

Hanukkah
Festival of Lights
John 10:22-30

The events of Hanukkah took place during the 400-year period between the writing of the last book of Hebrew Scriptures and the first book of the New Testament.

The Holy Temple was defiled with looting and desecration. In the ultimate act of total disdain and disrespect, Antiochus offered a pig on the altar to worship the Greek god, Zeus.

History and legend begins to interweave as to the accuracy of what happens next. But the best we can put together, there was about 3 years of guerilla warfare.

Tradition shares the story that when they began the celebration they only found one vessel of sanctified oil that was only good for one day. However, it continued to burn for 8 days and until they could sanctify enough oil to replenish.

That is why Hanukkah is celebrated for 8 days and the Menorah which was traditionally 7 candlesticks is 9 for this holiday.

Feast of Tabernacles – John 8

Remind the people of God's _____ and provision.

Jesus the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of all men proclaims that He is the light of the world!

Jesus did not say He was "A" light but "_____" Light.

If Jesus is the ultimate light and we are to shine as lights...what light do others see. A guiding light or lights of an ambulance?

How often do you grumble and complain about the events of life that only God has control over?

Do you allow others to rob you of your joy?

Do you really believe that everything in your life can be used for His glory and your good?

Feast of Dedication – vs. 22,23

Remind the people to _____ themselves to God.

This is same feast that we called Hanukkah or the Festival of Lights.

Solomon's Porch

The outer wall around the Temple area that was covered.

Tell us plainly – vs. 24

Jesus responds to examine His life.

1. He was born in the right family line – David's (That was never disputed.)
2. He was born in the right place – Bethlehem
3. He made the blind to see
4. He made the _____ to walk
5. He made the deaf to hear
6. He went to the poor and brokenhearted
7. He raised the _____

My sheep – vss. 25,26

Qualities of followers of Jesus – vss. 27-30

1. _____ Holy Spirit – hear My voice
God dwelling within to empower us
2. _____ - I know them
God knows not only your name but everything down to the very hairs on your head.
3. Sanctification - And they follow Me
Our life is not static but we are growing
4. _____ – I give them eternal life
Grace doesn't end at salvation. Sustaining grace, dying grace, hurting grace, loving grace. He has grace for every situation.
5. Security - and they will never perish – ever
Emphatically decided and our destiny cannot change
The security is not based on the sheep but the shepherd's ability to keep secure.
Emphatic double negative with second aorist middle (intransitive) subjunctive of ἀπολλυμι [apollumi], to destroy!
6. _____ - My Father, who has given them to Me
The incredible humility that while so undeserving He found us.

7. Sovereign - if greater than all.
We are in the hands of the greatest, beyond all.
8. _____ - No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.
Nothing and no one can thwart the plan of God for my life
9. _____ - The Father and I are one.
The wholeness of God desires wholeness in our being.

Putting it all together...

Being His possession gives me value and that value is seen in God indwelling in my very being. Knowing every detail of who I am, He empowers me to grow in grace and in the understand of His incredible security. When I think of my hopeless deserved state of eternal damnation from a sovereign God; I am crushed and humbled to the point of worship of His loving pursuit of me. I am completely safe in His plan that no one or nothing can change because of the wholeness of God.

One more point...

Here is Jesus standing at the portico of Solomon, proclaiming that He is truly God.

According to tradition, these stones were stored in the portico of Solomon, until such time as the Messiah would come and explain what to do with them.

What divine irony, they were about to pick up a piece of the old altar, that was waiting for the Messiah for its fate and hurl it upon that same Messiah who would be the ultimate sacrifice for sins.

Application:

Because God keeps His promises,

He will save and restore Israel.

Because God keeps His promises,

He will save and keep secure we who call believe on Him.

Because God keeps His promises,

He has made each believer to be His own Temple. 1 Cor. 6:19,20

Because God keeps His promises,

our response should be to yield and dedicate ALL of ourselves to Him.

Let us start out this new year - by faith, believing God.

Choose one of the 9 qualities to think about this week!