

QUESTIONS YOU HAVE

BUT ARE AFRAID TO ASK

Questions You Have (But Are Afraid to Ask)

Can a Christian Lose Their Salvation?

John 10:1–30

The Question

- Can a Christian lose their salvation?
- What the question is:
 - In whom does our salvation rest?
- What the question is not:
 - Does man have free will?

The Parable (vv. 1-5)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers” (John 10:1–5)

- The Parable (vv. 1-5)
 - V.1-2 - Main Teaching
 - There is only one true way to enter the sheepfold, the door.

- The shepherd enters through the door while the thieves and robbers try to enter by their own means.
- V.3-5 - Supporting Information
 - The gatekeeper opens the door for the shepherd.
 - By listening to and following the shepherd, the sheep can enter the sheepfold too.

The Explanation (vv. 6-18)

“This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly’” (John 10:6-10).

- vv. 6-10 - Explains v.1
 - Door - Christ
 - Sheep - Christians
 - Sheepfold - Eternal Life
 - Thieves and Robbers - Those seeking life apart from Christ
- “But this does not at all apply to Moses and the Prophets, who had no other object in view than to establish the kingdom of Christ. For it ought to be observed, that a contrast here is made between the words of Christ and those things which are opposed to them. But so far are we from discovering any contradiction between the Law and the doctrine of the Gospel, that the Law is nothing else than a preparation for the Gospel. In short, Christ testifies that all the doctrines, by which the world has been led away from him, are so many deadly plagues; because, apart from him, there is nothing but destruction and horrible confusion” (John Calvin, *Commentary on John*, Vol. 1)

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father” (John 10:11-18)

- vv.11-18 - Explains vv. 2-3
 - Why “Good” Shepherd? - Christ lays down his life for his sheep.

- Gatekeeper:
 - Christ - John 14:6
 - Spirit - John 16:13
 - Father - John 5:36-37a
- Main Teaching: Christ is the author, protector, and means of our salvation.
 - Author - Gatekeeper
 - Protector - Shepherd
 - Means - Door
 - Point - God ordains and orchestrates our salvation from beginning to end.

“He who knows that he gave for them is sure of their number” (St. Augustine, Lectures on the Gospel of John, Tractate 48).

“There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, ‘He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?’ Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’ At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. 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.’ 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, but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, 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. 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. I and the Father are one’ (John 10:19-30).

The Answer (vv. 19-30)

- Can Christians lose their salvation? No.
- God’s ordination and orchestration of salvation means we are sheep before we believe.
 - We believe because we are sheep (V.26-28)
 - The sheep do two things:
 - Hear Christ’s voice.
 - Follow him.
 - Christ does two things in response:
 - Knows them
 - Gives them eternal life
- “In short, our salvation is certain, because it is in the hand of God; for our faith is weak, and we are too prone to waver. But God, who has taken us under his protection, is sufficiently powerful to scatter, with his breath alone, all the forces of our adversaries” (John Calvin, Commentary on John, Vol. 1).

- “Our Lord says this because in knowing the Father, he knows the will of the Father that the Son should die for the salvation of the human race. He is also saying here that he is the mediator between God and man. For as he is related to the sheep as known by them and as knowing them, so also he is related to the Father, because as the Father knows him, so he knows the Father” (St. Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on John).

We have an eternal assurance of our salvation because God ordains and orchestrates our salvation from beginning to end.