

Week 4.2 - Jesus Challenging with TRUTHS

Small Group Lesson

OBJECTIVE:

- John 10:22-42

EXPLORE:

(These are different commentary notes that can be used to explain the context to our students. Feel free to use your own.)

Context / Background / History

Location: Jerusalem, The Feast of Dedication: This feast (also known as Hanukkah) celebrated the cleansing and re-dedication of the temple after three years of desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria (in 164 or 165 B.C.).

Leading up to this passage, in John 9 and earlier in chapter 10, Jesus has:

- Healed the man born blind (John 9), leading to controversy with religious leaders.
- Declared Himself the Good Shepherd (John 10:1–21), contrasting Himself with false shepherds (religious leaders who exploit the flock).
- Claimed intimate unity with His sheep, saying His sheep know His voice, and He gives them eternal life.

These bold claims left the people divided; some accused Him of being

demon-possessed, while others saw His works as proof of divine authority.

During the feast, the Jews surrounded Him and asked directly: “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

- Jesus responded that He already told them through both His words and His works (miracles), but they didn’t believe it because they were not His sheep.
- He restated His promise: His sheep hear His voice, He knows them, and gives them eternal life — no one can snatch them out of His hand (vv. 27–29).
- Then comes the climactic statement: “I and the Father are one” (v.30). The Jewish leaders understood this as a claim to equality with God, so they picked up stones to kill Him for blasphemy.

Jesus did not often specifically refer to Himself among the Jews as the Christ, the Messiah. He did this because messiah was a word with political and even military implications that Jesus wished to avoid. Yet Jesus could rightly say that in many ways, **I told you and you do not believe.**

- **You do not believe, because you are not My sheep:** The religious leaders wanted Jesus to speak plainly, and here He spoke more plainly than they probably wanted. Jesus previously told them they were not true shepherds (John 10:5, 10:8, 10:10, 10:12-13). Here Jesus told them they were not even true **sheep**, because the Messiah's sheep believe and hear His voice.
- **I and My Father are one:** This is an important statement regarding the deity of Jesus and the nature of the Godhead. **"I and My Father"** means that the Father and the Son are not the same Person, refuting the "Jesus Only" doctrine (anciently known as Sabelianism). **"Are one"** means that the Father and the Son are equal in nature, in essence, what they really are— refuting the teaching that Jesus isn't God (anciently known as Arianism).

RESOURCES:

- The Chosen [The Chosen | Jesus Not Backing Down](#)

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

Scripture (S)

- Read together! Encourage students to highlight or make note of anything that stands out to them.
- What details stood out to you in this passage that you hadn't noticed before?

Observation (O)

- How does Jesus prove His identity as the Messiah in this moment?
- Why do you think the Jews asked Jesus to tell them plainly if He was the Messiah? How does Jesus respond to their demand for clarity? What does He point to as proof of who He is?
- What role does belief and unbelief play in this story?

Application (A)

- What does it mean for you personally that no one can snatch you out of Jesus' hand?
- Where in your life are you asking God to "just tell me plainly," but He's already shown you through His works?
- How does Jesus' teaching that His sheep "hear His voice" challenge the way you listen to Him daily?

Prayer (P)

- How can you pray today to hear and follow the voice of Jesus more clearly?