

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Apr 18th 2012**

“The one who does not believe is already condemned.” Does this sound a bit premature? Is it like being called an “infidel?” Think of some friends who have not come to the Christian belief: is he or she branded and left without hope? No, because in another place, John says “The one who believes in the Son has eternal life” (3:36). To us this may sound equally premature. The key to it is the word “belief.” John could not have imagined, I’m sure, that the day would come when believing could mean just a nominal adherence. He would not have called a nominal Christian a believer. And conversely a nominal disbeliever is not beyond the reach of the Good Shepherd, Jesus who lays down his life for his sheep and thinks of those “other sheep who are not of this fold” (Jn 10:16).

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