
The Glory of the Grace of God in Salvation

A Study of the Attributes and Applications of the Doctrines of Grace in the Life of the Believer

The Extent of God's Salvation: Limited Atonement

His Life for His Sheep (John 10:14-18)

We have been working our way through a series entitled, "The Glory of the Grace of God in Salvation." This is a fancy way of referring to what we call, "The Doctrines of Grace" – or those biblical teachings regarding the how's and why's of God saving people.

Thus far we have considered two of the five doctrines of grace. First we looked at the doctrine of "total depravity" along with its companion truth, "total inability." Simply put, these two biblical doctrines refer to the extent of sin on humanity. This is not to say that people are as bad as they can possibly be because of original sin inherited from Adam, but rather that sin has so affected the heart, mind, will and emotions of people that they are "**dead in their trespasses and sins**" (Ephesians 2:1) and "**alienated from God, hostile in mind [and] engaged in evil deeds**" (Colossians 1:21). Because of this condition, people are unable to come to God on their own, hence, total inability. The scriptures are replete with verses that speak of man's fallen condition.

This brought us to the second and logical teachings of the doctrines of grace, the doctrine of unconditional election. Simply put, if man has nothing in himself to merit God's favor, then unless God lovingly chooses any, some or all out of this condition, all would perish in their sins. Unconditional election means God did not choose to save a single person based upon some condition that man would first fulfill. Unconditional election teaches that God acted first and on His own. As 1 John 4:19 says, "**We love because He first loved us.**" Again, this is the clear teaching of Scripture.

This leads to a third and again logical progression in the teachings of the doctrines of grace, the doctrine of limited atonement. This is the teaching that gets all the hard knocks and is so poorly misrepresented as somehow meaning that God and His salvation is weak and "limited" in the sense of power. But, as Scripture teaches, nothing could be further from the truth. As I hope to show, there is nothing "limited" in the atonement by way of power; but because so many struggle with the term "limited," ^[slide 03] I wish to borrow from John MacArthur and use the term he uses when speaking of this truth. He calls it "**Actual Atonement.**" He wrote, "*It was not a potential atonement actuated by the sinner; it was an actual atonement initiated by the Savior.*" Actual atonement means that *Jesus Christ actually died a substitutionary death on behalf of His people; a death that covers the payment of their sin; reconciling them to God; and making them fit for eternal life.*

Let us be clear on something that is vital if we are going to rightly understand the biblical teaching on this matter. The word "**atonement**" literally means "a covering" and specifically a covering for sin. It speaks of a real, actual payment of a price, usually blood, to make amends for sin. Just based on this, those who perish eternally in hell for disbelief in Jesus cannot be said to be the recipients of even an "*unlimited atonement*" – the idea that Jesus paid the price of and made a covering for the sin for each and every person; for if He did, then why do people perish in hell if their sins are covered? In such a case, the atonement of Jesus is not an actual atonement, but only a "potential atonement;" something foreign to the word "atonement" and to the Scriptures. The Scriptures present us with a Jesus who actually accomplished the salvation of those whom the Father has chosen. Nowhere do we read of Jesus dying to just make possible salvation to all; to both the sheep and goats alike, but Jesus actually saved all the sheep given to Him by the Father.

Jesus actually accomplished and perfected the salvation of His people from beginning to end. He did not just make salvation possible, but as Matthew 1:21 predicted, Jesus *really saved* "**His people from their sins.**" As the Second Person of the Trinity; eternal and infinite, His atoning sacrifice was also of infinite value; of this we can be sure. However, we are faced with a question; "For whom did Christ actually die?" Did Jesus die for every man, woman and child who ever lived

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on this earth from Adam onward? Did Jesus die for every person without exception? Or did He die for particular individuals whom God had chosen for salvation from among every tribe and nation? In other words, did Jesus die for all people without distinction?

Let us think through this. If Jesus died for all people who are and will be in hell, then His death on the cross would be in vain. Jesus did not do anything on the cross except open a door of possibility in such a case. And then a question would arise, Why would the Father allow Jesus to suffer and die on the cross for people that the Father knew were going to hell? If God is unity; a triunity, then the purpose of God the Father NOT to save all (because not all are saved); and the purpose of the God the Son to attempt to save all (but He did not) are at odds. There is no unity then. Additionally, if unbelievers are being sent to hell as a punishment for their own sins (just as the Bible teaches), then God would be guilty of *double jeopardy*, of punishing people's sins twice. For if Jesus was already punished for their sins on the cross, then why are they being punished in hell?

We all would agree that many people, both in history and even at present, have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. It would be strange for God *to intend* to save all people by the death of His Son, but *never tell* the many people about it so that they may be saved. Beloved, if God intended that Christ die for the sins of every person without exception, and yet many still go to hell, then the death of Christ is a colossal catastrophe on God's part; ill-conceived and ineptly carried out. Right? But what if God designed, targeted, and ordained the death of Christ to save a particular, a specific, and a definite number of people whom did not deserve His mercy? Is this what we find in the Scriptures?

Let us consider this. In the Scriptures the Lord is often pictured as a shepherd with His sheep. We have Psalm 23 – *“The LORD is my Shepherd...”*; our text here in John 10 and other passages like Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; and 5:4. In addition to this, the idea of sheep is often used to describe God's people. We see this in Matthew 25, where on the judgment day, the sheep, who are the true believers, are separated from the goats, the unbelievers. God, through the prophet Isaiah, likens His people to sheep who have *“gone astray”* and declaring that *“each of us has turned to his own way.”* In order to redeem these sheep, *“the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him”* (Isaiah 53:6).

Let us take this imagery of the Shepherd and the Sheep to get a grasp on this third teaching of the doctrines of grace, called **“limited”** or better yet, **“actual atonement.”** Using our text of John 10:14-18 and other select Scriptures, let us see the intention and scope of God's saving work. This morning we will see the purpose, the propitiation and the power of Shepherd's sacrifice.

14 I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, 15 even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. 18 No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.

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I. The Purpose of the Shepherd's Sacrifice – the intention of the Father

"...This commandment I received from My Father" (10:18).

An early Christian creed written around 500 AD declares, *"...we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity."*¹ The point here is that the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit have always had one purpose and one plan for the redemption of sinners. That plan is as follows: God the Father elected a people before the creation of the world to save (Ephesians 1:4); God the Son came down to earth to be the sacrifice for those the Father had elected (Matthew 1:21); and God the Holy Spirit brings the elect to faith by creating a new heart, mind, and will in them (Ezekiel 36:25-27) to the glory of God.

Beloved, God accomplishes this purpose and plan from beginning to end. Our John 10 text informs us that Jesus accomplished this very mission; to die, to make atonement for the sins of all that His Father has chosen to save. And there is unity in both purpose and person when Jesus declared just a few verses down from our text in verse 30 saying, ***"I and the Father are one"*** – literally, "a unity." The mission of Jesus was the result of the everlasting love and unconditional choice of the Father in choosing out of all who deserved eternal death, to be the recipients of eternal life. In 1 John 4:10 we read, ***"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*** Here John was writing to Christians for whom Christ was sent by his Father to be the atonement *for their sins, not the sins of every single person in the world.*

This purpose of the Father and mission of Jesus is declared in John 10:11 when Jesus said, ***"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."*** From all eternity, it was the Father's plan that Jesus would come to lay down His life for His sheep. How do we know this was the Father's plan and purpose? Look at verses 17-18 where we read, ***17 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. 18 No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.*** Jesus laid down His life ***"for the sheep"*** (John 10:15), that is God's chosen people.

But Jesus is not only the Good Shepherd, but, as the Scriptures reveal to us, He is also the ***"lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth."*** This Lamb that ***"was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him."*** It was this Lamb of whom it was said, ***"But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand."*** This was the mission of Christ (put in New Testament language); to be ***"delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God [and] nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death."*** (Acts 2:23; see also Acts 4:28; 1 Peter 1:20).

Now, let me ask you something; did Jesus actually accomplish this mission; the mission of laying down His life for all the sheep given to Him to save? When Jesus explained His mission to the Jewish crowd in John 6, He declared that His Father's purpose was to actually save all that He elected through the work of His Son, Jesus Christ. Let us note this carefully from John 6:37-39 where we read, ***37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the***

¹ Athanasian Creed – point 3

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will of Him who sent Me. 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.

Here we see that Jesus will lose nothing, not one of those given to Him by His Father, because, as we have seen and will continue to see, the Father intended the sacrifice of His Son to be only, or limited, or actual for ***“All that the Father gives...”*** Him. And notice that all, without exception, of these given to Him will come to Him. Let us note this in the high priestly prayer of Jesus. In John 17, before He was crucified, Jesus prayed, and notice this carefully, only for all those that the Father had chosen out of the whole world and given to Him. We read:

1 Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, 2 even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life...6 I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word...I ask [pray] on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours...”

This is amazing, that on the night before He died, Jesus prayed, but only for those whom the Father had chosen. He clearly left out of His prayer all those whom the Father had not chosen to be saved. Right? So then, why would Jesus, just a few hours after this, change His Father’s plan and die on the cross for *everyone*, without exception, even those whom His Father had not chosen? Do you see the problem here? When Jesus died on the cross, He fulfilled the Father’s plan and made an actual atonement. The Scriptures teach us that Jesus actually *accomplished* the salvation of those whom the Father had chosen. He did not just make possible salvation to all without exception, the sheep and the goats alike, but rather Jesus *actually saved all the sheep given to Him*. Whenever you read of the benefit of Christ death in the Scriptures, they are always spoken of as having actually made full satisfaction of the justice of God on behalf of the elect. This is what we call “propitiation” – the full satisfaction of the justice of God on behalf of the elect by means of death on the cross. This is why Jesus said on the cross, ***“It is finished”*** (John 19:30).

The problem is that if the Father intended for the Son’s sacrifice and atonement to be made for every sin of all people without exception, for every single person who would ever be born in this world, then why is it that not everyone is saved? You will say, because of their unbelief. But if unbelief is a sin, then Jesus died not die for every sin and this would lead to a truly “limited” atonement, one that does not pay for all the sins of His people but only most of the sins of all people. But this is what so many come to “believe” including the idea that salvation is based on a person’s “freewill decision” to believe in Christ. But again, we have a dilemma: If person is not saved unless he or she makes a decision for Christ, then no one is actually saved by the death of Christ. The death of Christ only makes it possible for people to be saved. But everywhere the Scriptures declare that Christ *really, actually, and completely* saved God’s people (Matthew 1:21; Galatians 3:13). This is why Jesus said on the cross, ***“It is finished”*** rather than “It is started” or “Now salvation is possible” (John 19:30). Beloved, if we combine this “freewill” view of salvation with man’s deadness in sin (Ephesians 2:1) and his slavery to sin (Romans 6:16-17), the result is unimaginable horror! Since fallen humanity is wholly unable and unwilling to come to God on his own understanding and will (1 Corinthians 2:14), *not a single person will be saved*, because no one has the ability or the will to do so on his own (Romans 3:10-12). In short, everyone would be lost!

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But the purpose of the Father was to save those whom He had chosen through the work of His Son; and this leads us to the second point:

II. The Propitiation of the Shepherd's Sacrifice – the intention of the Son

"...and I lay down My life for the sheep" (10:15).

The Father's purpose in sending His Son, Jesus Christ from heaven down to earth was to save all those whom He had chosen before the creation of the world. To be an actual propitiation for them. Let me remind you again that the word "propitiation" (a biblical word) means a full satisfaction of the justice of God on behalf of the elect by means of death on the cross. The question is this; did Jesus actually accomplish this purpose of the Father – to be the propitiation for the sins of His people?

This brings us to the Good Shepherd preaching here in John 10 where Jesus revealed to His disciples in verses 14-15, **14 I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, 15 even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.** Let me draw your attention to the word, "know" as it is key here. The idea of "know" is not simply of knowledge or information, but of intimacy. The "knowing" between God the Father and God the Son as well as between the Good Shepherd and His own sheep, is one of deep intimacy. Jesus knows His sheep intimately, but only His own, not all the sheep (or goats) in the world. How intimate a relationship is it? We get the idea Jesus is communicating back up in verses 3-5 where we read, **3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 "When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.** This is clear. The sheep outside of a particular flock would not know this shepherd's voice. Interestingly enough, in Palestine, the shepherd actually called each sheep by its own name. Would the shepherd know the names of the sheep in another flock? Certainly not! And all His sheep know intimately the shepherd's voice. How is it that the Shepherd knows His sheep so intimately? In addition to having been given these sheep, Jesus said that He **"poured out [His blood] for many for forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28).** In Ephesians 5:25 we read that Jesus, **"loved the church and gave Himself up for her..."**

Now Jesus' flock began with sheep from among His own people, the Jews, who knew His voice. Through His apostles and other under-shepherds, many sheep from other sheepfolds will be gathered into His one flock, and He will be the one Shepherd over them all; what we see Jesus saying in John 10:16. These sheep would be brought in from the remotest parts of the earth, so that Jesus would truly be the "Savior of the World." This leads to some confusion, calling Jesus the Savior of the World. Does it mean that Jesus intended to save every single person without exception (which we know He has not done)? Does it mean that all people will be saved, or that His death was for every person? Doesn't John 3:16 teach this, that **"...God so loved the world..."**?

Because of John 3:16 and a few other verses, a large number of church-goers have come to believe that Jesus died for every single person who ever lived in this world; that His atonement for sin was not "limited" but unlimited but was for every person without exception. However, the Greek word for "world," *kosmos*, is used in many different ways in the New Testament, and most of these uses cannot mean every person without exception by context. Let me give you some examples. In John 7:4, Jesus' brothers mocked Him and said, **"Show Yourself to the world..."** (*kosmos*). Are we to understand that Jesus' brothers were intending Him to reveal Himself to every single person on the face of the earth? Indeed not. Or how about Luke 2:1 that says, **"Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited**

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earth.” It is commonly understood that this is a reference to the Roman Empire, but that neither Caesar or his representative had any thought of counting every single person on the face of the earth. We have statements like those found in John 8:26 – “...and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.” In John 12:19, “...look, the world has gone after Him!” In Romans 1:8, “**First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.**” Are these to be understood as speaking about every single person in the world, without exception?

Beloved, an important rule of Biblical interpretation is that clearer texts are to interpret unclear ones. So, if we have texts that clearly state Jesus died only for His or God’s people; and we have another set of texts say that Jesus is the “Savior of the world,” and, it can be shown from other texts that “world” cannot always mean every single person who ever lived; it then becomes obvious which texts are clear, and which ones are not.¹ And so, if a text says that Jesus died only for His own people – His sheep (like what we have seen in John 10:14-16), then passages like John 3:16 and 1 John 2:2, must be understood to mean that Jesus is the Savior of the whole world *without distinction* (Acts 10:34-35), rather than *without exception*. Look at what we read in Revelation 5:9, **And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.** Clearly Jesus is said here not to have died for every person without exception, but for all kinds of people without distinction; the whole world. The text seems to be unlimited by why of kinds of people, but limited to those chosen by God to be purchased.

Now some will take issue with the idea of limited atonement because of the use of words like “all” or “every.” The argument is that God clearly intended an absolutely universal atonement because of verses like 1 Timothy 2:4 which says, **[God] “who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”** Or how about Hebrews 2:9 that says, “...Jesus...taste[d] death for everyone.” And then there is 2 Peter 3:9 where we read, **“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”** In these and similar text, was it the author’s intent to speak of every single person without exception?

Beloved, when we put these verses into context, they reveal that words like “all” and “everyone” refer to believers, not to every person in the whole world without exception. Additionally, context of these texts is to God’s love for *all kinds of people, without distinction*. Also, we know from Ezekiel 18:32, that the Lord does not delight in judging anyone; even when He punished Israel for their sins, God urged them to repent, saying, **“For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,” declares the Lord God. “Therefore, repent and live.”**

If we were to always read the meaning of these words “all” and “everyone” to refer to every human being without exception or to everything in this world, many verses would be reduced to nonsense. For example: in Mark 1:5 we read, **“And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.”** And in Matthew 4:23-24 we read (ESV); **23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them.** Are Mark and Matthew intending to tell us that every single person, without exception, in all of Judea and Jerusalem was baptized by John, and that there was not a single person in the country that was sick after Jesus healed them all? In Mark 1:5 it would seem the context speaks of a large number of people, but not every single person without exception. And Matthew 4, in context would be speaking large regions of Galilee, of all kinds of diseases and

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that large numbers of people were hearing of Him and large numbers of sick people were brought to Him.

We have the same idea in passage like 1 Corinthians 15:22 where we read, ***“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.”*** Clearly, the subject of the first instance is every single person without exception, for every human is found ***“in Adam”*** But in the second instance, “all” can only refer to Christians, those who are ***“in Christ.”*** In Titus 2:11 we read, ***“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men...”*** Now, was Paul teaching that every single person will be saved? No. So what did he mean? If we just read the next verse, in context, we get our answer; ***“instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,”*** The ***“all men”*** who are saved are the ***“us”*** - Paul and all other Christians from every tongue, tribe and nation who are being instructed in godliness.

Beloved, “all” of us speak like just the Bible. If we start a worship service and ask, “Is everyone here?” we do not mean everyone in the whole world. Beloved, words like “world”, “all”, or “everyone” more often than not refer to *all without distinction, not all without exception*. When we speak of Christ dying for all, because not all are saved, we know we are speaking not of all without exception, but all without distinction, that is, for all kinds of people, from every tongue, tribe and nation. Thus, while the atonement of Jesus certainly has benefited the entire human race by ushering in Christian living, the atonement itself only benefits the elect with salvation. The propitiation or work of Christ in turning away deserved wrath can only Biblically be said to apply to those chosen by God before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless (Ephesians 1:4). This leads to our last point...

III. The Power of the Shepherd’s Sacrifice – the intention of the Spirit

“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).

So, we have seen that the Father purposed to save those He chose and Christ actually purchased the chosen with His blood. This is actual atonement. Every believer throughout history has been saved by the blood of the Lamb of God who is Himself the Good Shepherd. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, ***“I will build My church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”*** The church will never fail, even in persecution and hardship, because the foundation of the church is in His blood.

Your Good Shepherd made promises that bring assurance of salvation. He said, ***“My sheep hear My voice” (John 10:27)*** and ***“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).*** What blessed assurance! But how can Christ, who is in heaven, guarantee such a promise? Beloved, Jesus has sent His Spirit to you to assure you that you are a sheep of Christ. In 1 John 4:13 we read, ***“By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.”*** The working of the Spirit of God within you is your witness that you are His sheep. In Romans 8:14-17 this is made clear, ***14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.***

Now, all this talk about for whom did Christ die may cause some to think, “Why preach the Gospel to the entire world if Christ died only for the elect? What is the use of calling sinners to faith in Christ if you cannot tell everyone that He died for them? This is a common objection against the teaching of limited atonement.

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The problem is that so often our presentation of the gospel has moved so far away from what the Bible says that we have come to believe in our gospel tracts rather than the Word of God. We have been taught that the only way to share the Gospel is to tell sinners that Christ died for them and they must believe this. But do you know that nowhere in the New Testament do we ever find either Christ or His apostles making statements like “Jesus died for you” to unbelievers? Never! What we do find over and over are exhortations to **“believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,”** coupled with the promise that those who do **“will be saved.”**

So then, how do we know if Christ died for us? Specifically, how do you answer the question, “Did Christ die for me?” How do you know? Well, beloved, in large part you can know the answer to that question by answering other questions. Let me ask you: 1) Do you want a Savior? 2) Do you need a Savior? 3) Do you admit that you are a sinner? 4) Do you admit that you cannot do anything to satisfy God’s righteous anger against you? 5) Can you say with all your heart: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner? Beloved, if you can confidently answer “YES!” to all these questions, then you can know Biblically that Christ died for you. If you believe that the Lord Jesus has is Savior and has done these things for you, then you are saved.

And so I exhort everyone in this place, in the name and authority of Jesus’ name, to believe that Christ died on the cross for you. I implore you to cast yourself upon the person and work of Jesus. For if you believe in Christ as your only hope, you have nothing to fear. The work that He begun in you shall be fully accomplished. Jesus the Good Shepherd and look with me at John 10:28-29 at the promise this Shepherd has made, **28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. 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.** Beloved, no one is more powerful than the Father and thus no one is able to steal sheep out of the Father’s hand. And it is the power of God the Holy Spirit who is your guarantee.

But how does the Spirit of God manifest His power and work within you? How can you know that Christ died for you? Beloved, is the evidence of the Spirit being revealed in you? How does the Spirit of Christ reveal Himself? Through the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Are you experiencing and revealing, **“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”**? The Good Shepherd leads you into pastures such as these where the Spirit of God feeds you and conforms you to the image Christ. And then what? What comes next for those for whom Christ has died? Beloved, with heart-felt gratitude, praise Him! Praise Him who alone is to be worship and glorified. Serve Him who alone is Lord of all. These are the results and the effect of the perfect work of Christ on the cross. Let me close with the words of 1 John 3:24 where we read, **The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.** This is the power of the Spirit at work in those for who Christ is the propitiation and for whom the Father purposed to save.

Soli Deo Gloria

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