

# Unsnatchable

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[0:00] If you would open up your Bibles to John chapter 10, we're going to be looking at the back half of John chapter 10, verses 22 through 42. It's on page 1068 of your pew Bible. And as you're churning there, let me tell you a story. I was 18 and I was fearing for my life. I had just graduated from high school and my youth pastor at the time had challenged me to run a mini triathlon with him in Crystal Lake. So it's swim, bike, run. And being the cocky fool that I was, I said yes.

But being the really cocky fool that I was, 18, prime of life, I'm like, I don't need to train. So I showed up not having trained. And I knew I was in over my head when I showed up to the Crystal Lake Beach in my American Eagle trunks to my knees. And I look around me and everyone is in this elite neoprene kind of wetsuit. I'm like, uh-oh.

So the starter, you know, shoots the gun and I'm quick. So I blasted off the line. I was one of the first in the water and the water was like 53, 55 degrees. And so I instantly like, meh.

And then everybody caught up. And the next thing I know, and this is where I was fearing for my life, people were swimming over me. And I realized at that moment, I'm like, down, get up. Because now the weight of my competitors was holding me down in the water. And I'm like, am I going to drown? Is this the way that it's going to end? I really wasn't thinking that clearly because I'm still kind of like breathless. You know, there are a lot of Christians and non-Christians who are experiencing a fear of having your head underwater spiritually. Like the weight of sin is holding you down and you are beginning to fear that there is no way up.

We default in our thinking that, yeah, God forgives every once in a while. He forgives the big stuff, the once in a while stuff. But for the chronic, repeated sin, the kind of sin that you say to yourself when you do it, like, why do I keep doing this?

[2:59] Why would God love a mess like this? Surely there comes a point when God says enough is enough.

And he just lets us go. Anybody been there? I lived a lot of my early Christian life that way. It was miserable. We have this knack of making God into our own image. And this knack of thinking God loves us the way that we love others based upon their response to us. So we sneak our obedience into our standing with God. You start thinking things like, how many second chances can God give me?

When is it like a banana that just is no longer ripe towards me? God's love certainly must have a limited shelf life.

I've got good news for you this morning, Christian. God's love for you does not depend on your obedience to him. God's love for you in its fullness does not have a limited shelf life.

God's love for you. God's love for you. God's love for you. We saw last week that the good shepherd, that his goodness runs red. That he died, he laid his life down for you and took it up again.

[4:29] That's good news. But this morning I've got more good news. That this good shepherd who laid his life down and his goodness, his goodness runs red. This same good shepherd, you go.

You are unmatchable. This morning we find ourselves in another confrontation between Jesus and the Jewish leaders.

And it's a confrontation over two titles. The Christ and the Son of God. The Jewish leaders have rejected Jesus being the Christ, the Son of God.

But for those of us who believe, those two titles, the Christ, the Son of God, it reveals a goodness to us that he will never let us go.

So let's look at these two titles and then bring them to bear upon our lives. And so chapter 10, verses 22 through 30, let's look at this first title, the Christ.

[5:39] We read this. 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 did 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, no one, no one will snatch them out of my hand.

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

I and the Father are one. Verse 22, time has passed since the last verses 1 through 21 that we read, that we preached, saw last week.

[6:50] Some time has passed. It's a different time of year. It's the winter time now. It's the Feast of Dedication. The Feast of Dedication, if you don't know, it's what we have commonly known, come to know as Hanukkah.

So Hanukkah is being celebrated. And notice where Jesus is. He's in Jerusalem. He's in the temple. He's in the colonnade of Solomon, the third king of Israel. And Solomon's colonnade, also known as Solomon's porch, was an 800-foot long covered porch on the eastern side of the temple complex. Do you know how long that is? That's like three football fields. That's huge. It had 40-foot columns. It was holding up a ceiling, a roof of cedar.

It was massive. In fact, in Acts chapter 5, we learn that the early church in Jerusalem met at Solomon's porch.

What we're going to see is that this account that starts in Jerusalem will end in a very different place.

[7:59] In verse 24, Jesus is literally surrounded. This is not an accidental kind of like surrounding.

This is an intentional surrounding. He's surrounded by Jewish leaders, and they have some questions for him. In fact, they are posing it as a question, but it's more of a demand.

And this is just part of the tension between Jesus and the Jewish leaders that has been building since chapter 5. And so, essentially, they say, are you the Christ or not?

Will you just give it to us straight? Just straight up tell us. Now, if you're not familiar with the word Christ, you can make a mistake at this point. Because you're familiar with the two words Jesus Christ.

And you may think, well, Christ is Jesus' last name. Like the last name, it is a title. Jesus the Christ, Mike the pastor, Nate the intern.

[9:06] They're descriptive titles. Christ is a Greek translation of a Hebrew word, Messiah, that we say in English. And that means anointed one.

As in the anointed king of Israel. It carries this sense of kingship. And so, throughout the Old Testament, there was this growing anticipation of a coming Messiah.

An anointed one. A king who would rule God's people. And he would be descended of King David. He would sit on David's forever throne. That's 2 Samuel 7.

He would be royal. He would be divine. He would be forever. He would be just. He would also suffer. But he would deliver God's people and establish a kingdom that could never be destroyed. Daniel 7, 13 and 14. Now, if you were a Jew living in Jerusalem in the first century, that means you were under Roman rule.

[10:03] And that would have been oppressive for you. It would have limited what you could do as a Jew. And so, if you were longing for the Messiah, chances are, it would have been politically loaded.

You're like, I want to get out from under Roman rule. Come, Messiah. Come deliver. Re-establish Israel. Make Israel great again. We can all relate with this.

We, as Americans, want a president. Regardless of where you're on the political spectrum. You want a president who will represent you.

Who will do you good. Who will deliver. Who will make us great. And so, we have this ripe situation in Jerusalem.

There are many ideas of who or what the Messiah would do. And there were many men claiming to be the Messiah. And so, it's no wonder that Jewish leaders, at least on one level, are like, okay,

would you just give it to us straight?

[11:04] Are you the Messiah or not? Come on, straight up. Just give it to us plainly. Shoot straight. But they have their own ideas of who the Messiah would be. So, let me just ask this question of you.

What is your idea of the Messiah? Who do you think the coming king, the king, should be? In verse 25, Jesus responds to the demand.

He says, verse 25, very plainly, I told you, and you did not believe. And then he says, the works that I do in my father's name bear witness about me.

I've told you. How did you tell me? And he switches kind of communication strategies. He's like, I told you with my works. With what I did. What works?

Well, in John 5, he heals the paralytic in Jerusalem on the Sabbath. And the Jews, at that moment, start to seek to kill him because he claimed to be equal with God.

[12:16] In John 9, we were just there. Jesus heals a man born blind. He tracks him down. And he asks this man who now sees, who's never seen Jesus' face.

Jesus asks him, do you believe in the Son of Man? And the man formerly blind says, yeah, show me him. And then Jesus says to him, you're looking at him. And when Jesus tells him that, Jesus is making a claim of being the Messiah because the Son of Man is just another messianic title.

And when you hear about his kingship, here's the association you need to have with that. It's about authority. Kings carry authority.

And Jesus has the authority to heal a paralytic. He's got the authority to heal someone who's been blind all their life. Next week, we're going to see him, hallelujah, heal a man who was dead for four days.

At the end of Matthew, when Jesus, after his resurrection, he appears to his disciples, and he tells them straight up, he's like, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.

[13:28] He's got all authority. He has the right to do anything he wants. And the Jewish leaders did not believe that these works that Jesus was doing were actually bearing witness that he was the Christ.

In John 10, Jesus calls himself the good shepherd. And it's that phrase, good shepherd, it doesn't just carry the sense of leader, follower.

It does. It carries more than that. It goes beyond Psalm 23. It goes beyond Ezekiel 34. Shepherding is a way of describing kingship.

In Psalm 78, Asaph writes this. This is verses 70, 71, and 72. He, God, chose David, his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds.

From following the nursing ewes, he brought him to shepherd Jacob, his people, Israel, his inheritance.

[14:33] With upright heart, he, David, shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand. A king was a shepherd king.

And what Jesus is claiming here, what's being said of him being the Christ, is he is the great shepherd king who has all authority, and he has laid his life down and taken it up again.

His goodness runs red. And so his words, his works, point to him being the Christ.

He even tells the Samaritan woman in John chapter 4 in Sychar, when she makes a comment, yeah, you know, the Messiah, when he comes, he will tell us all things.

He says to her, I who speak to you am he. So not just works, but he used words too. Unfortunately, these leaders were not around to hear that.

[15:38] They didn't believe. And Jesus says why in verse 26. He says, you don't believe because you're not among my sheep.

His sheep hear his voice. His sheep hear his voice because they belong to him. Jesus says in verse 26, excuse me, in verse 27, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.

And I know them. Last week we looked at Jesus saying, I know my sheep and my sheep know me.

And that knowledge is not just this kind of like fact knowledge, head knowledge.

It is that. It is a personal knowledge. It's a personal relationship. It's being in intimate personal relationship with the Christ.

CCEF, the Christian counseling. Thank you, Zach. So when we hear the word, I know them, you can swap out the word know with love. I love them. I know my sheep.

[16:43] I love my sheep. I laid my life down for my sheep. You might ask the question, well, how long? How long has he known us like that?

He has known you and loved you since before the foundation of the earth. He's been tracking you. In verse 28, we learn that Jesus gives them his sheep who he knows and loves, who hear his voice. He gives them eternal life and they will never perish. And just to be clear, we play no part in receiving this eternal life. It's God who causes us to be born again.

It's him that makes us new creations. Eternal life is not caused by any of us or anything that we do in any sense. But we've been made alive in Christ Jesus all because of the goodness of the good shepherd who laid his life down and took it up again.

His death and resurrection. His goodness runs red. But in verses 28 and 29, we have the un snatchable promise. No one, no one will snatch them out of my hand.

[18:10] No one. So let me put it together for you. The all authoritative Christ. The all authoritative Christ. Who has authority over heaven and earth.

All things. He has authority over paralysis. He has authority over blindness. He has authority over death. He has authority over your soul.

He has authority over the devil. He has authority over creation. He has authority over all things. And he is saying, no one will snatch them out of my hands.

No one. That's really good news. His goodness never lets you go.

It's because he's the Christ. He's got all authority. And in fact, he doesn't stop with just talking about himself. He says, no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand. He needs greater than all.

[19:13] And so what he's painting the picture of is this divine double grip on each of his sheep that will never let you go. You are held by the all-authoritative divine grip of the Almighty.

It is really good news. His goodness never lets go of his sheep. And in verse 30, he says, I and the Father are one.

He's claiming unity with God the Father along two lines. Mission. Why he came. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son.

One of a kind son that whoever believes in him shall not. Same mission. Different roles in that mission. But same mission. And he's claiming oneness of nature.

That he himself is fully God. It's not just mission, but nature. Two distinct persons. God the Father. God the Son. Of course, there's God the Spirit.

[20:20] Fully God. Playing different roles in our salvation. And they have a double grip on us. The Christ is the all-authoritative God.

And he's got a grip on you that will never let you go. Because of who he is. Not because of who you are. Now, let me just ask a question before we move on.

Who then has the authority to snatch you out of his hand? Who then in all of creation has a surpassing glory to Jesus that is authorized to snatch you sheep out of the good shepherd's hands? There's no one. And I would argue, not even you. So we've looked at this title, the Christ. Now let's look at the second title.

The Son of God. And that is in verses 31 through 39. Let me read that. The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, I have shown you many good works from the Father.

[21:33] For which one of them are you going to stone me? The Jews answered him, It's not for a good work that we are going to stone you, but for blasphemy. What's that? You, being a man, make yourself God.

Now, Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, you are gods? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came, and scripture cannot be broken, 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. If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, what I say about myself, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father.

Again, they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands. In verse 31, the Jews pick up stones to stone Jesus, to kill him, and we know that they've wanted to kill Jesus since chapter 5, when Jesus healed the paralytic and claimed to be God.

They've been wanting to kill him. Chapter 8, Jesus makes this crazy statement in verse 58, Before Abraham was, I am, claiming to be Yahweh.

[22:59] Why? And again, the Jews pick up stones to stone him, but it wasn't his time. So in verse 32, they pick up stones to stone him again in verse 31, and Jesus said, Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

For which of my good works are you going to kill me? Are you going to stone me? Now, you've got to understand what's going on here. It's like if we were looking down the muzzle of a gun, of a loaded gun, he's looking at men with stones in their hands, and he's like, Whoa, whoa, whoa. Which of these good works that I'm doing? Is it the paralytic I healed? Is it the blind man? Just wait till you see what I do in a few days. They say in verse 33, Not for a good work, but for blasphemy. And they give the definition. You a mere man making yourself God. Blasphemy, what it is, it's a charge of a false claim.

Blasphemy is charging someone with a false claim. Blasphemy is saying, You are claiming to be God, but you're not. Unfortunately, they got it wrong.

[24:20] Because what they're assuming in this charge is that Jesus is just a mere man. And that he's not God. He existed with God.

He didn't make himself God. He is very God. In fact, the Jews actually had it backwards. Here's what I mean by that.

He's not a man who made himself God. God. He is God who was made man. Remember John 1, 14?

And the word became flesh and dwelt among us. Oh man, did they have it backwards. They were totally missing this. They did not believe who Jesus was.

And in verses chapter 5 of John and 8 and 10. They just miss and miss and miss. And they just don't call him a blasphemer.

[25:21] They call him demon possessed. They call him insane. So check it out. If our king was called those things, what do you think that means for us?

There's no way around it. In verses 34 through 38, Jesus responds to the charge of blasphemy.

And he responds in a way that may sound a little confusing to our ears.

Let me try to spell it out. So what Jesus does is he corrects the Pharisees' sloppy use of a phrase, the son of man.

It's like you guys don't know your Bibles. And so in verse 34 he says, Jesus answered, is it not written in your law? I said, you are gods.

And that's Psalm 82 verses 6 and 7. And he just doesn't say you are gods. He says, you are sons of the Most High. And his point is that in that Psalm, God is speaking to humans and calling them sons of God.

[26:32] Sons of the Most High. And so what Jesus is simply doing here is just showing them, it's like, you guys don't know your Bibles. Because the phrase, the son of God is actually used for human beings.

For example, Psalm 82. And so what Jesus is doing here is demonstrating that they don't know what they're really talking about. But what happens in verse 35 and 36 is called a lesser to greater argument.

So starting there with this idea of Psalm 82 that in fact God does call some humans sons of God. Jesus makes an argument.

He says this, if God called them gods to whom the word of God came and scripture cannot be broken, Jesus had a high view of the Bible.

Inerrant, unbreakable. Then he turns to himself. If God spoke of that to just mere men, then he says, 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.

[27:45] What he's assuming is he is greater than a mere human. He is consecrated, made holy, set apart by the Father. He had been sent by the Father in order to save sinners by laying his life down for him, something only God could do.

So what Jesus is saying is saying you don't really know what you're talking about and by the way I am greater.

I am claiming that. I am saying in verse 38 37, 38 if I am not doing the works of my Father then do not believe me.

He comes back to this idea of his works testifying to who he is. It's like if I'm not doing the works of my Father then don't believe me. Don't believe what I'm saying about myself.

Don't believe what I just said that I and the Father are one. If I'm not doing his works don't believe that. Then he says verse 38 but if I do them if I am doing the works of God my Father even though you do not believe me even though you may not believe what I'm saying about myself my verbal claim that I and the Father are one even though you don't believe me believe the works.

[29:05] It's proof in the pudding. And then he says that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father. Do you know what that is? That the Father is in me and I am in the Father.

That's just another way of saying I and the Father are one. He comes back to this claim of being God. The works show it. He's claiming equality with God.

That this healing of the paralytic that that giving sight to the blind man that that his soon raising of Lazarus from the dead and his own giving of his life and being raised from the dead this all points to who he is.

He is God in the flesh. He is the Christ the Son of God. in verse 39 the Jews seek to arrest him because they don't buy it.

They still think that he's blaspheming. They don't believe that he's that this claim is true.

[30:19] And so we have these two titles. first is the Christ all authority and the second title the Son of God and Jesus is the Son of God in full divinity full full godness.

Do you know what that means? He is the almighty. He's got all power. He just hasn't been given authority over all things. He has power over all things to do what he sees best.

He's got full authority full power. So what's the point? What's the point of this passage?

This passage is the culmination of this tension that's been building since chapter 5 between Jesus and the Pharisees. There's been this ongoing back and forth of who Jesus is and whether these leaders were going to believe him or not.

It centers in this passage on those two titles the Christ and the Son of God. The Jewish leaders refuse to believe that Jesus is the Christ.

[31:35] They refuse to believe that he is the Son of God. What they're doing is they're refusing to submit to the all authoritative Christ and they're refusing to submit to God Almighty that he has come to establish a new kingdom.

In John chapter one we read this speaking of Jesus he has come to his own and his own did not receive him.

That's what's happening here. That's what's coming full into the picture but those who did receive him to them he gave the right to become children of God.

To those who did receive him as the Christ as the Son of God as the good shepherd who laid down his life and took it up again to them he gave the right to become children of God to them he gave! new life born again to them the Holy Spirit would come and indwell them and would bubble up life as an eternal spring the Christ the Son of God gives eternal life to his sheep who hear his voice and the good news this morning he will never let you go these two titles they show up at the end of John we hit this before it's the purpose statement of the book in John chapter 20 verses 30 and 31 we read this now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book but these are written so that you may believe that

Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name you may receive the abundant life you may receive eternal life and here's where this is all landing no one has authority to snatch you out of the Christ's hand no one has the power to snatch you out of the hand of the Son of God there there is no one no thing that has the authority or power to take you from Jesus because his all authoritative all powerful grip has no rival this is one of the greatest of all assurances for a Christian so if you're a

[34:25] Christian in the room I need you to stop doing something this is a call to repentance here's the call stop making God in your own image stop stop believing that God is like you in the way he's committed to you he's not he's all authoritative and he's almighty and he loves you if you see that operating in you do you know what you need to speak to that that's wrong that is not the God of the Bible we need to repent of making God into our own image the other side of that is to rest assured in these titles of Jesus that his being the

Christ that him being the son of God that he is all authority and he's God almighty it is these realities his posture towards you in his authority and power is one of love he's exercising those things for your good because Jesus is the authoritative Christ because Jesus is God almighty no one not

even your own sinfulness can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus here Romans 8 who shall separate us from the love of Christ shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword as it is written for your sake we are being killed all the day long we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered no and all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us in his authority in his power for

I am sure that neither death nor life nor angels nor rulers nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in creation all creation including yourself will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord that's just another way of saying you're un snatchable and I hope what this does in your heart is it causes your heart to rise some people will hear that and they'll critique it they'll say well isn't that convenient Salvati you're giving everybody license to sin in the room this is Jesus talking here's how it works if you're convinced that he will never let you go what will that affect what should be that effect on you in relation to sin to abuse it or to press into it if

I know that I will never be let go I am going to slay my sin this is not an excuse to sin this is an assurance of salvation if you're not a Christian in the room do you believe that Jesus is your long awaited king the God king do you believe that Jesus is God almighty in the flesh who laid his life down and took it up again do you believe that is that true did he lay his life down for you and take it up again is that true the way you respond is very simple the way you respond is by just saying I believe Jesus I believe I hear your call I believe this to be true and I will follow you as my good shepherd!

you you you and you put your faith in Jesus he lays hold of you and he will never let you go and then you come follow Jesus with the rest of the flock together following Jesus we hold fast to him knowing that his goodness will never let us go he holds fast to us this passage ends in verses 40 and 42 and it ends in a very different place than where we began it ends with Jesus going across the Jordan into the wilderness where John the Baptist had begun his baptizing ministry it's very interesting and all sorts of people come to Jesus at that point and they believe in him based upon John the Baptist we're in Jerusalem Jesus is surrounded by the

[39:34] Pharisees and it's Jesus speaking to them and they don't believe it ends with Jesus in the wilderness not Jerusalem you'd think hey all the godly people are Jerusalem not in the wilderness and all of these people gather to Jesus they surround him not because of what Jesus has said but because of what John the Baptist had said who's now dead they believe to believe they believe that he's the Christ that he's the son of God these are sheep coming to their shepherd and it's there in the wilderness we see belief not in Jerusalem ironic John is a master master storyteller this morning we've heard good news not only does the goodness of Jesus run red the goodness of

Jesus will never let you go and it's because of him not us let's pray God in heaven we do thank you so much for this assurance this this blessed assurance of these words no one will snatch them from my hand God would you impress that upon us your sheep that this week we would walk through this week with this word un snatchable echoing through our heads thank you Lord Jesus that our assurance is not grounded in our performance but in your very nature in Jesus name we pray amen