

## THE GOSPEL OF

## JOHN

Follow  
God

## INTRODUCTION

John 10:22-42

Winter in Israel is the rainy season. The "portico of Solomon" was a large roofed-in enclosure supported by beautiful columns that filled one side of the temple arena. There, sheltered from the rain, our Lord resumed his teaching ministry during the Feast of Hanukkah. Hanukkah celebrates the purification and rededication of the temple after its defilement under the Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes, in the year 165 BC. The feast looks back on that dramatic, exciting period in Israel's history when the Maccabee family revolted against Israel's Syrian overlords. After a terrible time of murder and slaughter, and defilement of the temple courts by the offering of pigs on the altars of Judah, Judas Maccabeus and his sons drove out the Syrians, reclaimed the temple for the Lord and dedicated it anew. That event is celebrated down to this day in the Feast of Hanukkah.

It seems likely that Jesus returned to Jerusalem for two main reasons: First, he wanted to resume his wonderful teaching about his role as the Shepherd of Israel. This whole 10th chapter is built about the theme, "The Lord is my Shepherd." Here Jesus speaks of himself as the Great Shepherd who gives his life for the sheep, the True Shepherd who is not like the thieves and robbers, etc.

The second reason for his return seems to be to make arrangements for his final return to Jerusalem when he would come to offer himself as the Lamb of God, slain for the sins of the whole world.<sup>1</sup>

## OPEN IT

1. How many Facebook friends do you have? Twitter followers? Instagram followers? Who is someone that is interesting to follow on social media?

## READ IT

John 10:22-42

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.raystedman.org/new-testament/john/mad-man-or-god-man>

## EXPLORE IT

2. What feast was being celebrated in Jerusalem?
3. Where did Jesus have this discussion?
4. What was the question that the Jews asked Jesus?
5. What did Jesus say bore witness about Him?
6. Why did the Jews want to kill Jesus?

## APPLY IT

In this remarkable scene, it is evident that the Jews deliberately encircled our Lord (that is what John suggests in the word he uses here) so that he could not get away, forcing him to face their question, "Are you the Messiah, or aren't you? If you are, tell us plainly." Our Lord's answer was, "I have already told you." According to John's account he never had really said to these men, "I am the Messiah." He did say that to the woman at the well of Samaria, and he did say to the man who was born blind (John 9), "I am the Son of God," but to these Jewish leaders, these Pharisees, he had never said, "I am the Messiah." The reason, of course, was that their idea of what the Messiah would do and Jesus' fulfillment of the predictions of the Messiah were wide apart. They pictured the Messiah as a conquering hero who, like the family of Judas Maccabeus, would drive out the Romans, free the temple and enable the Jewish nation to again gain control of the land. But Jesus gave no indication that he ever intended to do that. Therefore, for him to say to them, "I am the Messiah" would have been to arouse totally false hopes in their minds. But he did tell them by other means that he was the Messiah.<sup>2</sup>

7. When Jesus was surrounded, what did He do? How did He speak?

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- 8. What are some of the ways in which Jesus had revealed Himself as the Messiah up to this point in the Gospel of John?**
- 9. Many people had come to believe in Jesus, and some had even followed Him, but why hadn't these Jews come to believe that Jesus was the Messiah?**
- 10. Jesus had worked incredible miracles in Judea and Galilee. Why were these miracles not good enough for the religious leaders in Israel?**

At the end of the day, these Jews did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah because they were not one of His sheep. They did not believe in or follow Jesus. They did not ask Him the question in verse 24 because they were eager to pronounce Him the Son of God and fall on their knees in worship. They hated Him, questioned Him, and tried to kill Him.

Jesus said that those who follow Him do so because they hear His voice. In order to hear someone's voice they have to speak to you. God speaks to people and they respond to His voice and follow Him. What is the incredible promise for those who hear and respond to the voice of Jesus? "They will not perish" and no one will be able to change that!

Eternal life begins and ends in God's hand - and what a strong hand He has!

Some may say that if you believe in the eternal protection and security of the believer you will take it for granted and live a life of sin, taking advantage of the grace of God. C. H. Spurgeon (Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit [Pilgrim Publications], 35:695-696) replies to that charge:

*Shall I come ... to your house, and tell your children that, if they do wrong, you will cut their heads off; or that, if they disobey you, they will cease to be your children? If I were to propound that doctrine, your children would grow angry at such a slander upon their father. They would say, "No, we know better than that!" Far rather would I say to them, "My dear children, your father loves you; he will love you without end, therefore do not grieve him." Under such doctrine true children will say, "We love our ever-loving father. We will not disobey him. We will endeavor to walk in his ways."*

**11. Is it ever right or wrong to give assurance of salvation to a believer who has sinned badly?**

**12. Think specifically about Village Bible Church - is the eternal security of the believer emphasized at the expense of the responsibility of the believer? Or vice versa?**

**13. Hearing the voice of God is a subjective activity, unless you are audibly communicating with the Lord! How do we judge that the voice we are hearing really is the Lord's voice? Specifically, what things can we do/practice to help us discern if God is speaking to us or not?**

**14. What Jesus says in verse 30 sends the Jewish religious leaders into a frenzy, and they pick up stones to kill Jesus. How does Jesus argue that He was not committing the sin of blasphemy? Was Jesus backtracking in His assertion of being one with the Father?**

**Personal Application Questions:**

**15. Do you believe in God? Do you believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of the living God? How have the miracles and works of Jesus strengthened your faith?**

**16. Do you listen for the voice of God and does He speak to you? How?**

**17. Do you take action and do what God asks you to do or do you find reasons not to step out in faith?**

**18. Do you believe that you are safe and taken care of by Jesus for all of eternity? Or do you struggle with knowing that you are truly saved?**

**19. How has your small group helped you in your walk of faith? (Tell them!)**

**Or has your small group not helped you in your daily walk of faith in Jesus Christ? (Don't tell them! Just kidding! Share this and brainstorm how small group life can help build your faith.)**