

No One Will Snatch Us Out Of His Hand

Someone has said, "Every promise in the book is mine". They meant that every biblical promise belonged to them, but that is not true since some of the Bible's promises were given to the nation of Israel. Yet, it is amazing that some very important promises are overlooked by some Christians. In the Beatitudes Jesus gave us a series of promises that are often not understood. One beatitude states, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" and another says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The first and second Beatitudes are often missed due to poor translations. They should read "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" and "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Notice that the Beatitudes describe the character of those who will experience the future millennial kingdom and eventually heaven. The character described in the Beatitudes is the result of the work of God the Holy Spirit in their lives. These promises are wonderful, and our study is about more promises which are recorded in John 10:27-30.

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD. Early in Jesus' ministry, He told a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus how a person could be forgiven their sins and have eternal life. Jesus told Nicodemus that God loved him and then gave him two promises which are recorded in John 3:16.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NASB)

This is a familiar verse to many people. The verse has appeared on billboards and in coliseums. Christians and non-Christians have read the verse. It simply reveals that God loves everyone in the world. Romans 5:6-10 also tells us that God loves everyone, even those who have not believed in Christ. The passage teaches that God loves us even though we are spiritually helpless and we are His

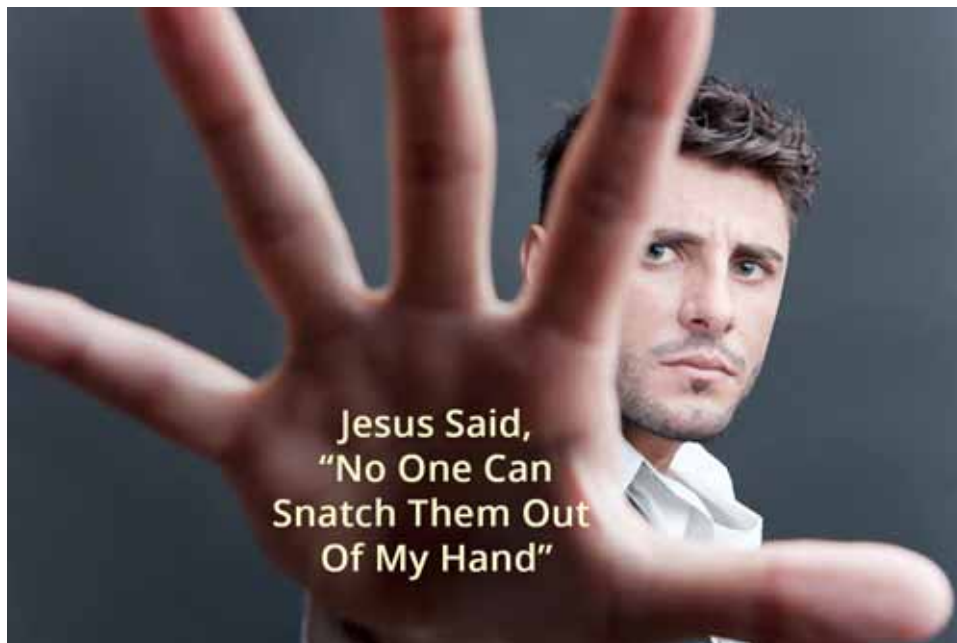
enemies from birth.

God proves that He loves us every day. He renews and maintains our lives (Psalms 23:3), sustains the flowers and plants (Matthew 6:28-29) and gives us rains to supply food (Acts 14:16-17). Numbers 14:18 and Jonah 4:2 state that God is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, and forgiving. But Romans 2:4-5 warns that if we continue willfully

sinning, we will eventually be punished.

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant

heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God . . . Romans 2:4-5 (NASB)



The message is that God loves us. God has not left us, but we have abandoned God and have gone our own way! God is not unloving and unjust. It is we who are unloving and unjust and we have rejected God and His will. Jesus spoke the truth—God loves the world.

HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON. Then Jesus told Nicodemus that He, Jesus, was given to the world. He was given in the sense that He took on human flesh so that He could die for our sins on the cross. There was nothing magical about the cross. What is significant about the wooden cross is that it is the place where Jesus sacrificed Himself so that our sins can be forgiven. 1 Peter 2:23-24 says that while Christ was on the cross, He bore our sins in His body. He was sinless yet He became sin for us so that He can rescue us. His resurrection into an immortal body proved that He was God (Romans 1:4), and that His sacrifice satisfied the Father (Romans 4:25). When He ascended back to heaven, He returned home. Someone had to die for our sins and Christ did it.

Christ did this because when Adam sinned, his single act of disobedience caused his descendants, you and me, to inherit a sin nature at conception. As a result, every person is a sinner at birth (Romans 5:12-19) and we prove it by our behavior. God had warned Adam before he disobeyed that the penalty for disobedience would be spiritual death (Genesis 2:16-17) but Adam disobeyed anyway. Romans 6:23 describes our problem this way,

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23 (NASB)

How much Nicodemus understood is not clear, but we can be confident that he understood the two promises that Jesus gave next.

FIRST PROMISE - SHALL NOT PERISH. The first promise that Jesus gave Nicodemus, and to us, is that anyone who believes in Him shall not perish (John 3:16). They shall escape hell. It is not a hope or a wish. They shall escape hell. Then a few verses later in John 3:18 Jesus told Nicodemus that those who do not believe in Him are already judged. That is, they are going to hell; they will perish unless they

believe in Him.

He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:18 (NASB)

Jesus' message was simple. Every person is either for Christ or against Christ. Every person either believes or does not believe in Christ. There is no middle or neutral ground. At birth we are against Christ since we are sinners and we continue being opposed to God until we believe in Christ or place our faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord and God declares us to no longer be sinners.

When we sincerely believe in Christ, we will respond by trusting Him to forgive our sins and will yield ourselves to Him. This is the spiritual U-Turn that every unbeliever must make. When they do, they escape eternity in hell. This is the greatest news anyone can have next to the news that God loves them. Then hell is not the next destination in their spiritual journey.

Romans 3:23 and 6:23 describe the most dangerous and helpless condition of every person before they become a Christian.

... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus ... Romans 3:23-24 (NASB)

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23 (NASB)

In these two verses God reveals that everyone is a sinner and, consequently, is going to hell. But when someone believes in Christ, God gives them the gift of eternal life. That is what Nicodemus wanted and Jesus promised that those who believe in Him will not perish or go to hell. That is the first promise.

SECOND PROMISE - HAS ETERNAL LIFE. The second promise is that they will have eternal life. The first promise guarantees escape from hell and the second promise guarantees eternal life. The two promises accomplish the same

thing. These two promises are effective at the moment of saving faith—at the moment someone trusts in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins.

“Saving faith” refers to true faith. In 1 Corinthians 15:2, the apostle Paul warns that a person can have false faith. Saving faith is repentant, trusts Christ to forgive their sins and humbly yields to Him. Romans 10:9-11 states that saving faith is real and submits to Christ by calling Him Lord. Yielding one’s self to Christ occurs at the moment of saving faith. It is the response of a repentant sinner when he or she understands Christ and only Christ can forgive their sins. Humble submission to Christ accompanies saving faith. It is the fruit resulting from the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian.

It is also important to know that the promise of eternal life or salvation appears throughout the New Testament.

on subsequent works. The two promises are effective at the moment of saving faith—not later. This is an incredible eternal life “insurance policy” that is effective at the moment one truly believes in Christ. We could say that the promises are effective at the moment a person signs on the dotted line by faith. Yet, that faith is a gift from God and that is the reason someone believes in Christ. Nevertheless, we are urged to believe (Acts 16:31). We are even warned to believe (1 John 3:23). What a paradox! We are urged to believe and yet faith is a gift from God (Acts 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9).

TWO SIGNS YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN. These two promises are the same two promises that Jesus gave in John 10:27-30, which is the passage of our study.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
John 10:27 (NASB)

FOR IN MANY **DREAMS**
AND IN MANY WORDS THERE IS
EMPTINESS

Eternal life or salvation appears in Mark 1:15; Luke 8:12; John 1:12; John 3:36; 5:24; 6:40; 11:25; 20:31; Acts 15:11; 16:31; Romans 3:22; 4:3, 5; 5:1; Galatians 3:3-9, 22; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Timothy 1:16; 1 Peter 1:3, 9; and 1 John 2:25. The overwhelming testimony of Scripture is that faith and only faith, not works, is required to obtain eternal life. Baptism is not required and nothing else is required. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

Thus, saving faith results in escape from hell and the guarantee of eternal life in heaven. Notice that Jesus did not say that the promise of eternal life might be revoked, canceled, or withdrawn. Jesus did not say the two promises are not in effect at the time a person believes in Christ. Nor did He say His promises will only be effective if an individual does not commit some great sin or abandon the faith before they die. Jesus did not say whoever believes and then says who might escape hell or might gain eternal life based

on the last study we discussed the meaning of “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” Therefore, the reader is encouraged to visit that study called, “Are You The Christ, Tell Us Plainly!” for an explanation of this statement. In summary, Christ’s sheep are Christians.

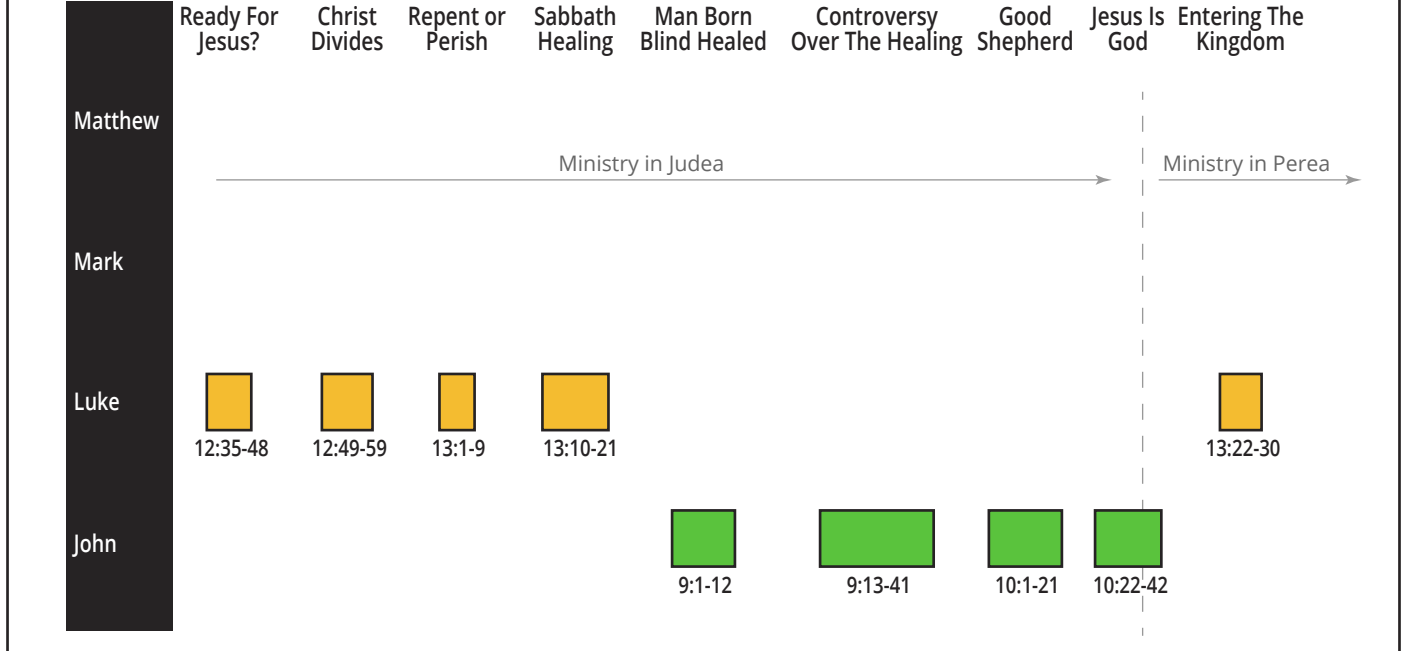
Now did you notice in John 10:27 that Jesus gives us two signs or marks of a Christian? The first indicator that a person is a Christian is that he or she hears His voice. They listen to Christ. This reminds us of 1 Peter 2:1-2 where we are told that newborn Christians long for the Word of God.

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation . . . 1 Peter 2:1-2 (NASB)

This is the first major sign that a person is a Christian. A new

Life and Heart of Jesus

Ministry In Judea & Perea - Late A.D. 32



Christian longs to know the Scriptures so that they can grow spiritually and to know God. They want to hear from God. This will not just be hollow words. They will actually study the Bible in order to learn from their God.

The second major sign that a person is a Christian is that they follow Christ! The Greek word that is translated as follow is *akoloutheo* and it means “to follow one who precedes.” It is the idea of following Christ in action and word in every circumstance. Unbelievers do not follow Jesus Christ. They have no desire to do so! Some unbelievers strongly hate Christ. It is sad how many people think they are Christians but they do not want to obey Christ nor do they want to know what God has written in the Bible. They do not attend church and do not love Christ. In this passage Christ clearly states that His sheep listen to Him and follow Him. Do you?

THREE PROMISES GIVEN TO CHRISTIANS. Then Jesus gave every Christian three promises.

... and I give eternal life to them and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. John 10:28b (NASB)

The first promise Jesus gives every Christian is that eternal life has been guaranteed to them. This is the same promise that Christ gave to Nicodemus in John 3:16.

Christ’s second promise is that they will never perish. They will never go to hell. The English word “never” comes from five Greek words, *ou me eis ho aion*. The literal Greek is “no no into the age.” Jesus did not use a simple negative statement. It is a strong negative revealing that Christians will never, ever perish. Christians will not perish even into the end of the age. Every Christian will escape the Lake of Fire which is also called the second death in Revelation 20:14. This is a powerful promise.

Jesus’ third promise is that no one will snatch Christians out of His hand. This promise is identical to the second promise, except that this one is a dogmatic statement of the second promise. This promise occurs in other passages in the New Testament.

For example, in John 6:40 Jesus tells us,

For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the

Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day. John 6:40 (NASB)

Notice that Jesus promises He will raise up everyone who believes in Him on the last day. Jesus even makes the statement emphatic. He says, "I Myself." This is a very strong promise since Christ says that He will do it. Since Jesus has given us this promise, there should be no doubt that once a person has saving faith their salvation is guaranteed. Then four verses later Jesus said,

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. John 6:44 (NASB)

Once again notice that Jesus promises He will raise up Christians on the last day. Once again Jesus repeats the same

reason they make the claim is that they believe Christians can lose their salvation and they struggle with Jesus' promise. But to claim that a Christian can jump out of Christ's hand and thus no longer be a Christian ignores His promise that "no one" can do this. "No one" includes the Christian who thinks he or she can. It also ignores the previous two promises of Jesus.

The Greek word for snatch is *harpazo*. The word has the sense of "to seize, to gain control over." The word has the idea of taking someone by force such as in Matthew 11:12 or Jude 23 where the word is used to seize someone so that they can be rescued from fire. Jesus' message is that no one can take control of any Christian, no matter how strong they are, since He, Jesus, is in control. That is why Jesus adds in verse 29 that no one can snatch a believer from the Father's hand either. He appeals to God the Father. No one is stronger

CHRIST PROMISES BELIEVERS THAT
NO ONE, INCLUDING THEMSELVES, CAN CAUSE
THEM TO LOSE THEIR SALVATION.

promise in John 6:54. We skipped an earlier statement in verse 39.

This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. John 6:39 (NASB)

This time notice that Jesus added He would not lose anyone and this promise includes "all that He has given Me." Notice the word "all." Once a person becomes a Christian, they will not lose their salvation. This promise is repeated in Romans 8:30, Philippians 1:6, and 1 Peter 1:5. 2 Corinthians 5:17 even states that Christians are new creatures. Becoming a Christian is a one-way trip.

CAN CHRISTIANS JUMP OUT. Now some have claimed that a Christian can jump out of Christ's hand even though He said, "No one will snatch them out of My hand." The

than God is His point! The phrase "no one" includes everyone, including each believer.

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. John 10:29 (NASB)

Notice that Jesus said the Father has given every Christian to Him. The Father gives and keeps every believer. The Greek word for "give" is *didomai*. The word is a verb and it is in the perfect tense which refers to completed action that is continuing. The Father gave them to Christ and that is their permanent and final state. It is the Father's will against the will of any and everyone else and He will win! His will will be realized. His decrees will be realized. No one, including you, can remove any believer from God's family. Romans 8:15 says that every believer has been adopted. Babies do

not have control over the adoption process. When a person becomes a Christian, they are a baby Christian. 1 Peter 2:2 describes new Christians as newborns. So when someone becomes a Christian, they cannot go back.

I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE. Then Jesus makes these promises even more secure and certain when He adds that He and the Father are one.

[I and the Father are one. John 10:30 \(NASB\)](#)

Some cults claim that this verse means that Christ and God the Father are one in agreement. But the Greek word for “one” is *hen*. It is the cardinal number one. That is, it refers to the digit one, as in the numbers one, two, three and four. Every time *hen* appears it is translated as “one.” It is also important to know that *hen* is neutral and not masculine or feminine. Since Jesus has been identifying Himself and the Father with masculine words, this means that they are not one person but one substance. It is also important to know that the Greek grammar describes “one” as being Christ and the Father. This means the Greek text is telling us Jesus claimed to be God along with the Father.

The Athanasian Creed (fourth-fifth centuries A.D.) provides a helpful explanation when it says, “Nevertheless, there are not three eternal beings, but one eternal being.”

ATHANASIAN CREED (PART OF THE CREED)

Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit. But the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit have one divinity, equal glory, and coeternal majesty. What the Father is, the Son is, and the Holy Spirit is. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is boundless, the Son is boundless, and the Holy Spirit is boundless. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is eternal. Nevertheless, there are not three eternal beings, but one eternal being.

The early church father Hippolytus writes,

And if he [i.e., Noetus] were to say, “Jesus himself said, ‘I and the

Father are one,’” let him [Noetus] apply his mind to the matter and learn that Jesus did not say, “I and the Father am one” but “are one.” “We are” is not said with reference to one but with reference to two. He revealed two persons but a single Power.¹

That is, Christ and the Father are one. Obviously they will be in agreement, but they are also One. Jesus is teaching us that the trinity does exist. Jesus’ word for the trinity is—One. He said they were One! Later in Acts 5:3-4 we discover that the Holy Spirit is also God and part of the trinity. Therefore, when Christ says no one can snatch a believer out of His hand, He also said that no one can snatch a believer out of the Father’s hand. God is more powerful than all. Our salvation is secure because it is His will.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. The message of Scripture is that God is sovereign over His creation. 1 Timothy 6:15 reminds us that God is sovereign over all—everything.

[... only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. 1 Timothy 6:15 \(NASB\)](#)

Examples of God’s sovereign control start in Genesis 1:1 where we are told that God created the universe. Notice that He did not ask for my opinion or your opinion about what to do. He decided what was *good* every day that He created. God has been and is in control of how His creation functions.

Genesis 6-9 tells us that God killed every living thing with a worldwide flood because people were evil and 2 Peter 3 tells us that He will destroy all of the creation some day because we are evil and the creation is evil. In Nehemiah 4:15 Nehemiah reported that God had overruled the plans of their enemies. Psalm 33 and Isaiah 14:27 give us the principle that God is God and He will do as He wishes.

[The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. Psalm 33:10 \(NASB\)](#)

[For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it?](#)

¹ Hippolytus. Against Noetus. New Testament. *Ancient Christians Commentary*. InterVarsity. 2006. IVa. 359.

And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back? Isaiah 14:27 (NASB)

God does not seek our opinion because our ways are inferior to His ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). We think God needs to listen to our great advice, but we would soon regret it if God did.

In Ezra 1:1 we discover that God changed the thinking of the King. Ezra and Proverbs 21:1 say that God can move the heart of the king in any direction He wishes. Ezra 1:1 is the proof.

. . . the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing . . . Ezra 1:1 (NASB)

judgment day.

All of the previous examples of God's sovereignty have been about nations and other people. Now let us examine some verses that are personal and deal with our eternity. In 1 Samuel 2:7 we are told God decides who is poor and who is wealthy. In 1 Chronicles 29:11-12 we read that God rules over all.

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. 1 Chronicles 29:11-12 (NASB)

ONLY GOD UNDERSTANDS
THE MYSTERY OF SALVATION -
HE SOVEREIGNLY CHOSE AND YET WE ARE URGED
TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST TO BE SAVED.

The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD;
He turns it wherever He wishes. Proverbs 21:1 (NASB)

In Jonah 1:1-3 we are told that God chased down the disobedient prophet Jonah who was running away. The message of Scripture is clear that God is in charge and He can force us to do as He wishes; but when we sin, that is our choice and not His. James 1:13-15 reminds us that when we sin, we choose to sin. God lets us sin. The fulfillment of prophecy also requires God to be in total control. Jeremiah 29:10 and 33:7-13 are just two examples. Christians rejoice when they read Acts 2:22-24 because it tells us that God was in control of Christ's ministry, death and resurrection. Yet, the leaders who put Christ to death were and are still responsible for their actions. They have to give an account for their sin on

In Luke 12:25 Jesus reminds us that we cannot add to the length of our lives. God controls how long you will live.

And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span? Luke 12:25 (NASB)

In Psalm 139:16 we are told that God has already determined or ordained the length of our lives. God is in control; we are not. We can pray and He may grant an extension but we are not in control. Therefore, ask yourself how much freedom do you really have?

Romans 11:17, 25-26 reveals that God's chosen people have been hindered from coming to Christ, but some day all the Jews who are alive at the end of the tribulation will become Christians. The passage says, "all Israel will be

saved.” Jeremiah 30:7-9 and Zechariah 12:10-11 are the prophecies describing the fulfillment.

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery — so that you will not be wise in your own estimation — that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved . . . Romans 11:25-26a (NASB)

Ephesians 1:4 teaches us that God also controls who comes to Christ. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 and Acts 13:48 echo the same truth. Here is Acts 13:48.

When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. Acts 13:48 (NASB)

The Greek word for “appoint” is *tasso* and means “to appoint, to place in order.” It is a military term of control. It is in the past perfect tense implying something occurred in the past and the action is continuing. That is, God appointed those who would be saved and His appointment continues. As an illustration, it is obvious that God appointed Paul to be a Christian. On the Damascus Road he became a Christian (Acts 9:1-9). That was not Paul’s idea. Paul was not planning on becoming a Christian. He was traveling to the city of Damascus to put Christians in jail (Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-3). He hated Christians, but God had appointed Paul to be a Christian. God did not ask Paul what he wanted. God decided and made it happen (Acts 26:12-18). God even told Paul what his ministry would be. God did not ask his opinion or give him a spiritual gifts test. God the Holy Spirit gave Paul spiritual gifts without asking Him (1 Corinthians 12:11).

There are many more examples that could be given that reveal God is in control of everything from the beginning to the end. God controls the creation, nations and rulers (Romans 13:1-3), the wealthy and the poor (1 Samuel 2:7), the weather and everything upon the earth (Acts 14:17) and our salvation (John 6:65), our spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11), including our faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). The message of Scripture is that God is sovereign over all and has guar-

anteed eternal life to every true Christian because that was His decision!

CONCLUSION. God is in control of all who come to Christ and not the individual seeker. Yet, from the perspective of each individual believer, he or she chooses to believe on their own. They experience the emotion and the desire to come to Christ. They seek after God and respond to Him in faith. In fact, Scripture urges us to believe, commands us to believe, and warns us to believe. But how God can choose people to be saved and yet urge us to believe in Christ and why He rebukes us when some do not is a mystery that only God understands. In theology this is called an antinomy. That is why Paul wrote Romans 9:19-22. Even Paul did not understand how God chooses men and women to believe and yet we are responsible to respond in faith. Even that faith is a gift from God (Acts 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9).

The message of John 10:27-30 is that God is in control of our salvation from the beginning to the end. Those who claim we have freewill ignore the clear teaching of Romans 6:20 which states that before we became a Christian, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we were slaves to sin.

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. Romans 6:20 (NASB)

Sin was our master and we obediently served it. Jesus made the same statement in John 8:34. Men and women have never had freewill. We just think we do. Adam stripped that away when he sinned. We were controlled by sin before we becoming a Christian. But as Christians, we are finally free to live righteously.

In Romans 3:11 we are told that none seek after God. In Matthew 21:32 Jesus rebuked the religious leaders for not believing in John and feeling remorse. Scripture teaches that men and women respond to Christ because God moves us to respond and we respond because we desperately want to respond. Only God understands why both concepts are true. The fact that anyone responds to Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit. Yet, as we have discovered in this study, God saves anyone who wants to believe in Christ. Only God understands how the doctrine of election and men choosing

to believe work together.

The great news is that if you were repentant, trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and humbly submitted to Christ, then you know that you are and will be a Christian forever. Why? Because Christ promised that 1) you will not perish, 2) you have eternal life and 3) no one, including you, can cause you to lose your salvation, then you know you will not lose your salvation. Both Christ and the Father

will never lose you. Every true believer is eternally secure in Christ and they are going to heaven. Sometimes this important doctrine is called “eternal security,” “perseverance of the saints,” “once saved, always saved” and “saved only once.” Whatever it is called, every Christian can thank God that He loves them and chose them, because they would have never chosen Him since they were slaves of sin and disobedient.