

Teen Devotion

Year C – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Victorious



One truth shared: We can trust everything that our Savior says to us in his holy Word.

Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

John 10:22-30

Promises Kept March Victorious Over Empty Words

There are some teachers in school for whom students hang on every word spoken and it all seems to make sense. There are others for whom this is not the case.

There are some parents whose spoken word is taken to heart by their children, because their kids know they will never let them down. There are others where this is not the case.

There are some friends that always have your back and are much more part of the solution to your issues instead of the problem. There are others... Well, you get the point.

The Pharisees had enough of Jesus infringing on their popularity and purpose. While he had preached and taught openly in their midst for some time, they finally confronted him and asked, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly" (v. 24).

Jesus had already made this known. He had already pointed to himself as the One who was to come to save mankind from their sins. He had already revealed his deity and love for those he came to die for.

Jesus had not only come to talk the talk, though. He came to walk the walk. He came to preach the good news and teach a message of salvation by grace alone. But he had also come to serve as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of a world which did not receive him or deserve the gift he was about to give.

The Pharisees were all about empty words and promises. Jesus was all about doing what he set out to do and following through on what he said. That's why we worship him. That's why—as sheep—we recognize the Good Shepherd's voice and follow him wherever he leads us. Listen again, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand."

People will let us down in life. But that is why the assurance of our salvation isn't found in how others treat us or how good of a friend we are. Instead, we look to Jesus—the One who never lets us down and never will.

Prayer: Thank you for your Holy Word which we have for our nourishment, strength, and salvation, O Savior. Not only did you become the Word made flesh, but you share with us the very words of eternal life in your Gospel. Fill us today and always with this good news which gives us hope in this hopeless world. Amen.

Foundations Teen Facilitators Guide

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Starting the Discussion: *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

- On a scale of 1 (yikes, not good) to 10 (amazing), how good of a “promise keeper” are you? How about your family members? How about your friends?

Connecting: *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they’ve looked at it.*

Give some reasons why promises are so easy to make and so difficult to keep?

Digging In: *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- The Jews come to Jesus and ask him a very direct question in our reading today. What do you think was the rationale behind that question? Why were they so often very frustrated with him?
- What does Jesus’ answer to the question tell us about those who asked it? What does it tell us about himself?
- Re-read verses 27-28. Where do you find comfort about your relationship with your Savior here?
- How is the title “sheep” a fitting description of people in the world? How is the title “Good Shepherd” a fitting description of Jesus as our Savior and Lord?
- What aspect of Christ’s relationship with his Father is brought out in verse 29? What about in verse 30? How do we jive these two verses together?

Conclusion: *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the “connecting question” above.*

Promises made are not always kept. That’s a fact for every one of us and those we come in contact with. But not for Jesus. What he says he does, and what he does is always for our benefit. Identify one area of your life where you would like to be a better “promise keeper.” What actionable way can you make that happen?