

Christ Assures Your Security

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[0 : 00] John chapter 10 verse 22. 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. 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. The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, I have shown you many good works from the Father.

[1 : 21] For which of them are you going to stone me? 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 answered them, is it not written in your law, I said you are God's. 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 the Father, then do not believe me. 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.

Again, they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands. He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he remained.

And many came to him and said, John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true. And many believed in him there.

[2 : 44] This is the word of God. Thanks be to God indeed. You may be seated. Will you pray with me?

Oh God, what we know not, teach us. What we have not, give us. What we are not, make us.

Amen. Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, today you need to see in these verses how it's Christ who assures your security.

In this world, doesn't it just feel like all the things we try to hold on to and to secure in our own hands, it's like trying to hold on to dry, fine sand.

The tighter we squeeze them, the more it slips through our fingers. I was shocked to look up this statistic. The security industry in America in the last 10 years has grown from \$31 billion in just 10 years to over \$51 billion.

[4 : 12] Now our population has not grown nearly that much in the last 10 years. Our population grew from \$313 million to \$339 million. So population only grew by about 8%.

But how much money Americans are spending in the security industry to try to find security? It's 164% growth.

In this world, we have a lot of fears, don't we? And most of the time, they're not for no reason.

They're founded on something.

We've experienced pain. We've experienced loss. We have the fear of a child being snatched away.

If you're a parent. If you are trying to put some acorns away in your savings account, there's always that fear that it could lose all of its value.

If you're like me, there's a real fear of failure. And there's the fear in relationships of being hurt once again. And our human tendency is self-preservation.

[5 : 20] So to counteract that fear, anticipate and prevent it, we do anything we can. We try to hold on to control. Control whatever we can. Our Lord Jesus says, the only security in life is if you are in my hand.

He says, if you're in my hand, no one can snatch you out of it. But Christ assures your security. He personally assures it. And my goal today is simply that you can discern biblically from the words of Christ himself. Can you have his assurance that you are safe?

You are secure in him. Can you have that or not? And the reason this is important is because listen to how the Bible talks about the type of faith you need to have. Hebrews 11.1 says, faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

Do you understand? Just hoping that some of what you're hearing in the Bible or the gospel is true, just hoping in that is not what the Bible calls you to. The Holy Spirit wants you to have an assurance of the things hoped for.

[6 : 33] And in case that's not plain enough, the conviction of things not seen. So Jesus steps again into the temple.

The time period is about two and a half months later. And he says, there is a kingdom not in this physical realm. It's a spiritual kingdom. I'm here to declare to you, my father's heavenly kingdom is mine.

I am the gate. You only have security in the kingdom of my father if I hold you in my hand. That's his message.

Are you assured of your security in Christ alone? Well, the first observation I want to draw to your attention is that you will have no assurance if your security is in the physical realm.

Let me tell you why I have this conclusion. Look at verse 24. The Jews asked Jesus, stop being around the bush. Hey, we've seen you again in the fall and the feast.

[7 : 42] Are you the Messiah or not? Just tell us. Tell us. What's implied here is that we control this place. You keep showing up with these crowds following you.

If you're the Messiah, we can work with you. We can help you out. We have all the political ties you're going to need if you're the true Messiah. You see what's on their mind is the physical realm. It's the physical kingdom of Israel. And I think the context when they ask him this question sheds even more light and brings even more depth to that. Look at verse 22.

We read that at that time it was the feast of dedication. Dedication is the feast of consecration. And it took place at Jerusalem. Notice what time of year it is in verse 22.

When was it? Yeah, it was winter. Now hold on. Didn't we just see that when Jesus healed the blind man, it was after the feast of nations had just ended? You remember what time of year that was?

[8 : 40] It was the last of the three feasts that happened in the fall. The first three in the spring, the last three in the fall, the harvest. We're going into winter. Two and a half months later comes this separate feast.

Now you can search in your phone, your Bible. You will not find the feast of dedication commanded by God anywhere in the Bible. So where did this come from? What is this feast of dedication that's taking place at Jerusalem?

Well, you know it's wintertime. And I'll tell you what the feast of dedication is also called even today. It's called Hanukkah. And the word Hanukkah means to dedicate, but it can also be broken into two parts.

It can mean to rest like a ceasefire when a battle stops and the 25th. Those two together. Well, the winter, December 25th, is when a ceasefire happened.

And this happened when the Maccabees overthrew the rule of Syria, of a Syrian king. It was really Greco-Syrian named Antiochus the fourth. Why did they revolt against him?

[9 : 42] I can give you more history. I'm trying to do this the concise version. I'll tell you more later. Here's what Antiochus the fourth did. Instead of appeasing those he dominated, he wanted to shove their nose in the dirt.

And he knew that for the Israelites, the biggest way to do that is to attack their temple. That's the hub of their identity, their national identity, to show his dominion. And you know what Antiochus the fourth did is he set up inside the temple a statue, an idol of the Greek god Zeus.

And then he brought in what he knew to them was an unclean animal. He brought in pigs. And he took these unclean pigs and put them on God's holy altar, which was meant to point to the atonement of sin, foreshadowing the work of the Son of God himself.

And he slaughtered these unclean animals as a sacrifice to Zeus. So the Maccabees revolt. They take power. And they establish a non-religious.

I mean, it was religious as it was tied to their identity, but it was not commanded by God. It was not a divine, you know, spiritual foreshadowing of any type. It was just a political celebration called the Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah.

[10:56] It was winter. Now look at verse 23. Jesus was walking in the temple. Jesus is walking in the temple. More specifically, where in the temple?

In the colonnade of Solomon. Well, the temple is the meeting point between the holy God and his people. Solomon was meant to be the king who would bring peace.

But Solomon, though he asked for God's wisdom, he became greedy like every other king, like every other nation. So you see the contrast is a greedy, power hungry king domineering over the people.

He taxed them very heavily. Solomon did. And now Jesus, the wisdom of God himself taken on flesh, walks in the temple. And he sees the religious elite celebrating this political power grab of their own.

Very different than the other feasts we've seen so far. And in verse 24, the Jews gathered around Jesus and said to him, How long will you keep us in suspense if you are the Christ?

[12:05] Tell us plainly. With this backdrop, they're wanting to know, are you our next Maccabean zealot? Are you going to lead a political revolution?

We'll get behind you. We can do that. Will you overthrow Rome and bring physical prosperity to the land? See, that's as far as they could see. They could only see blessings in the land.

All of their security was tied up in the physical realm. Jesus answers them in verse 25. I told you and you do not believe.

He's calling them to a faith in something unseen. 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.

When I tell the gospel to my sheep, they have faith. They have an assurance, a confidence in the reality of this unseen realm that I am declaring.

[13:05] The truth for us is the same, that if you put all of your hope in this physical realm, and that's where all your security lies, you will be greatly disappointed.

Sooner or a little bit later. The Bible teaches in James 1.11 that the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass, describing how perishing this physical world is.

Its flower falls and its beauty perishes. So also will man fade away in the midst of his pursuits, if all you're pursuing is the physical realm.

But Jesus says, There is a security for your soul that is not in this physical realm. Seek first my kingdom, my invisible kingdom and my righteousness.

And all these things will be added to you. Are you assured of your security in Christ alone? Second observation is that Christ does give assurance.

[14:09] Christ wants his sheep to feel safe and secure in this life. He gives assurance to his true sheep.

These are some of the most glorious verses we have. John 10, 27 through 30. Let me walk you through. Let's try to trace out all that we can of these promises of assurance for true sheep of his. I've got eight of them. I'm going to do it quickly. Ready? His sheep, number one, hear his voice. See that in verse 27? My sheep hear my voice.

Number two, your soul is secure in Christ. If you are known by your good shepherd, you know him. He knows you. Number three, how do you know? If you hear his voice and if he knows you, you will follow him. See, my sheep follow me.

[15:09] Number four, your soul is secure in Christ. If you have taken this promise as a free gift. He says, I give them eternal life.

Let me just pause right there. Let me just pause right there. Because if you feel like your security is attached to any of your own works, then you're saying that him giving you this gift is not enough. You have to take the gift and add on to it with your own. But he says those who are truly secure, they freely receive the gift of eternal life that he gives.

Number five, your soul is secure in Christ. If you trust his promise that this is eternal life, that you have eternal life.

Eternal life. It's life of the age to come. You can taste now the spiritual reality of his spiritual kingdom. And by definition, the life he gives, it is eternal.

[16:15] It is not conditional because it's eternal. It is not going to stop or expire or have an end date. It is eternal. And he gives it to his true sheep.

He says, I will give them eternal life. In verse 28, he says, they will never perish. The word perish here is never be destroyed.

You remember what he said about the false shepherds? They come to destroy the flock. That's what they do. But his sheep will never perish. It's the same word. They will never be destroyed. See, he gives a free, unilateral, unconditional promise that when he is your good shepherd, you will be secure with him.

You will never perish. You will never be destroyed. You will enjoy his eternal life. Number six, you have such a high view of your good shepherd.

[17:15] Your soul finds comfort because every time you hear of Christ, your view of him gets elevated even higher. And a lifetime is too short to raise our thoughts about Christ in contrast with all others.

See, he says, no one, no one will snatch them out of my hand. All those things that we fear, all those things I mentioned, none of those can touch your soul.

If your soul is held in the hand of your good shepherd, no one is greater than he. Number seven, your soul is secure in Christ.

If you trust that it is he, he who holds you in his hand. See, he says, no one can snatch them out of my hand.

It's the very hand of your good shepherd himself that holds your soul and keeps you from perishing and gives you eternal life.

[18:16] Here's my last one. Number eight, your soul is secure in Christ. As you come to understand more and more and more how the hand that holds you, the hand of your good shepherd is the hand of God himself, the creator of the universe.

Look what Jesus says in verse 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.

Remember, they were asking him, speak plainly if you're the Messiah. Jesus says in verse 30, I won't be able to get any more plain than this.

I and the father are one. Now, this is where our own minds, we want to object.

Hold on. I choose God. I can un-choose God. I can jump out of his hand. Well, he says, if you're a true sheep, you will follow your shepherd.

[19:25] Well, hold on. We all think of examples. How about this person? They were following him and then they strayed away and they abandoned the faith. Jesus says, my true sheep know my voice.

No one can snatch them out of my hand. Well, they chose him. They un-choose him. Well, think about how Satan snatched Adam and Eve out of the hands of God in the garden.

Just as Jesus walks the wisdom of God walking in the temple. God created Adam and Eve. They had a true, perfect, free will untainted by the fall and the curse and sin.

Their will was not depraved. And Satan started to make them question the word of God, the promise of God, the goodness of God. And yes, they chose to rebel.

They chose to sin. So it's through the temptation attacking the word of God that he strays away the lambs and he draws them away.

[20:27] Maybe you're thinking, I'm not sure if I'm a Christian. I don't know if I ever was really saved. Maybe as a child, maybe I'm going through a period where sin is winning.

Maybe. Well, listen, the picture, let's stick with this same picture. The picture is this. The shepherd has his flock. He calls everyone by name.

This is what we've seen in all of John 10. He leads them out and they follow. He calls them back and they follow. If you are not following your shepherd's voice, you need to pay attention.

You need to listen to his voice. If you have wandered off, prone to wonder, all of our hearts are ever since the curse, you are stuck in the thorns and thistles, you will be the most miserable, true lamb of Christ.

Jesus says, when you're lost, I will come for you. I came to seek and save the lost. Not one of my lambs will perish. So we can we can look and try to imagine what's going on in the hearts of our

loved ones, maybe in your own soul.

[21 : 35] When the shepherd sees you and you're made aware again of the danger you're in, the wolves, those yellow eyes at night and the sin that's attacking your soul.

When the shepherd calls you to him, you will follow. Only as you follow your shepherd will you enjoy the peace of assurance.

Your soul will find abundant rest and nourishment in the green pastures. No matter what's going on physically in the physical realm, your soul will rest with your shepherd.

Isn't this a great comfort? One commentator summarized, I think so well, the type of relationship Jesus promises in these verses to his sheep. Jesus has a loving relationship with those who know his voice because he died for you.

He said, I lay down my life for my sheep. His relationship is loving. He has a living relationship with you who follow his voice because he cares for you.

[22 : 39] He actively leads you in and out and protects you. He watches over you and cares for you. It's loving. He's living, living relationship. And his relationship with his true sheep is lasting.

You trust his voice. You know it's his hand that holds you. He keeps you. You are one of his own. You will not be lost. In his hand, you will not perish.

You will have eternal life. The relationship with the good shepherd to his true sheep is loving. It's living and it's lasting. Fannie Crosby knew this assurance.

We sang this. You remember we talked about her last week. Blind. Love the word of God.

Memorized it. Wrote over thousands of hymns. She knew this assurance.

Blessed assurance. Jesus is mine. Can you sing that? Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine. I'm an heir of salvation.

[23 : 46] I'm a purchase of God. I've been born of his spirit and washed in his blood. Do you know the security, the assurance that Christ alone can give you?

I also want to make sure I'm defining this well. Here's how the canon of Dort describes this. Okay. Assurance, summarizing what the Bible teaches. Assurance springs up from faith in God's promises.

We just heard his glorious promises. And it springs up from hearing those promises, which he made most abundantly clear in his word. And he gives you those promises for your comfort from the testimony of the Holy Spirit, witnessing with our spirit that we are children of God and heirs with Christ.

Has the Holy Spirit taught you that, ministered that assurance to you? And lastly, what you'll see to happen is this, that you'll experience a series of holy desires growing in your life.

You will desire to have a clear conscience before God more and more. If there's a battle with sin, you will hate the sin. And you will desire, because God put more love in you for him than what you had on your own.

[25 : 11] He will make you want to love and show your love to him in obedience, in grateful obedience. And when you do the works that he calls you to do as a sheep, as a follower of his, you will do it out of joy, because he gives you the desire and the energy, and it's really his spirit working out in you.

That's what assurance is. Do you know this assurance? I hope you do. But I also hope your assurance is growing. I think this text also gives us some good insights onto how God grows your assurance of salvation.

I think that for your assurance to grow, you need to also learn to discern the truth of God's word as it's rightly interpreted.

In Pilgrim's Progress, he's suffering. He's struggling through the slough of despond and the hills of difficulty. And finally, the interpreter helps him to see God's word truly and to understand correctly what the Bible teaches.

Notice what Jesus does here next, beginning at verse 31. See, the Jews picked up stones again to stone him, and Jesus answered them, I have shown you many good works from the Father.

[26 : 23] For which of these works are you going to stone me? See, he's pausing them. He says, you're experts of the law. You know the word of God. Use it. Show me what you've understood from the word of God.

Let's start there. What are you bringing from the knowledge of the Bible? 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.

So the Jews had no doubt in their mind this was a real man. Some have attacked the human nature of the person of Christ. Well, in their mind, no, he is a man.

Jesus says, okay, you're right. The Bible says if someone blasphemes or speaks wrongly about God, they deserve to be stoned. God's word does command that. But what he does here is, I just don't know if I can do justice to this or make it clear.

What he does is so brilliant. Look at verse 34. I think what he's doing is making a reference and an illusion, and then rightly applying it. So they're taking this claim of blasphemy deserves to be stoned.

[27 : 29] He says, okay, hold on. It is, is it not written in your law that God himself said you are gods? So he's saying you read what you read in the Bible about blasphemy, a man claims to be God, stone him.

That's right. But look, God also says, if you just want to go on that technicality, God also uses the term Elohim or gods, lowercase g, in an honorific sense.

It's a term of placing honor on those who are rulers. And we read this earlier, Psalm 82. This is such a tricky song. I've come to the conclusion the right interpretation of Psalm 82 is that God says he calls his divine counsel.

And there are these shepherds or these rulers over Israel, and they're unjust. They're treating God's people unjustly. And Jesus says, you are gods. You are gods.

You know, he's giving them this honor. You've put yourself above men. But what that very next verse says is that you will perish like all other men. And you will die like the princes.

[28 : 35] So by referencing this, Psalm 82, those teachers of the law knew the psalm. Jesus would have known the psalm. Many of the other Jews that grew up knowing the Bible, they would have known this.

So they know that the context is speaking to men who have put themselves in the place of God, who are acting like gods. And the Lord God speaks to them and says, you put yourself above my people, ruling over them with injustice.

I will punish you. You will perish. And I will bring my vengeance upon my people. That's the context of Psalm 82. Now think about this.

It's the feast of dedication. So on their minds, it's that statue of Zeus and the pigs on the altar being pushed back out.

And you know, in the Old Testament, when God brings judgment on his people, it's because they've turned to the idols, to the gods. I think Psalm 82 is pointing out to these men ruling over God's people.

[29 : 40] You have made yourself like a god. You have made yourself like your own idol. Because when Christ comes to redeem his people, to fulfill all the law, there are no Baals.

There are no Asherah. There are no one of these other false gods of the nations. But he's saying, you, you corrupt leaders have become your own idols.

So the Lord Jesus now makes the argument from the lesser to the greater. He says, if God used that term speaking to these mere men, And I am the son consecrated by the father sent into the world.

You can't say I'm misusing that term because I said I am the son of God. So on a technical level, they have no grounds to arrest him.

It's not his time. I think on a deeper, on a spiritual level, Psalm 82, which says this, God has taken his place in the divine council.

[30 : 48] In the midst of the gods, he holds judgment. And he says, nevertheless, as I look at you men, you shall all die. You will perish like any other prince.

But I am the true temple. I am the consecrated son of God. I am the one who is coming to redeem and to bring the justice of God to the land.

Those who are grabbing power. Those who were oppressing the people of God. Those who were celebrating Hanukkah as a political celebration.

Their eyes were blind to the reality of his spiritual kingdom. Jesus fulfills the purpose of the very temple. He was consecrated, set apart, dedicated, and sent into the world to remain holy.

His prayer is our song. Take my life and let it be consecrated, Father, to thee. Take my moments and my days. Let them flow with endless praise.

[31 : 53] The wisdom of God, greater than Solomon, walking among us. The Son of God, the true and final temple, the meeting point between forgiven worshipers and the holy God, correctly interprets the Bible for them.

That's our privilege throughout the week. When you pick up your Bible and you read it, you pray and ask, God, help me to rightly read your word. Show me how how your word is fulfilled by Christ, how your word unveils the spiritual kingdom of heaven.

And as the Holy Spirit does that and teaches you, we do this together. You will grow in your assurance of faith. Jesus says also, look at my works.

In verse 37, he says, 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, believe the works. Your assurance grows as you come to know and understand the meaning of Christ's works.

Jesus says, even if you reject me, you reject my message, you reject my word. He invites them. He compels them. He urges them to believe based on his works.

[33 : 10] The only works they saw at this time were signs that pointed to what he would do on the cross to redeem his people. So we now have the privilege of having all the scripture show us how every sign, every work of God, this magna la day, this wondrous work of God throughout all of redemptive history.

It points to Christ. So your assurance grows as he teaches you to know and understand the meaning of all of his works. That's what our life is for.

He says that you may know and understand. Notice how this is fulfilling what was lacking in the leaders in Psalm 82, verse 5, which says they have neither knowledge nor understanding.

The same phrase. Christ points out you are like those leaders. See, they walk in darkness. Psalm 82 says, Jesus says those in darkness are not my sheep.

Give us a plain answer. They had asked. Jesus says, you need to know and understand that the father is in me and I am in the father.

[34 : 17] This is the greatest statement he's made so far. It's even greater than what he said in John 6. He said, I came down from heaven. It's even greater than what he said in John 8. He said before Abraham was, I am.

And now he says, the father is in me and I am in the father. Well, again, in verse 39, they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

He had promised them, like we saw last week. No one takes his life from him, but he lays it down willingly. And now is not the time when you will lay it down yet. But Jesus came to, he said, I came not to bring peace, but the sword.

He's saying, I am in the father. The father is in me. Psalm 82 describes the judgment of God that's coming. The psalmist cries out, how long will you judge unjustly to these wicked rulers and show partiality to the wicked?

Give justice to the weak and the fatherless. Maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy. Deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

[35 : 30] And this cry for help from judgment from heaven before the counsel of God is answered. The father sends the son to bring that judgment. When all the foundations of the earth will be shaken.

Arise, oh God, judge the earth. Now the kingdom of Christ, the judgment of Christ came in two parts. He answers this cry. God will rain down his judgment, his wrath against sin and abuse. And he'll rain it down in two phases. He'll rain it down first on the cross of Jesus Christ for all those who Christ will inherit from the nations. And those who are not hidden in Christ, when Christ returns, he will rain down the justice of God, setting all things right on every man who tries to stand as a God, as a little statue of Zeus before the creator of heaven and earth.

Are you assured of your security? That day is coming. That day is coming. Can you sing from your own experience, not the experience of your parents, of your spouse?

Can you sing? Oh, what grace that you would see me as your child and as your friend, safe, secure in you forever. That's how I pour out my praise.

[36 : 58] Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, good and gracious King. His kingdom is coming.

You can know that you are secure if your assurance is growing in Christ as your only hope. He is your only hope. In verse 40, we see that Jesus went away across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first.

And there he remained. Remember how the gospel of John begins with the prologue and then the action sequence starts with John the baptizer. Well, this is giving us a textual hint that now we're approaching the long ending of the book, the prologue, which is the passion and the prayers of Christ in that final week of his ministry where he will lay down his life for his sheep.

Now look at verse 41. And many came to him. Second Peter 2 says that the dog and the pig will go back to their sin like vomit.

But it's the clean, the clean one, the sheep. They will follow the shepherd into green pastures. And those who follow Jesus, who came to him, who went away with him.

[38 : 20] Picture that. They're turning their back on the establishment, on the Jews. They're following him into the wilderness, the place that represents the cleansing by baptism. They confess everything that John the baptizer said about this man was true.

Well, what did John the baptizer say? We got to see this this fall. In John chapter 1 verse 29, John the baptizer preached, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away your sin.

In John chapter 3 verse 27, John the baptizer preached, A person cannot receive even one good thing unless it is given him from heaven.

In John chapter 3 verse 29, John the baptizer preached, I am the friend of the bridegroom. I rejoice greatly at the bridegroom's voice. And in John chapter 3 verse 31, John the baptizer preached, He who comes from heaven is above all.

He bears witness to what he has seen and heard. Whoever receives his testimony believes that God is true. He whom God has sent utters the words of God. He gives the spirit without measure.

[39 : 32] Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life. Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life. But the wrath of God remains on him.

They confess everything John the baptizer said is true of Christ. If you reject Christ, the wrath of God remains on you.

But behold the Lamb of God who takes away your sin. Your assurance grows as you follow your shepherd as your only hope.

My last observation for today is that your assurance grows as you see others believing. You see many everywhere believing in him as their good shepherd.

Look at verse 42. They followed him. He preached to them. And many believed in him there. Many believed.

[40 : 32] Hasn't it been a joy to get to know one another and to hear each other's stories? How was it that you heard the shepherd's voice?

How was it that he called out to you? He called you away. He spoke life to you. How was it that you believed? I think our assurance grows as we get to hear that from one another.

And when we get to read or hear from our missionaries, look, in this least reached people group, they heard the gospel and many believed in him there.

Doesn't that grow your assurance? What a joy it is when we get to celebrate even one person whose life God turns around because they heard the shepherd's voice.

I picture a man in the shadows fleeing as a fugitive from a totalitarian regime.

[41 : 34] And there's the border between that kingdom that he's from and this kingdom that promises peace, rest, parks, education, medical care, everything he needs.

Nothing matters for that man in the shadows, that fugitive than to know for whom does the gate into that kingdom open?

Jesus says, I am the gate to the kingdom of the spiritual realm, the kingdom of heaven. I am the shepherd who guides you, who calls you, who leads you by faith, with confidence, with assurance. If you are in me, I am the gate. There's no one else you need to fear. I am the good shepherd. I not only am the gate, I hold you in my hands.

Well, what if they encircle around me and try to take me away to a labor camp? No one can snatch you out of my hands, Jesus says. I am the king of kings, the prince of peace.

[42 : 38] I am the only passage point from the curses of sin and death in this world into the holy kingdom of God. In John 10, 9, Jesus says, If anyone enters by me, he will be saved.

And we read here that many who heard this entered the kingdom of heaven. They entered his kingdom and found rest.

They could now sing of that peace that passes understanding. It's the peace of faith, of full assurance, of confidence in the things we hope for.

Fanny Crosby, once again, It's a peace of perfect submission to Christ. All is at rest. I, in my Savior, am happy and blessed, watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in his love.

This is a daily experience. This is a daily experience if you know Christ. Here's the second part of the canon of Dort's definition of this type of assurance.

[43 : 57] It's the sense and certainty. See how it's a personal experience? The sense and certainty of your election as a child of God. It is a matter for daily humiliation before him, for adoring the depth of his mercies, for cleansing yourself, for rendering grateful returns of ardent love to him who first manifested so great love toward us.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Well, we've come to the end of John chapter 10. I hope you've been able to see, as I have more and more with these weeks, how glorious a good shepherd we have.

There's a connection between this passage at the Feast of Dedication with what Jesus had taught previously. Last time he was in Jerusalem, he taught of the good shepherd. Now he comes back. He reapplies it. And people made their decision. Do we stone him? Or do we follow him? If you follow him, then these words that I'm about to read, reinterpreting Psalm 23, in light of what Christ revealed in John 10, will be a great comfort to you.

And that's my prayer that they will be. This is a little poem by a Dutch Reformed pastor. The shepherd is my lamb. The shepherd is my lamb. He tasted my want.

[45 : 29] He laid down in the wilderness. He endured the judgment storm waters. He relinquished his soul.

He was nailed to the cursed cross for my sinful namesake. Yea, when he walked through the valley of the shadow of death, he took up my sin alone under wrath.

With the rod and the scourge, they beat him. He was made to hunger and thirst in the presence of his enemies. His head took a mocking thorn of crown of thorns.

The bitter cup of God's wrath, he drank, drank to the dregs. Surely all the days of his sinless life were mercifully for my good, so that now I can dwell in the house of the Lord, my Savior, my Lamb, my Shepherd forever.

Father, make sure that the Lord Jesus Christ and he alone is the assurance of your security.

[46 : 49] Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Oh, God, it's your grace in Christ that is the sole efficient cause of our salvation.

We were each born spiritually dead. We were incapable of even cooperating with your regenerating grace. But because you are love, you loved us first.

And because you loved us first, you will never let us go. None can snatch us away from you, our good shepherd, our God, and our King.

Amen.