

Eternal Security, part 2

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[0 : 00] We've been dealing with a very Christ-honoring, and for us a very humbling subject, that being the eternal security of the true believer.

! We live in a time when, you'll notice a pattern with me, I inject true believer in all this. That's just the day we live in. It's what the Reformers referred to as the perseverance of the saints.

What some of the later guys said, preservation would be more accurate, because he preserves us. As part of our study, we have been looking at some of the major portions of Scripture that deal with this vitally important subject.

We're not going to cover them all. We'd be in every book, and it'd take a while. Now, I know a few of you were out last time.

I would encourage you to pick up a copy of last week's lesson. Take a look at it. Any of y'all that need previous lessons, we can make that happen.

[1 : 26] Last week, we looked in some detail at John chapter 6, one of my favorite chapters in the Word of God.

And we look at it in detail, as much detail as you can do in an hour. That is where the Lord Jesus Christ, very God of very God, makes a promise to God the Father.

And we need no reminder that the one true God, who expressed Himself in the three persons of the Trinity, cannot lie.

God the Father can't lie. God the Son can't lie. God the Holy Spirit can't lie. It's not just that they won't lie, although that's true. God is incapable of lying.

He self-limited Himself in a number of areas, and this is one of them. He has no capacity to lie. If God ever lies, the universe is going to implode, the elements will melt, and there'll be no existence.

[2 : 43] So God is incapable of lying. The same disaster would happen if God ever reneges on a promise made.

Once He makes a promise, it's in stone. It's going to happen. The entire universe is constantly sustained by the powerfully effective Word of God.

And who specifically is the Word of God? Of course, it's the Lord Jesus Christ. We know that. John 1.1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He is the Word. If you go into Genesis chapter 1, in the creation event, it says, And God said, and God said, and God said, and God said. How does God say anything?

The Word. He speaks words. That's Christ. The Word is the Lord Jesus Christ. In chapter 6 of John, we see the Lord Jesus, saw this last time, making a promise to the Father.

[3 : 56] Neither one of them can lie. Neither one will ever renege on the slightest promise. And it is a promise much to our eternal benefit. In chapter 6, beginning in verse 37, All that the Father gives me will come to me.

And whoever comes to me, I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.

And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise Him up on the last day.

Church has been debating eternal security for millennia. I can't figure out why. When you read those verses. Our lesson last week was centered on this passage, where the Son makes a promise to the Father about the perseverance of the saints.

And I think it's an absolute promise. God deals in absolutes. When He was alive, I remember Dr. Zachariah at a university, and a kid got up there and said he's an agnostic at best, probably an atheist, and he said, I don't believe in absolutes.

[5 : 34] And Dr. Zachariah said, well, how certain are you of that? He said, well, I'm absolutely certain. He said, so you're absolutely certain there are no absolutes? Yeah. Well, the crowd's starting to laugh, and the kid can't figure out why.

And Dr. Zachariah said, well, you've just named an absolute. You're absolutely certain there are no absolutes. That's an absolute. And I mean, by the time they were through. It was interesting. He always does this.

He met afterwards and talked to that young man and exchanged letters with him. So we centered on the promise last week between the father and the son. Tonight, we're going to take a little different slant.

We're going to see a promise again made by the son who's incapable of lying, capable of reneging. And we find ourselves in another great chapter and one of my favorites in John, John chapter 10. Great passage. In verse 22, it says, at that time, the feast of dedication took place at Jerusalem.

[6 : 47] It was winter. I love the way John adds those little things. It was winter. And Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.

The Jews then gathered around him and were saying to him, how long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and you do not believe me.

The works that I do in my father's name, these testify of me, but you do not believe because you're not one of my sheep. Now, let's pause there for a couple of moments.

And most of you know that my few moments can become a few minutes. Sometimes beyond that.

The passage starts out informing us that this is the feast of dedication.

Being Gentiles living in the Western Hemisphere, we probably know little or nothing about the feast of dedication. Well, I didn't know. So I did a little basic research and I found out that today the Jews call this the feast of lights.

[8 : 07] They call it that because they light up the interior of their homes with lights and candles. But again, that wasn't much help to me.

Then I discovered there's a third name this particular celebration goes by. Today it's known more by the popular name Hanukkah. And we probably all heard that.

We probably all heard that. That I've heard. So I looked it up. Hanukkah is a Jewish festival commemorating the rededication of the second temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean revolt against the Seleucid Empire at Syrians.

The feast was in celebration of the Maccabees, Jewish fighters defeating the forces of the infamous Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes in 170 B.C.

And all that occurred during the intertestamental period and that's 400 years from the last verse of the Old Testament until we get to Matthew 1.1.

[9 : 20] There was 400 years there and they say that's the 400 years of silence from God. He didn't speak to them. And it's in that period of time that this occurred.

So how does this apply to our lesson tonight? Well, it doesn't but I thought it would be interesting. We will be content to know that the Scriptures reveal it was the Feast of Dedication in John chapter 10.

It was celebrated among the Jews in December. Hence, John tells us it was winter. So Jesus is in the temple specifically the portico of Solomon.

Now that itself is interesting. In Israel that time of year it's the rainy season and many would gather under the roof of the portico to be protected from the cold rain of winter.

And in verse 24 we read these words. The Jews then gathered around him. And that's these guys under the portico that are talking to Jesus about why don't you if you're the Messiah tell us.

[10 : 42] They've gathered around him. That's the English translation. They gathered around him. And it's easy to pass over passages like that and I'm sure there's thousands of them.

We don't think a lot of that. They gathered around him. Okay. On the surface that really seems very passive. However, this passage is quite the opposite.

The English translation of gathered around is very weak. It was a very weak translation. It is actually a word of hostile confrontation.

These guys that gathered around are mad at Jesus because they know he's claiming to be the Messiah. It literally means to surround or to encircle.

So what we have here we have a confrontation going on. These are hostile guys surrounding the Lord and they're yelling things at him.

[11:52] They're not happy. They're screaming demands. And remember who's the recipient of these screams is the incarnate God of the universe. And they said this next thing mockingly.

How long will you keep us in suspense if you're the Christ? Tell us plainly. Christ is the Greek rendition of the Hebrew Messiah. If you're the Messiah, just tell us.

But that was the confrontation. In my spare time, I've been reading a biography of John Wycliffe. I think you mentioned Wycliffe, William Wycliffe yesterday, didn't you?

Tyndale. Tyndale, okay. And now I've started a biography on him. He translated the Roman Catholic Bible from the Latin Vulgate, which was understood only by a handful of people, into the English language.

Rome rewarded his efforts by executing him. He probably didn't endear himself to them when he completed the translation.

[13:08] He said, now every plowboy in the English speaking world knows more about what the Word of God says than the Pope in Rome. He didn't win a lot of friends in doing that.

I looked this up in one of the ancient New Testaments written several hundred years ago. They translated verse 24, therefore the Jews came about him and said to him, how long take us thou away our soul?

That was the confrontation. I'd say that qualifies as confrontational. Jews were demanding that Jesus tell them if he was the Messiah.

Jesus said, he answered them, I told you and you do not believe the works that I do in my Father's name. These testify of me. He had been revealing himself as the Messiah for three and a half years.

I mean, you go back to the wedding at Cana. Remember that? And they ran out of the wine and Jesus created good stuff.

[14:22] He had raised people from the dead and he's going to do that again. He had created eyes, human eyes out of dirt and spit.

And I've talked to a lot of ophthalmologists and optometrists and that's the most intricate organ in the human body. He created them out of spitting some dirt and made a mud ball and that became an eye.

He walked on water, suspended gravity. He could do that. He created gravity. He created food for 20,000 people. He told the Samaritan woman directly, I am the Messiah.

I who speak to you am he. And the word of that revelation spread over that entire region. The whole city went out to him. His words and his works stand as powerful testimony to the fact that the Messiah had arrived.

So next we come to the most amazing verses in all the Bible. I think this verse really, I've been looking at this for years. It is also a verse that has been twisted to fit mankind's interpretation and not God's meaning.

[15:48] Because next Jesus says in verse 26, talking to that confrontational group, you do not believe because you're not one of my sheep.

can you get any plainer than that? You don't believe that I'm the Messiah, not me, but you don't believe I'm the Messiah because you're not one of my sheep.

Many in the church in the mid-20th century adopted a new belief system that twisted slightly that verse into meaning something never intended.

The new belief system, the new doctrine was called easy believism. Just say the correct words and you're an instant believer. And so the new interpretation of verse 24 became you're not a sheep because you don't believe.

If you'll say these words, you'll be a believer and that makes you a sheep. But that's not what the verse said. Not at all what the verse said. that new interpretation is the opposite of what the verse actually says.

[17:01] The new system said if you want to be a sheep, believe by praying a prayer. Repeat these words and you'll be a sheep. And the church then entered into the business of making instant sheep.

And I tell you, our denomination in the 50s and in the 60s, they always had these programs of, well, we're going to baptize so many million this year and next year we're going to baptize.

you know, we just, that was the road we went down on. Now, in many cases the motive was good. We wanted to see people saved.

We can make people instant sheep was the idea behind it that spawned the age of mass evangelism. Jesus tells the confrontational crowd they're not believers because they're not from his sheepfold.

Only those in the sheepfold of the Lord are true, meaning saved sheep. Saved sheep. The next words from the mind and mouth of Christ are amazing.

[18:19] As we like to say in Oklahoma, you can take this to the bank. And don't lose sight of the fact we're talking here about eternal security or perseverance of the saints.

We read this in verses 27 to 30 of chapter 10 in the gospel of John. This is Jesus talking. My sheep hear my voice, God's and I know them and they follow me.

I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

No one. my father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of my father's hand.

I and the father are one. Amazing set of scriptures there. This is one of those portions of scripture we really need to memorize.

[19:42] Just like what I read to you out of John 6. This needs to be memorized. And the Lord begins by contrasting his elect sheep in verse 27 with the lost sheep of verse 26.

Take those two together. The sheep that are genuine believers hear the voice of the Lord. They hear the voice of the Lord.

These are the people of true faith. As scripture says, faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ. Now, how do real sheep hear the word of Christ?

They sit under the preaching of the word, reading the words of Christ in the Bible. I love what that one guy said. He said, if you want to hear from God, read the Bible.

if you want to hear God audibly, read it out loud. Pretty simple. Let me remind you that his words are not limited to those in red letters only.

[20:54] Okay? The words of Christ begin in Genesis 1-1 and they end just before maps at the end of Revelation.

Once you're into maps, that's not inspired, it's helpful, but those are the words of Christ. And the Lord then injects this vitally important truth.

I know them. That's the God of the universe. He says, I know them. Jesus knows every one of his sheep.

He knows them. He knows everything about them. He knows them intimately. He knows their actions.

He knows their thoughts. He knows their subconscious minds. Jesus knows his sheep. That's both comforting and disconcerting at the same time.

[22:01] how can the sheep of Christ be identified? How do you know who a sheep is? How can we know that any person is a sheep of the great shepherd?

There's only one way. Jesus already told us. They follow me. You know, that's action.

That's action. true shepherds follow the Lord Jesus Christ. What about those that don't follow Him?

Their mom made them come forward like my cousin down in Texas when he was nine.

She said, it's time to be baptized. So they looked in the yellow pages and found a church. They didn't go to church. And he went forward to preach or baptize. Went home. Grew up 19.

Left at 2 o'clock in the morning, go get some beer and cigarettes and car wrecked, broke his neck and died. We see that verse 26 is filled with truth.

[23:12] I think I meant verse 27. The sheep hear the voice of the shepherd. The shepherd knows every one of his sheep. The sheep owned by the shepherd follow him.

When I was in the service, I was in a mountainous area for training. It was cloudy, mostly cold rain, winter, some snowflakes.

We were outdoors on a break. We were sitting on the ground. You rested when you could. And right in front of us was this marvelous mountain.

beautiful mountain. And we were well below the frost line. Is that there was grass? We weren't in rock.

The rocks were up higher, what I'm trying to say. I can see it now in my mind. It was beautiful. Still plenty of grass. grass. And we spotted a shepherd.

[24 : 21] Quite a ways from us, but we could see him. And he was up there with about a dozen sheep. And he had with him a sheepdog that he was putting through advanced training.

You could figure out what he was doing. And he was kind of dressed like a shepherd. He had a neat hat, looked like in Switzerland, and he had a staff. I meant to bring one tonight. I've got a bunch of them.

We were mesmerized by this scene. The sheep were grazing. The shepherd with the staff was just standing there, holding the staff, very still.

The sheep dog was lying in the grass, but you could tell he was keeping his eyes on the shepherd. And if the shepherd moved, he watched him.

And he's ready. That sheep dog is ready to spring into action. He lives to make the shepherd happy. Suddenly, we're watching all this.

[25 : 27] The shepherd raised that staff, and the dog is up. And you could see the muscles, even though it was pretty far away. He's ready to work. And the shepherd went like this.

And that dog turned and he herded all 12 of those sheep that way. And when they got over there, he stopped, they started grazing again, he hunkered down, started looking at the shepherd again. And the shepherd stood there, dog is knelt down, waiting for the next command. And then the shepherd goes like that, and the dog took him back over that way.

we were just mesmerized by this. It was amazing. I could have watched that all day. I would have preferred to have watched it all day.

But that was an American shepherd. Shepherding is different in the Middle East. That includes Israel, even the Arab world around Israel.

[26 : 28] They have shepherds. our shepherd, with the help of the dog, drive the sheep where they want them to go.

In Israel, the shepherds lead the sheep. Well, how do they do that? They go out front of them. And the sheep follow the shepherd.

You see why Jesus is using this terminology? The sheep follow in Israel and in the Arab world. They follow the shepherd.

At night, the shepherds place the sheep in a community sheep pen for safety. There's all kinds of flocks in there, different flocks.

It's a cooperative deal. And they put them in there and they'll put up branches or whatever. And of course, they're standing guard over wild animals trying to get to them. But they're in there for the night for safety.

[27 : 40] And there could be many herds of sheep in the pen. men. When morning comes and it's time to retrieve the sheep and the shepherd goes, they open it up and the sheep don't run out.

The shepherd calls his sheep and his sheep come. They hear his voice and they come out to him. They follow him. The other sheep stay there. that's not their shepherd. It's amazing. It's absolutely amazing. The sheep of other folds remain until their shepherd shows up.

I'd love to watch that scene. this is precisely how Jesus would have seen shepherding in Israel in his time.

And it is a great metaphor for how the Lord shepherds his flock. Again, they hear his voice. They identify with his voice.

[28 : 53] He knows each one and they follow him. That's a beautiful picture. That's a beautiful, beautiful picture.

Now, remember, the Lord is in the temple under Solomon's portico, surrounded by this hostile crowd, also surrounded by some of his followers.

And he next tells them this, I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand. That is packed with great truths from the triune God.

Let's break it down. Jesus gives his followers, that's his sheep, eternal life. Now, there again, that's that word.

Why have we been debating this for 1800 years? He gives his sheep eternal life, the followers of Jesus will never perish.

[29 : 56] If they perish, it's not eternal, is it? No one will snatch a true follower out of the hand of Jesus.

If all we had in the entire Bible was verse 28, that would be enough to believe in eternal security. I mean, if that was the only verse we had, we have many more passages, but that one is one of the

definitive statements on eternal security.

Because of these words, we can conclude that the followers of Christ will persevere until the end, but there's more.

Now, my Father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

No one. Here we add another step in the process of eternal security. Those for whom Christ died were given to him by God the Father.

[31 : 07] remember our lesson last week, we saw Jesus making a promise to the Father that all he was given by the Father, he would lose none. Those who say that some true believers can be lost are disregarding this promise and defaming the character of Jesus as the great shepherd.

The Lord further explains that in addition to holding on to these given him by the Father, the Father is also holding on to them. That's a marvelous picture.

No one can take them out of the hands of Jesus and no one can take them out of the Father's hand and it's so beautiful. We're going to do an illustration and I've asked Frank and Caleb to help me. I'll say Caleb, Jacob, Jacob and Frank and James I didn't ask you, could you join us? Now this is going to make perfect sense to you.

Jacob, come on up Jacob, Jacob is a follower of Christ. Frank, Frank's Jesus. Cover him with his hand.

[32 : 16] He's got his follower here, right? Can you all see that? James is God the Father. That makes sense. Look at that.

Let me snatch his hand out. Yeah, don't let him, don't let him, don't let him. You couldn't get it, could you? I think I broke his arm. That's okay because it's still in there.

Jesus will heal it. Thanks guys. Jesus will heal it. Since when did the Father and the Son were blessed? Yeah. What was worse in that?

Oh no. I had one of my good friends, you know him, I want to say his name, and he said, well, maybe you could jump out.

I don't think so, but of course my response was, why would you want to? Why do you want to jump out? Jesus then tells, he's already got a hostile crowd, right?

[33 : 23] So now he's going to win them over. He says, I and the Father are one. It didn't get less confrontational.

I and the Father are one. That statement was made because the Lord Jesus and the Father are jointly guaranteeing the eternal security of true believers.

The Greek word there here is neuter. I'm sure you saw that and not masculine. What does that mean? It means that the Lord is speaking that he is one of substance and not person.

He's not the same person as the Father, but they are the same nature, the same essence, the same substance. Dr. MacArthur says this, thus their unity of purpose and action and safeguarding believers is undergirded by their unity of nature and essence.

God's I feel certain that Jesus won over the hostile crowd with that. This is how they respond to the next verse, the Jews picked up stones to stone him to death.

[34 : 33] It's a hostile crowd. You know what? It's still hostile, isn't it brother? People died today somewhere in this world because they wouldn't deny Christ.

and some people are going to die tomorrow. That's the world we live in. And dare I say, it's come to our shores.

And it's going to intensify. The hostile crowd became more hostile. The crowd has gone from confrontational to a lynch mob.

And this isn't the first time. This is actually the fourth time in the Gospel of John, and you may have probably already covered some of these, but it's the fourth time in the Gospel of John where a crowd attempted to kill Jesus.

It didn't happen. Why? It wasn't yet time. When it's time, and Mike will be covering that in a few months or a year, when it's time, they're going to seize him.

[35 : 40] And they're going to kill him. But it wasn't yet time. Let's do a summary for tonight's lesson. What have we learned? First, believers are his sheep, and it is the absolute duty of the good shepherd to protect his flock.

The Father commissioned Jesus, the good shepherd, to protect his flock. second, Christ's sheep hear only his voice and follow only him.

Since they will not listen to or follow a stranger, they could not possibly wander away from him and be eternally lost. Third, Christ's sheep have eternal life.

To speak of eternal life ending is a contradiction in terms. Fourth, Christ gives eternal life to his sheep.

Since they did nothing to earn it, they can't do anything to lose it. I say this, you didn't attain your salvation, you're not going to maintain it.

[36 : 53] It's the continuing grace of God. I had one guy tell me one time, he said, you know, if I could just get to heaven and close the door, I'll be alright. No, you won't. Satan and a third of the angels fell out of heaven.

Your security is not in a place, it's in a person. Christ Jesus. Fifth, Christ promised that his sheep will never perish.

If one of the true sheep ever perish and are cast into hell, Jesus becomes a liar. And God's not going to allow that to happen.

That will never happen. Sixth, no one, not false shepherds, not false prophets, not even Satan himself, is powerful enough to snatch Christ's sheep out of his hand.

I'll add Wes in there. He wasn't even powerful enough. He's a big guy. Seventh, Christ's sheep are held not only in his hands, but also in the hands of the Father.

[38 : 07] Infinitely secure, the believer's life is hidden with Christ in God. And by the way, that's inspired, that's Colossians 3.3.

Our life is hidden with Christ in God. Next week, we're going to look at another and very powerful revelation of the truth of the eternal security of the true believers.

Thank you.