

GOSPEL OF JOHN

Encounter Jesus – The Son of the Living God

Lasting Security

We worry a lot about security these days. Even followers of Christ tend to focus on what we should ‘do’ about our finances, health, jobs, our country even when we already know that nothing in this world is totally secure. But, what does it really matter? Children of the King of Kings have the greatest security detail in the world made up of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit! Paul confirms our security in Christ in:

Romans 8:38-39 ³⁸ *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,* ³⁹ *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

John Piper writes, “So many religions (and even some brands of Christianity) say, “Yes, God saves people. But no, you can’t be sure if you are included. You can’t be sure your works are good enough or your faith is strong enough.” This is deadly. And it is wrong. God has done and said so much to give His people assurance and security, it is an assault on His integrity to say that we can’t have it.”

Read John 10:22-26 (ESV) 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.”* 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.*

The Feast of Dedication is also called Hanukkah or the Feast of Lights and is celebrated in November-December. It is the only Jewish festival not specified in the Old Testament. It celebrates an event that took place in the intertestamental period (the time frame between the Old and New Testaments). Jesus had healed the blind man during the Feast of Tabernacles which is in September-October. So, some time had passed since that healing and the Feast of Dedication.

Solomon’s Colonnade or porch was not actually built by Solomon but was called that because it was built in the exact place as the original temple. Notice scripture says that Jesus was walking there. This reminds me of the wonderful opportunity we have to walk with our Lord through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us. Instead of enjoying a beautiful walk with Jesus in Solomon’s Colonnade, the people came there to taunt Him with questions. *How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.* These men were looking for a public statement they could use to accuse Jesus of blasphemy. Jesus knew that His miracles affirmed the truth of His words. And, He also knew that no amount of proof would convince someone who does not want to believe. This serves to remind us that we cannot ‘argue’ someone into the kingdom of God. Standing up for Jesus does not involve browbeating others into believing. On the other hand, we should not be guilty of the sin of silence regarding Jesus. **Romans 10:14 (ESV)** ¹⁴ *How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?*

Their rejection of Jesus revealed they were not His sheep. Genuine believers know who Jesus is and obey His will. Works do not save us but works reveal our salvation just as the fruit on a tree reveals its identity. This does not mean that Christians cannot or do not sin. But, true believers will experience conviction of sin. They will then confess their sin, repent of it, and return to following God's will for their lives.

While Jesus never said specifically to 'the Jews' that He was the Messiah, in various ways His words and deeds had revealed to them who He was and they wanted none of it. We have already studied several such scenarios where they had rejected His words.

Before we move forward in the study of this passage concerning the security of the believer, I want to tell you that the believer's security does not just rest on Christ's words in this one passage alone. All three members of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) are involved in salvation and Jesus' work to atone for all sin and all three affirm that we have eternal security in Christ.

The words of the Father:

Romans 11:29 (ESV) ²⁹ *For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.*

The Holy Spirit's confirmation:

Ephesians 1:13-14 (ESV) ¹³ *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,* ¹⁴ *who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

Some are afraid that the concept of the security of the believer is dangerous because people will think that they can go out and live any way they please – willfully sinning – without consequences. David Jeremiah says, “Anyone who treats the security of the believer as an insurance policy so they can sin without consequences probably doesn't know the Lord to begin with. That is simply not the heart of a born-again believer.”

Read John 10:27-29 (ESV) ²⁷ *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* ²⁸ *I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.* ²⁹ *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.*

Puritan theologians used to say that there are two marks of Christ's sheep in verse 27. (1) The mark of the ear – *My sheep hear my voice.* (2) The mark of the foot – *they follow me.* When I was a kid my father raised cattle and had them vaccinated for bangs disease. Then a metal strip was stapled into one ear proving they had been vaccinated. Also, their feet when swiftly follow my daddy when he rattled a feed bucket. A true Christian is one who listens to the words of Jesus and who follows Him.

Questions always come up when a person who joined the church and professes to be saved but after a time of apparent consistent Christian living, returns to the world. What happened? Did they “lose” their salvation? The Apostle John answers this question in **1 John 2:19 (ESV)** ¹⁹ *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.* Pretending won't last in following Jesus.

Then, there are those who believe that even though no one can snatch a person out of God's hand, a person can 'give back' their salvation. They mistakenly believe that a person can of their own free will separate themselves from God. They were saved and then rejected God's great salvation.

A Christian who has been redeemed from sin and placed on the path to heaven is a new creation with a heart that has been turned toward God. His old nature is gone, passed away. **2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)** ¹⁷ *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

Gotquestions.org explains, "His new nature would no more desire to give back his salvation and return to his old self, condemned to hell for eternity for sin, than a heart transplant recipient would want to give back his new heart and have his old, diseased one placed back in his chest. The concept of a Christian 'giving back' his salvation is unscriptural and unthinkable."

Jesus did not want His followers to be afraid or to wonder if we would be saved after we die. The dilemma occurs when a believer feels that maintaining salvation hinges upon what we do. There are people who claim to profess the name of Jesus but do not invite Him into their heart. God will eventually separate believers from non-believers. Jesus explained how this will happen. **Matthew 13:30 (ESV)** ³⁰ *Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.*''

Concerning thoughts of losing our salvation, someone might use the Old Testament story of King Saul as an example since we read in **1 Samuel 16:14 (ESV)** ¹⁴ *Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the LORD tormented him.* The Spirit leaving Saul here is God removing His blessing on Saul as king of Israel. He gives His Spirit to David, the man He has chosen to replace Saul as king.

In our disobedience we can lose the joy of our salvation and in Saul's disobedience that joy never returned. However, God's Word in a very interesting way reveals that Saul did go to be with God's children when he died. Saul was fearful about the future and consulted a medium – the witch of Endor. Saul asked her to call up Samuel, the prophet who was already dead so that he could consult him. When God allowed Samuel to appear to Saul, the witch of Endor herself was actually astonished. Samuel said in **1 Samuel 28:19 (ESV)** ¹⁹ *Moreover, the LORD will give Israel also with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me. The LORD will give the army of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines.*''

Samuel predicted the imminent physical death of Saul and yet – he said Saul and his sons would be with him the next day. We can be confident that Samuel was with the Lord. Jesus taught that after death there is a gulf between those who believe and do not believe. Therefore, scripture indicates that even though Saul strayed from the LORD he will be among the saints in heaven.

For me, the security of the believer is a wonderful blessing because I know that no matter what I do or don't do Jesus still loves me and will never leave me. He knows my name and I know His voice.

Read John 10:30-33 (ESV) ³⁰ *I and the Father are one.*'' ³¹ *The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.* ³² *Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?"* ³³ *The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God."*

Jesus made something very plain to the Jews. He said, *I and the Father are one*. Jesus knew these words would set off another firestorm from His adversaries. They wanted an answer and now they had it. Wiersbe says this is as clear a statement of His deity as you will find anywhere in Scripture. Jesus had previously told ‘these people’ that He had come down from heaven (**John 6**) and that He existed before Abraham ever lived (**John 8:58**).

The word *one* does not suggest that the Father and the Son are identical persons. Rather, it means that they are one in essence. Jesus was speaking of unity – identity.

As we picture the Jews picking up stones to stone Jesus, we see a glimpse of His divinity. My response probably would have been something like – if you are going to stone me, I will just call down fire from heaven on you. But, no, Jesus said: *“I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?”* Their reply is ridiculous! *It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy...* It would have been blasphemy if Jesus were just a man but He was God then and He is still God now!

Read John 10:34-38 (ESV) ³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? ³⁵ If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—³⁶ do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? ³⁷ If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; ³⁸ but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.”

Jesus quoted **Psalm 82:6** to defend His claim to be the Son of God. **Psalm 82:6 (ESV)** ⁶ I said, “You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you.. It makes Bible translation more complex but the Hebrew word *Elohim* translated in our Bibles as God has other usages in the Old Testament besides referring to the One True God. In some contexts, *elohim* refers to human rulers or judges as in the case of **Psalm 82:6**. The whole point of **Psalm 82** is that earthly judges (gods) must act with impartiality and true justice, because even judges (gods) must stand someday before the Judge. Jesus’ question, based on **Psalm 82:6**, was that if God named those to whom he gave his law ‘gods’, why should He be charged with blasphemy if he, as the one whom God himself ‘set apart as his very own and sent into the world’, said, ‘I am God’s Son.’ It is a deep concept for my finite mind but I do want you to be aware of the different uses for the word *Elohim*/God. Jesus was talking to unreasonable men and they did not want to learn from Him. They wanted to arrest Him.

Read John 10:39-42 (ESV) ³⁹ Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands. ⁴⁰ He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he remained. ⁴¹ And many came to him. And they said, “John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true.” ⁴² And many believed in him there.

John the Baptist had given his witness concerning Jesus and now many people who came to Jesus realized that John’s witness was true. He had said as he looked at Jesus, *“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!* Lasting security! That is what Jesus is to all who will believe.