remember what are these writers saying was to write it in a memorable way. And one of the ways they did that was they write in blocks or sections. And you'd know what that section about. Today, the end of John chapter 10 is the end of a section, a block that John has been writing. And we know that for two reasons.

[6 : 20] One, John chapter 11 starts with a death and resurrection. And the next section, John chapter 22, ends with a death and resurrection. So that's the next section in John's gospel, right?

11 to 21. But also in chapter 5 to 10 is kind of one section, one block. And today we come to the end of that. And we see that because chapter 5 and 10 both begin and end with a man being healed on the Sabbath day and then following by teaching of Jesus about Jesus and his relationship with the Father.

So if you remember many weeks ago, Oscar preached in John chapter 5 way back in September. There's a man who's paralyzed and he's by the pool of Bethesda, I think it was. And Jesus heals him on the Sabbath day and the religious leaders freak out because you're not allowed to do any work on the Sabbath day and apparently healing somebody's work and he gets in trouble and Jesus follows that miracle with the teaching about his relationship with the Father.

And you remember a few weeks ago, John chapter 9, there's a healing. Jesus heals a man born blind by the pool of Siloam on the Sabbath day and the religious leaders freak out because it's the Sabbath and you're not allowed to work on the Sabbath.

And he follows that with a teaching about I'm the Good Shepherd and then a teaching about his relationship with the Father. That's where we're at today. So chapter 5 and 9 and 10 kind of parallel each other and in between these two, if you've been here the last couple of weeks, chapter 6, 7, and 8, Jesus makes all these claims about himself, right?

[7 : 47] He says, I am the bread of life. I am the living water. I am the light of the world. I am the truth. I am the Good Shepherd. But Jesus makes all these radical claims about himself. And as we come today, what we see is that these claims are kind of bookended with these teachings.

And John today is coming to the end of the section. He's bringing this to a conclusion. And he's saying this. You've heard all these claims about Jesus. You've heard what he has to say about himself. What do you make about it? What do you make about it?

What are you going to do? John's been showing us about how the people in Jesus' day respond to him. And he's writing this as history, but he's also got one eye on us. And he's saying, what about you? How are you going to respond?

This is how they responded. How are you going to respond? So does that make sense? So this is a section. He's been telling us all the claims that Jesus has been making. And now he's asking us, what are you going to do about it? And he's been saying, I've been, Jesus has been talking a lot. He's been saying a lot of words. In some ways, this is a kind of final notice. This is, I want you to hear my words. In some ways, John's gospel, we've come to the halfway point, right?

[8 : 53] 21 chapters, we're at the end of chapter 10. You know, if you go to the theater and there's an intermission and just before the intermission, someone will leave you with something hanging, a question to ponder or a twist in the story or something that you go out at the halfway point thinking, hmm, I wonder how that's going to be resolved.

John is at the halfway point and he's saying, you've seen a lot about Jesus. How are you going to respond? Now, the rest is going to be resolved as we look at the rest of it. But, the main idea of this passage in some ways mirrors the main idea of John's gospel.

And if you know John's gospel, right at the end, he tells us why he wrote it. He said, I wrote these things that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and by believing, experience life in His name.

Okay? And so that's the big idea. John says, will you believe, will you receive that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? For only by believing in Him, will you experience life in His name?

Okay, so today we've got two things. There you guys see it on the screen. The essence of Jesus' claim and the response to Jesus' claim. Okay, two things for us to think about. So, firstly, let's look at the essence of Jesus' claim.

[10 : 00] So, Jesus has been using all these figures of speech in this Old Testament imagery, right, to speak about Himself and to show who He is. He says, I'm the light of the world, I'm the bread of life, He's the door, He's the truth, etc.

And some people come to Him and they say, how long will He keep us in suspense? Another translation says, how long will He keep annoying us? Okay, you could translate it that way.

How long will He keep annoying us? Tell us, if you are the Christ, tell us plainly. In other words, all these figures of speech you've been saying, just tell us, are you the long-awaited Messiah, the one that we've been waiting for for hundreds of years to restore the fortunes of Israel and make Israel great again?

And so Jesus says to them, verse 25, I have already told you. I've told you. That's what all my teaching's been about. This is what I've been saying to you all this time, right? I'm not just saying it, but also demonstrating it.

He says, the works that I do in my Father's name bear witness, but you do not believe me. Jesus says, I've been telling you who I am, both my words and my deeds, right?

[11 : 01] I've been proclaiming the gospel in word and in action. And of course, the greatest action is still to come. The greatest deed is going to be the empty clothes on the empty grave at the end of the gospel, but that's still to come.

But these people, he says, I've been telling you, but you do not believe. You do not believe. Why don't they believe? Well, a couple of reasons. Look what he says in verse 26. One, he says, you do not believe because you are not amongst my sheep.

My sheep hear my voice. I know them and they follow me. Jesus says, you don't believe me because you've been drowning out my voice. I've been sending you letters. I've been talking to you. I've been trying to tell you.

I've been demonstrating word and deed, but you're drowning out my voice. You're refusing to listen. You don't want to hear what I have to say. Earlier, when they say, just tell us plainly, are you the Christ?

Why do they ask that? Is it because they want to bow down and worship him? No, of course not. They want to kill him. They're looking for proof, for evidence that he's blaspheming, that he's saying this outrageous thing, right?

[12 : 03] They're not genuine questions of genuine seekers. They're evidence gathering of prosecutors and they're trying to find their evidence that they can arrest him and kill him. But here's the other reason why they can't receive Jesus.

Because they don't understand what God's Messiah is all about. They don't, for them, the Messiah is a military Messiah, a political Messiah, someone who's going to restore the fortunes of Israel, someone who's going to make Israel great again and destroy all their political and their military enemies.

John tells us in verse 22 that this happened at the time of the Feast of the Dedication. What that was, was about 170 years before, the Syrians overran Israel and Jerusalem and they plundered the temple, they took all the money, they destroyed the temple and then the leader of the Syrian army, his name was Antiochus IV, he takes a pig, which if you're Jewish, a pig is like the most unclean,

dirty animal there is.

He takes a pig into the temple and he sacrifices this pig in the middle of the temple to desecrate the temple and kind of destroy it, right? And one leader called Judas Maccabeus says, enough of this and he gathers his army, his friends and they go and they destroy the Syrians and they drive them out and they kill them and they restore the temple and they clean it and they rededicate the temple to the glory of God.

And so every year in the middle of December they would have this Feast of Dedication and that's what's going on here, right? But that's the kind of Messiah that they want. They say, okay, Judas, he died, give us another Judas Maccabeus, someone who's going to this time destroy the Romans. [13:38] Okay, the Syrians are done, they've done, the Romans, get rid of the Romans and kill them and restore the glory of Israel. And they're looking for a Messiah like that, a political Messiah, a religious Messiah, a military Messiah.

But that's exactly what Jesus has not come to do because that's not who Jesus is. Who is Jesus? Well, look at what he's trying to say here.

Jesus says, I'm not just the Messiah that you want. I'm nothing less than God himself. I am the son of God. Jesus says, I'm equal with the father in divine authority, nature, and power.

I've come to accomplish the will of God, the father, son, and spirit, which we determined beforehand in eternity to save and rescue for ourselves, those who will trust in him. Look at verse 25 to 29 in your Bibles.

Jesus says this, the works that I do in my father's name bear witness about me. Verse 27, my sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life, they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hands.

[14:48] My father, who has given them to me, is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of his hands. Why? Why does Jesus say, what I do is what the father does. Why? Because I and the father are one.

And that's what Jesus is saying. He's saying, I'm not here just to make your lives great again. I'm not here to make your nation great again. I'm here as God himself. I'm here to save you from a far bigger enemy than the Romans.

I'm here to save you from your sins. And that's clearly the big idea here because nine times Jesus uses this phrase, my father or the father. Everything is, he says, my will is the father's will.

My work is the father's work. What I do is what the father does. What the father says is what I say. Verse 38, the father is in me and I'm in the father. Why? I and the father are one. Now, the people that Jesus is speaking to, they, on one hand, they understand exactly what he's saying, right?

Because look at how they respond. Verse 31, the Jews picked up stones to stone him, right? They know exactly what he's saying. Verse 33, I think it is, says, Jesus says, why are you stoning me?

[15:57] Why do you do this? And he says, it's not for good works that we're going to stone you, but for blasphemy because you're making yourself out to be God. They know exactly what Jesus is saying. In chapter 5, Oscar preached a few weeks ago, says the same thing.

Verse 18, this is why the Jews were seeking to kill him because he was calling God his own father, making himself equal to God. They know exactly what Jesus is doing. They understand that Jesus is claiming to be nothing less than the uncreated eternal God, one in nature, power, and authority with God who's considered so holy that to utter his name in those days, to say the name Yahweh on your lips was a capital offense punishable by death.

That's how holy God is and they know that Jesus is claiming he and I are one. But on the other hand, they actually don't know what Jesus is saying at all. They completely misunderstand because look at what happens here.

Jesus says, I've shown you many good works in the Father. For which of them are you going to stone me? And the Jews answer him saying, it's not for good works we're going to stone you, but for blasphemy because being a man, you make yourself God, which is exactly not what Jesus is doing.

Jesus is not a man who's making himself out to be God. Jesus is God who's become man. Jesus is the uncreated one, the God of all creation, who's become man, who took on humanity, who made himself a servant.

[17:25] Why? To go to the cross and lay down his life for you and for me. Friends, what they find so blasphemous and offensive, Jesus claiming to be God is actually such good news for us that God himself became man, took on humanity, took on flesh and blood, took on the nature of a

servant, humbled himself to the point of death, death on the cross in order to rescue us and save us from our sins.

And so again, Jesus' words in John chapter 5, Jesus said this, he says, truly I say to you, whoever hears my words and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come to judgment, he's passed from death to life.

That's what Jesus is saying. Why? Because he's not just a messiah, a political messiah, he's not just a military leader, he is God himself. I and my father are one. I don't know if you know the New City Catechism.

Catechism is a way that churches throughout the ages have taught theology and doctrine through question and answer. And so the most famous one is the Westminster Catechism. Question one says, what is the chief end of man?

Answer, to glorify God and enjoy him forever. New City Catechism question two says this, what is God? And the answer is this, God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything.

[18 : 44] He is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in his power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice, and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.

This is who God is. And the Jews would have said, yes, that's God, God the Father, no problem. Jesus says, that's me as well. And when they hear what he's saying, they pick up stones to kill him. Just this week, I've been reading the book of Revelation in my devotions, my quiet times, and I got to Revelation 4 and 5, which is the apostle John who writes, and in that, John has a revelation of heaven, and he sees in his revelation God on the throne, and around the throne are these incredible creatures, these amazing creatures and angels, and they are worshiping God the Father on the throne.

This is what they say, worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things and by your will they existed. But then, after that, all these creatures worship Jesus, and this is what they say about Jesus.

They say, next slide, I'll tell you, worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.

[20 : 01] And then, after that, all creation, the whole of creation, angels and creatures and people, everything, worship God and Jesus together, saying, to him who sits on the throne and to Jesus the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever and ever.

Friends, you see the essence of Jesus' claims. Why is Jesus able to say the things that he is? I am the light of the world. I am the living water. I am the bread of life. Why is Jesus able to say these things?

Is Jesus very proud and hubris? Is Jesus a great leader that can help us just get ahead in life? No, Jesus wants us to see he is nothing less than God himself.

Jesus is not offering himself as one option in a buffet of good things to have in your life. One more guide to help you get ahead in life. So some of us, maybe we've got our finance guru, we're going to speak to him about finances and we've got our mental health expert that helps us with mental health and we've got our career guidance person that helps us with our career guidance and maybe you've got a health and fitness person on the side and then you've got Jesus who's your kind of spiritual coach or your life coach, right?

Jesus says, no, no, no, that's not who I am. I'm not one of a buffet of options of things. I am the uncreated God and life is found in me. And Jesus says that if you want to find life, life to the fullness, you have to come to me.

[21 : 29] You have to accept me as God, as king. So friends, what about you? Is that true of you? What do you make of Jesus? Is Jesus just a wise man that helps you get through life?

Someone who gives you good wisdom and advice? Jesus says, that's not who I am. That's not who I've come to be. I've come to be God. I've come to be king. I've come to be a savior. I've come to lay down my life for you.

As we often quote C.S. Lewis, he says, Christianity, if false is of no importance, if true is of infinite importance, the only thing it cannot be is moderately important. Jesus' claims are not moderately important.

Jesus' claims are either true and of infinite importance or false and of no importance. He will not allow us to consider him moderately important. Now, what are the implications of this?

What does this mean for our lives? Well, there's two things. One positive, one negative. One implication is this. If you know and trust Jesus, if you're safe in Jesus, you are safe in God the Father.

[22 : 29] And that's actually one of the points that Jesus makes here in chapter 10. He says, to know me is to know God. He says here, sorry, wrong book of the Bible. We're in John, right?

He says, he says here, I give them eternal life and they will never perish. 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 my Father's hands.

Jesus gives us this incredible assurance that though your faith may go up and down, though you may be strong at times and weak in times, though at times you may be full of confidence and other times you may have questions, if you are able to hold on to Jesus, Jesus himself and God the Father, the uncreated one, is holding on to you.

It's unbelievable assurance that you don't need to know everything, how everything works. You don't need to have every question answered. But if you know Jesus, if you trust in him, if you say, I'm going to try to hold on to him, he and the Father are holding on to you and no one and nothing can let you go.

As the song we sometimes sing, when Satan tempts me to despair and tells me of the guilt within, up would I look and see him there who made an end to all my sin.

[23 : 48] Friends, this week, you're going to find lots of reasons to despair. This week, you're going to find lots of reasons to doubt. Christ Jesus, the one that you're holding on to, is holding on to you and more than that, God the Father is holding on to you.

But here's the second implication. To reject Jesus means to reject God himself. Jesus says, I am the Father, are one. And there's two ways we can do that.

We can do that outright as the people in Jesus' day did that. Remember when Jesus on trial, Pilate says, what should I do with this man called Jesus? And what do they say? Crucify him. Get rid of him.

Get this man out of here. We want nothing to do with him. And they cast him out. Maybe that's you. Maybe you feel like, I want nothing to do with this Jesus guy. But actually, there's another way that we can do that and we can far more subtly reject Jesus.

And by doing that, we're rejecting God. Without even almost realizing it. And that's by not quite following Jesus entirely in all the areas of our lives. So we tell ourselves, yes, I'm a Christian.

[24 : 49] I believe in Jesus. I'm just not really willing to forgive that friend. Yes, I believe in Jesus. I'm just not willing to honor Christ with my sexuality, with my money, with my career, with my relationships, with my time.

And we can shut the door on God himself, the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. The one who is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in his goodness and grace, power and perfection, wisdom, justice, and truth.

We shut him out of our lives and we say, God, take a step back. I won't have you because we don't want to trust Jesus' words. And so when we reject Jesus, we're actually rejecting the God of all creation and cutting him out of those areas of our lives, which is a very sad thing to do.

Friends, this week, all of us are going to be tempted to treat Jesus in some area of our lives as just a man trying to make him out to be God. And when we say no to him, we say no to all the grace that God wants to give us through him.

Friends, it's important we take this in, that Jesus says, I am one of the Father. And when you accept me, you get the Father. When you reject me, you reject the Father. Now, look at what happens here in verse 34 and 37.

[26 : 06] Jesus throws a bit of a theological spanner in their works. Do you know that phrase? I was thinking about that this morning. Do you know that, to throw a spanner in the works? Is that a very South African thing to say? No?

So think about if you've got this big machinery, right? These big engines and someone throws a metal spanner in it is going to mess up the whole machinery, right? Jesus throws a theological spanner in their thinking here because they want to kill him, right?

And so Jesus says something to get them scratching their heads just to pause and to kind of like to throw them off their thinking a bit because they say to him, we're going to kill you because you're blaspheming and Jesus quotes Psalm 82.

He says, well, in the Psalms, you know, the Psalmist talks about all God's people being gods. So why do you criticize me when I say I'm a son of God? And why does Jesus do that? He's kind of getting them just to like drop their stones for a bit and say, that's a good question. Let's think about that so that he can escape from their hands. And the reason is because Jesus' time has not yet come. Jesus is going to be crucified over Passover weekend in a few months time, but it's not Passover yet.

[27 : 12] His time has not yet come. And Jesus wants to make one final appeal, one more appeal to get them to trust him. Jesus is wanting, he's not wanting to confuse us.

He's wanting to help them to see and believe. And so look what he says in verse 37. And as I read this, I want you to listen to the tone of Jesus' words. Listen to Jesus almost employing, he's begging us, he's saying, he's employing us to come and listen to him.

I find these verses amazing. his final plea to them and to us. Verse 37. If I'm not doing the works of my Father, then don't believe me. But if I do them, even if you do not believe me, believe the works that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.

Jesus is saying, you may not like me, but I want you to see that I am the Savior that God has sent to you. You may not like what I have to say, but look at my works.

Don't ignore it. Don't walk away for one more day. You need to see who I am because only by seeing who I am can you be saved. Jesus is employing them.

[28 : 25] He says, even if you don't believe me, that's fine, but please, look at the evidence. Believe the works that you may know and understand.

The Father is in me and I am in the Father. And if you walk away from me and reject me, you're walking away from the Father. Friends, you hear the tenderness of his appeal?

It's almost like Jesus begging them not to walk away from what he's offering them one last time. In just a couple of months' time, Jesus will come back to Jerusalem, but this time to die on a cross.

He wants them to believe in him before that happens that they may receive the life that he offers.

So, how should we respond? Well, John is a master writer of his gospel and John wants us to see how they respond because he wants us to respond appropriately.

And so, John gives us two responses. In verses 31 and 39, he shows us how the Jews in Jerusalem respond. And how do they respond? Verse 31, they pick up stones to kill him.

[29 : 29] In verse 39, not killing him, they seek to arrest him. They want to get rid of him. But then, John gives us an alternative. And John shows us there's another way to respond.

There's two responses. You can reject him or you can receive him. And so, look what happens in verse 40 to 42. Verse 40, Jesus went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first and there he remained.

So, John the author takes us back to John chapter 1, back to John the Baptist, right? I know it's confusing, two different Johns. And what is John's witness about him? John the Baptist. Remember what John the Baptist says?

He says, there is a man coming after me whose sandals I'm not worthy to untie. A man who ranks before me because he has always existed before me. And so, John's taking us back to John the Baptist's testimony and he's telling us about John the Baptist and what John the Baptist said.

And then he says, many came to him and they said, John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man is true. And many believed in him. John the Baptist did no signs, no wonders, no miracles.

[30 : 40] He just told them about Jesus. He told them that he was the Christ. He told them that he was the son of God. He told them that he was the lamb of God who would die for the sins of the world.

And that Jesus would baptize them in the spirit and bring them into God's kingdom. And now, having seen Jesus, they believe. They believe. And they experience life in his name.

But others, in Jerusalem, they see Jesus and they saw the miracles and they saw the signs and wonders and they saw everything that Jesus did and still, they would not believe.

Do you remember what the Apostle John said right at the beginning? He said, Jesus came to his own and his own did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

And at the end of the section, these two bookends of chapter 5 to chapter 10, John ends with this question. Which one are you going to be? Are you going to be the Jews in Jerusalem that reject

him?

[31 : 36] Or are you going to be like those that believe? And that makes all the difference. That makes all the difference. John closes off this first half of his biography of Jesus, giving us multiple instances of religious leaders who refuse to believe and now points us to people that are on the outskirts of Israel, the backwaters of Israel.

And he says, they believed. Will you be like them? So friends, as we come to a conclusion here, for 18 weeks this year, 18 Sundays, we've been looking at John's gospel.

And for 18 weeks this year, we've been listening to John's testimony about Jesus, about who he is, that he is the Christ, the son of the living God, that those who believe in him will find life in his name. We've heard the words, we've seen the signs, we've listened to the miracles, we've considered Jesus teaching, we've heard John's witness, we've seen how he fulfills scripture, we've seen that Jesus is one with the father.

And now John ends off asking us, what are you going to do with this? Will you believe or will you reject him like the people of his day? These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God, and by believing receive life in his name.

[32 : 51] Friends, Jesus sends us that final letter. Don't keep on ignoring it. Don't keep on rejecting. Respond and let him help you find life in his name. Let's pray together.

Lord Jesus, sometimes, God, we confess our hearts can be very hard. We can be dull and slow to listen, slow to hear. But God, you're so gracious, you're so patient.

Jesus, even these people that they want to stone you and kill you and be done with you, you are so patient that you keep on employing them and you come back to them another time and you say, even if you don't like what I have to say, believe my works that you may receive life.

Jesus, help us to believe your works. Help us to believe, Lord, the death and resurrection. Help us to believe the empty tomb and help us to find life in your name. God, in you there is life and apart from you there is no life.

So help us, we pray. In your wonderful name, Amen. Amen. Amen.