

The Gospel of John

Lesson #90
The Journey
Jim Hoffman

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The Gospel of John

- John 10:22 At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. 24 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."
- The Feast of Dedication is a winter feast, now known as Hanukkah – this particular Feast preceded the spring Passover when Jesus was crucified.
- So, we are inching ever closer to the cross. (10-12 weeks) 2

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The Gospel of John

- When the Jews asked, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly" they were demanding he make an official statement of his identity.
- One would think that he had already made it quite plain that he was the Messiah, and that furthermore he was the Son of God.
- But they are looking for a confession they can use to hang around his neck and demand his death as a blasphemer. 3

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The Gospel of John

- John 10:25 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, 26 but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.
- Jesus' works gave testimony to who he was – not just the individual miracles themselves, but also the volume of them.
- He did everything to announce who he was except for wearing a name tag reading, "I AM THE MESSIAH". 😊

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The Gospel of John

- At this point his enemies are not in the dark because they lacked evidence, they were in the dark because that's where they were comfortable.
- You and I have people in our lives who are in the same condition – they are where they are because that's where they want to be.
- People do not fail to come to Jesus because they cannot come, they stay in the darkness because "men loved darkness because their deeds are evil". (John 3:19)

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The Gospel of John

"If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our dead bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms wrapped about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go unwarned and unprayed for."

Charles Spurgeon

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The Gospel of John

We see those in the dark as people who just haven't heard the gospel clearly enough, or haven't heard it enough times, or maybe haven't heard it from the right preacher. While that could be true of some, there are many who haven't come because they just don't want to, and we find that hard to accept. Indeed, for those closest to us we cannot accept their rejection of Jesus as long as they, or us, have breath. Given the penalty for unbelief, how could we? So, they are a mystery to us who are in the light and can see. And the closer we are to the lost the more urgent their salvation becomes to us. From our perspective we sometimes feel helpless to reach them so we do that which is perhaps the most evangelistic thing we can do – we pray.

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The Gospel of John

- John 10:26 “but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.”
- Pay attention to Jesus’ words – he did not say his opposers could not believe, he said they did not believe.
- The fact that they were not believing was not due to them being excluded by Jesus from the gospel – in Jesus’ own words, “you do not believe” – the inverse is, “you are not among my sheep because you do not believe”.

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The Gospel of John

- John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (porter at the sheepfold gate)
- These obstinate Jews Jesus was dealing with were in the dark by choice and had no interest in following him – sheep come to the Shepherd because they want to obey him.
- No one has truly come to the Shepherd for salvation, while not wanting to obey him – those two thoughts are incompatible.

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The Gospel of John

- According to Jesus there are no cafeteria Christians who pick and choose what they like and don't like about the Savior.
- Sinners do not get to choose to take a "worldly life with a side of Jesus" – you know the ones. They don't want to go to hell but are not enthused about settling for heaven.
- We just read this minutes ago – "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

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The Gospel of John

If you want to know if you are saved, just ask yourself this question – do I want to obey Jesus? From the mouth of Jesus we hear, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me".

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The Gospel of John

- 1st John 2:3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him.
- Keep – tereo in the Greek means "to guard with the eye".

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- John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.
- Before we talk about the gift, let’s understand who the gift is for – “I give them” – so who are the “them” Jesus is going to gift eternal life to?
- Well, in context, the “them” are the sheep who “hear his voice and follow him” – in other words the gift of eternal life is for those who obey him.

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The Gospel of John

- So why doesn’t Jesus say what the Bible says so clearly elsewhere – “those who believe Jesus is the Christ are born of God”?
- 1st John 5 – “whoever believes Jesus is the Christ is born of God.”
- Acts 16:30 – “Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

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The Gospel of John

- So why doesn’t Jesus use the same words about “believing”?
- Maybe it’s because to say one is to say the other – It becomes obvious as we follow Jesus and observe the lives of those around us that if you believe you will obey.
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer who watched a lot of fake Christians go along with Hitler, concluded this when he said, “Only he who believes is obedient and only he who is obedient believes.”

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The Gospel of John

- “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”
- As we know, salvation is a gift – Paul even defined it as a “free gift” which sounds redundant; aren’t all gifts free?
- In our culture – there is no such thing as a “free business lunch” and when large political donors donate to a campaign, favors are expected in return.

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The Gospel of John

- Words have meanings and we call our Bible the Word of God – God’s words have even clearer meanings than the ones in our dictionaries.
- When Jesus says, “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish” – unless you think Jesus is speaking casually and carelessly then you should take him at his word.
- The Greek word here for eternal is “ahee-o’-nee-os” and it means “without end, never to cease, everlasting”.

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“never”

Word: oumh

Pronounce: oo may

Strongs Number: G3364

Orig: i.e. 3756 and 3361; a double negative strengthening the denial; not at all:--any more, at all, by any (no) means, neither, never, no (at all), in no case (wise), nor ever, not (at all, in any wise). Compare 3378. G3361 G3756

Use:

Heb Strong:

1) never, certainly not, not at all, by no means

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The Gospel of John

- And then Jesus goes on to answer a question he wasn't even asked – "and no one will snatch them out of my hand".
- The question he anticipated was "okay, what if the devil were to come along and snatch the believer right out of your hand, Jesus?".
- And then "well what if you are over-powered by the enemy and he grabs the person away and runs?" – again he anticipates and says, "my father who gave my sheep to me is greater than all".

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The Gospel of John

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

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The Gospel of John

Some foolishly argue – well, what if I decide to jump out of the hand of God? Jesus never said we can't do that! While true that he never said such a thing it seems unnecessary for such a statement to be offered. It is no accident that Jesus tells Nicodemus "you must be born again". The idea of a birth brings with it some things that can never be changed. When a child is born, he is a part of a family and while he may want to disown his parents, or even if they want to disown him, because of what we know about DNA the bond between parent and child is unalterable. Well, what if the child didn't believe his parents are his real parents – then what? Well, that is a dispute that is settled in our day by a DNA based paternity test. Some things just cannot be undone.

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Questions?

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