ADULT SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Zeal for His House

The Gospel of John: Why Should I Believe? · Week 08 · November 1, 2026

LEADER OVERVIEW

Big idea: Everybody has a picture of Jesus, usually a gentle one. In John 2 He walks into the temple at Passover, finds a market in His Father's house, and drives it out. When the religious leaders demand, "Prove it," He promises one sign: His own resurrection. Jesus is the true temple, the place we meet God, and the question isn't whether we're impressed with Him but whether we believe Him.

Sermon outline: Jesus travels to Jerusalem for the Passover (vv.13–14) · Jesus is rightly angered by the merchants and money-changers (vv.15–17) · Jesus prophesied His resurrection (vv.18–22) · Jesus knows the condition of the heart of man (vv.23–25).

Scriptures used: John 2:13–25 · Psalm 69:9 · Isaiah 56:7 · John 1:14 · Matthew 26:59–61 · John 20:31

Time: 60–75 minutes. Eleven questions are more than you need — choose what fits your group and skip freely. Questions in bold are the ones not to skip.

OPENING (10 MIN)

The goal of the opener is to get every voice in the room once before the harder questions arrive. Keep it light.

1. What picture of Jesus did you grow up with: a painting, a children's Bible, a movie?
2. **Pastor Tom said, "Everybody has a picture of Jesus in their head, usually a gentle one holding a lamb." What happens to our faith when that is the only picture we have?**

THE MARKET (15 MIN)

Read John 2:13–17.

3. Passover pilgrims needed animals to sacrifice and coins exchanged for the temple tax. What made this market wrong rather than just convenient?

   Leader: it was set up in the Court of the Gentiles, the one place a non-Jew could come to pray (see Isaiah 56:7). Sellers charged a premium for worship, and money-changers took a cut. If someone asks: Matthew, Mark, and Luke record a cleansing in Jesus' last week; MacArthur and the BKC see two separate events.

4. **Jesus calls it "my Father's house." What is He claiming about Himself? How would that have sounded in that courtyard?**
5. The disciples remembered Psalm 69:9: "Zeal for your house will consume me." MacArthur says it shows Jesus "would not tolerate irreverence toward God." How is Jesus' zeal different from ordinary anger?

   Leader: David wrote "has consumed me"; John writes "will consume me." Jesus' zeal would take Him to the cross.

6. Where are we tempted to turn worship into a transaction, giving God something in order to get something back?

THE SIGN (20 MIN)

Read John 2:18–22.

7. **The leaders didn't dispute what Jesus did. They asked, "What sign do you show us?" In other words, "Prove it." How do people still ask Jesus to prove Himself on their terms?**
8. Jesus answered with a promise, not a miracle on demand. Read Matthew 26:59–61. What happened to His words three years later?
   Leader: they heard His exact words, missed His meaning, and used them against Him at His trial.
9. Pastor Tom said Jesus "was telling them the temple was no longer the place to meet God. He was." Read John 1:14. How does that change the way we come to God?
   Leader: "dwelt" in 1:14 means He pitched His tent among us. God's presence is now found in a Person, not a building.
10. Even the disciples didn't understand until after the resurrection (2:22). What moved you from hearing about Jesus to believing Him?

BELIEVE (10 MIN)

Read John 2:23–25.

11. **"Many believed in his name when they saw the signs," but Jesus "did not entrust himself to them." Pastor Tom said, "The question isn't whether you're impressed with Jesus. It's whether you believe Him." How would you describe the difference? Where are you today?**
    Leader: these verses set up John 3–4, where Jesus meets Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and the royal official one at a time.

CLOSING (5 MIN)

Read John 2:19 together. The religious leaders demanded a sign, and Jesus promised them one: His own resurrection. The temple was no longer the place to meet God. He was.

If someone in your group is impressed with Jesus but hasn't yet trusted Him, don't rush past it. John wrote this gospel for exactly that person (John 20:31). Pray together that each person would believe Him, not just admire Him.

Then give the week's assignment: Memorize John 2:19, and tell one person this week why the resurrection is the reason you believe.

Memory verse: John 2:19. Next week: Week 9 · You Must Be Born Again · John 3:1–15 · November 8, 2026