

Livin' the Life
Jesus and the Father are One
John 10:27- 42
October 28, 2018
David Taylor

We are looking at the life of Jesus and the life he promises in our series in the Gospel of John, Livin' the Life. We finish chapter ten today with 10:27-42. In this chapter, Jesus gives us a glimpse of who he is as the good shepherd, his relationship to us, and his relationship to the Father. Today we see that your eternal safety and security is dependent upon who Jesus is in relationship to the Father. If you have your bibles, turn to 10:27-42 and listen as God's word is read.

Review

Jesus has said he is the Good Shepherd who is gathering his sheep. There is a growing division between those Jews who are not his sheep and so do not believe and those who are his sheep and so do believe. His sheep hear his voice, he knows them, and they follow him (27).

Jesus Keeps His Sheep Safe

Now Jesus tells us how he keeps his sheep safe and secure. Jesus has described the threats to their safety. There are thieves and robbers and predators who snatch and scatter them. Jesus keeps his sheep safe by giving them eternal life so that they will never perish (28). Jesus has described eternal life in many ways already, most recently as abundant life or flourishing life (10:10). Because he gives his sheep eternal life, they will never perish. Perishing is the opposite of eternal life (3:16). When Jesus gives eternal life, the threat of perishing is removed forever. Eternal life means that you are forever bound to Jesus (17:3). The result of having eternal life is that no one will snatch Jesus' sheep out of his hand (28). The safety of the sheep is dependent upon Jesus. Jesus ensures that those who are given eternal life never perish and no one will snatch them out of his hand. The threat of any and every predator is gone. The Father stands behind Jesus' promise. My Father, who has given the sheep to me, is greater than all, and therefore no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand because I and the Father are one (29-30). Nothing is stronger than God the Father so nothing can sever the relationship between the true sheep and Jesus. The Father and the Son are united as one to keep the sheep safe for all eternity.¹ Jesus never loses any of his sheep because the Father and the Son are one and together they guarantee their safety and security by their sovereign and omnipotent will (see also 6:37-40).

Reconciling Assurance and Warning Passages

There are two types of passages that relate to salvation that one must address to deal with the New Testament fairly. There are passages that promise assurance that one will inherit final salvation and passages that warn against falling away and not inheriting final salvation. The assurance passages talk about God's power to sustain us, keep us faithfully following Christ to the end of this life. The warning passages talk about our responsibility to persevere in following Christ and the dangers of drifting away. This is how I reconcile those contrasting passages. The assurance passages promise us God's power to sustain us so that we persevere to the end of this life. Perseverance is actively following Christ, growing in our relationship with Christ, and being formed into the character of Christ. Always recognizing that desire will always be greater than reality. Those who are true believers will faithfully persevere to the end by God's grace and the work of God's Spirit in us. The warning passages encourage true believers to persevere because they take the warnings seriously. If people fall away, and they do, then they are not true believers (1 Jn 2:19). Falling away is not necessarily a complete rejection of Christ but can be as simple as just stop following Christ. Someone can identify or claim to be a Christian but have no real desire or interest in following or obeying Christ. This is what we saw in John six. A large crowd of disciples are following Jesus until he clarifies what it means to follow believe in him and follow him. The response was that this teaching is too hard so

¹ Note the difference in the language between vs. 28 and vs. 29. No one will snatch the sheep out of Jesus' hand and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand because he is greater than all.

they turned away and stopped following him. Then Jesus turns to the twelve and asks them if they want to leave also? Peter responds, where would we go, you have the words of eternal life (6:60-71). Genuine sheep keep following Jesus. Faith that fizzles before the finish was faulty from the first.

Jesus is God

Let's get back to the text, when Jesus says the Father and I are one, the Jews picked up stones to stone him for blasphemy (31-33) because he is claiming to be God. John tells us that Jesus is God several times in this gospel.² This is the third time Jesus claims to be God. The first time, Jesus called God his Father, a claim to be equal with God (5:18-19). Then Jesus claimed to have existed before Abraham (8:58) and there also, the Jews wanted to stone him for blasphemy (8:59).

Answering the charge of blasphemy, Jesus quotes Psalm 82:6 to show that there is precedent for calling humans god. If God can call human judges god, then how much more can the Son of God be called God (34-36)! It really does not answer their question but it does distract them from stoning him long enough so that he can give them another opportunity to believe (37-38). Remember, Jesus was sent on a mission so he keeps extending the invitation.

Then Jesus eludes the crowd and goes across the Jordan river and many believed there because of John the Baptist's ministry (39- 42). Though Jerusalem, the center of Jewish faith and practice, rejected Jesus, he is still gathering his sheep! The mission of God does not fail! They believed because John made much of Jesus. The key to witness is making a big deal of Jesus. Is Jesus a big deal to you in your life?

² See for instance 1:1-2; 1:14 (see Isa 42:8); 20:27-28.

