



got life?

The Gospel of John A Bible Study with Stan Key

PREDESTINED TO CHOOSE!

John 10:1–42

- I. To be a sheep or not to be a sheep, that is the question.
- A. Story of the Calvinist who had a nightmare.
- B. On _____, John 10 is about sheep and shepherds. Studies and sermons that work at this level are rich and rewarding, typically focusing on:
1. The qualities of _____ (defenseless, noisy, herd mentality, dumb, etc.).
 2. The qualities of a _____ (provides food, protects from danger, sleeps in the doorway, etc.).
- C. But when one goes _____, one discovers an even richer and more rewarding wealth of wisdom. At a deeper (theological) level, this chapter is about how to become a sheep; aka _____ (*ordo salutis*). This term refers to that series of conceptual steps that denote the progressive _____ of events that must take place for someone to experience salvation (become a sheep). Some of these steps take place in the _____ and some are the _____. What may seem abstract and theoretical, however, has profound and practical implications for how we understand:
- And experience salvation.
 - The security of the believer.
 - Predestination.
 - And practice evangelism.
- D. Read John 10, noting especially the words:
1. Voice (Jn 10:3–5, 16, 27); call (Jn 10:3); hear (Jn 10:3, 8, 16, 20, 27)
 2. Believe (Jn 10:25–26, 37–38, 42)
 3. Know (Jn 10:4, 14–16, 27, 38)
 4. Life (Jn 10:10, 28); be saved (Jn 10:9)
 5. Division (Jn 10:19). Jesus’ presence divides people into two groups: those who are sheep and those who are not.

<p>The Good Shepherd Calls His Sheep</p> <p>They hear his voice They believe in him They follow him Thus they have eternal life John 10:1–21</p>	<p>But Many Are Not His Sheep</p> <p>They haven’t heard his call They haven’t believed in him They are not his followers Thus they will perish John 10:22–42</p>
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Notes on the text:

1. The Old Testament provides many references for the metaphor of God being the good shepherd and Israel being the sheep of his pasture (Ps 23, etc.).

However, the passage that offers the richest background for understanding John 10 is _____.

In this sermon, the prophet castigates the shepherds of Israel because they have not cared for the sheep (fed them, protected them, sought them when they went astray, etc.). Rather, the shepherds have exploited the sheep (fleeced them for wool to wear, slaughtered them for meat to eat, etc.). God is very angry at the shepherds and will judge them severely. The climax of the sermon is the stunning announcement that _____ will come and be the shepherd for his flock!

2. Though many details enrich the text, the emphasis of the passage is clear:

- The primary characteristic of a *true sheep* is that he _____ of the shepherd. Sheep may be dumb, but they are not stupid.
- The primary characteristic of a *true shepherd* is that he _____ for the sheep. No price is too great to provide for their care and well-being.

II. A closer look at John 10:24–29.

So the Jews... 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 _____. The _____ that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not _____. My sheep _____ my voice, and _____, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will _____, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who _____ to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. (John 10:24–29)

A. I would believe if only I could.

The Jews make what seems to be a reasonable demand: "If you are the Messiah, just say so!" They outwardly appear to be _____ about Jesus. *They would believe in him if only they could.* They need more _____—then they will decide.

B. I could believe if only I would.

Jesus refuses to answer with a simple yes or no. First, he tells them that he has already answered that question (see for example Jn 2:19; 3:14–15; 5:46–47; 6:48; 7:37–38; 8:12, 58). Then he mentions the "works" that he has already done: turned water to wine, healed a paralytic, fed 5,000, walked on water, gave sight to a man born blind. Jesus knew that their problem was not a _____! Jesus knew their problem was not intellectual but rather a willful refusal to believe. *They could believe if only they would.*

Jesus has turned the tables! The Jews think that _____ because of the outrageous claims he is making. Jesus, however, reveals that it is the Jews who are on trial because of their obstinate unbelief. The problem is not the lack of evidence but the _____ and deafness of the human heart! How can ears not hear the Voice of the Shepherd calling them by name? How can eyes not see the Light of the World? Jesus is saying, "I'm not the one on trial here. You are!"

C. The world tends to say, "If Jesus would just show us who he is, then we would believe. Seeing is believing, right?" Jesus says, "If you would just believe then I would

show you who I am. _____!” Augustine put it this way: “Seek not to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand.”

D. Point to Ponder: How much evidence does it take to enable someone to believe? Reason takes you to the diving board and helps you know that jumping is not _____. But faith is what enables you to _____! See John 12:28–31a for a dramatic illustration.

E. This text takes us deep into the divine mysteries of the Order of Salvation. It introduces us to great doctrinal truths such as:

1. _____—The Father “has given” (Jn 10:29) the sheep to Jesus long before Jesus even met the sheep.
2. _____—When Jesus tells the Jews that they “do not believe because [they] are not among his sheep” (Jn 10:26), he seems to know those who are sheep and those who are not. It seems as if some are elected to salvation and perhaps some aren’t.
3. _____—Jesus’ sheep “hear” his voice (Jn 10:27) and then believe and follow their shepherd. Others don’t have this experience, but is it because God is not calling or because they are not listening?
4. _____—Believing in the identity (one with the Father) and mission (to lay down his life) of Jesus is the key to becoming a sheep. But some people simply won’t (can’t?) believe. They say they need more evidence. Really?
5. _____—Once a sheep is in the fold, Jesus and his Father hold him secure. No outside predator is able to snatch a sheep out of their hands!

The question is: how do these great doctrines (and others) fit together? In what order do they come? Welcome to the doctrine of the Order of Salvation.

F. Two historic interpretations of the Order of Salvation:

CALVINISM	WESLEYAN ARMINIANISM
Predestination (the sovereign decrees)	Foreknowledge
Election (unconditional)	Election/Predestination (conditional)
Calling (irresistible grace)	Prevenient Grace (resistible)
(based in a limited atonement)	(based in a universal atonement)
Regeneration (new birth)	Calling (resistible)
Repentance & Faith	Repentance & Faith
Sanctification	Regeneration (new birth)
Perseverance	Perseverance (conditional)
Glorification	Sanctification
	Glorification

G. A type of biblical order appears in Romans 8:29–30.

For those whom he _____ he also _____ to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also _____, and those whom he called he also _____, and those whom he justified he also _____. (Romans 8:29–30)

III. How to be a sheep!

A. It begins _____.

God created you for a good purpose. He has a glorious plan for your life. In his infinite grace, he loved you and sovereignly provided the means for your salvation. Though he knows in advance how your life will turn out, his foreknowledge is not determinative. You are no _____!

B. _____ grace.

The light that _____ (Jn 1:9) makes it possible for you to see the truth though you are blind! And though you are “dead in your trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1), this grace that “goes before” salvation enables you to hear his call and respond. The greatest illustration of this is when Jesus called Lazarus out from the grave. The dead man heard the call! “Lazarus, come out!” (Jn 11:43).

C. The Call.

Sheep know the voice of their shepherd. They hear when he calls _____ . Salvation is not when we call out to God but when he calls out to us. “You did not choose me, but I chose you” (Jn 15:16). But this call confronts us with _____. Will we listen? Will we respond? Will we follow? Prevenient grace makes the choice a real one!

D. Repentance and Faith.

As we respond to Jesus’ call, we turn from our sins and put our trust in the one who calls. There is no _____ in this. The ability to respond is not the result of our own noble efforts or hard work. “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is _____, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph 2:8–9).

E. The image of God.

Repentance and faith make it now possible for the sanctifying Spirit of God to begin a work of _____. We are born again and the work of sanctification begins, which restores the image of God. This means that holiness is more than a positional state as we are covered with robes of Christ’s righteousness. It means that our heart is genuinely changed and we are perfected in love.

F. Assurance of salvation.

Our salvation is absolutely secure as long as we remain in the sheep fold. No one can snatch us out of his hands (Jn 10:28–29). Salvation is not dependent on my hold on God but on _____. However, the reality of indwelling sin makes it possible for one to wander out of the fold and potentially one day reach such a state of disobedience that _____ occurs, and salvation is lost.

G. Glorification.

For those who continue in faith to the end, a crown of life awaits. “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears _____, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure” (1 Jn 3:2–3).

IV. Predestined to Choose.

A. You are gods.

When Jesus quotes Psalm 82:6 (“You are gods”), he is neither introducing some new pantheistic doctrine of divine humanity nor equating his own unique divine status (“I

and the Father are one”) with humans. The reference seems aimed at the unbelieving Jews, reminding them that they were masters of _____! They had a “godlike” ability to choose—and like all divine choices, the consequences will go on forever! Deep within every human soul resides a kingdom where _____. Not even Almighty God will intervene! God will go to every conceivable length and expense to save people, but he will never rob them of their God-given ability to choose!

B. Yet no one can boast.

God’s wisdom has ordained so that prevenient _____ enables even dead sinners to respond and so that there is just enough _____ to make faith possible. If we are ultimately saved, it will be by grace alone (He did it!). But if we are lost, it will be our own fault (I did it).

C. Today, if you hear his voice.

Salvation, like marriage, is an ongoing _____. There may have been an original choice, but, like any relationship, salvation is composed of decisions made every day. _____ is the day of salvation! “Today, if you _____, do not harden your hearts...” (Heb 3:7–4:11).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the primary characteristic of a sheep?
2. If sinners are dead (and thus deaf and blind), how is it possible for them to hear the voice of the One who calls them or to see the light of the world?
3. What are the implications that flow out of our theology of how we understand the Order of Salvation?
4. Discuss the phrase “predestined to choose.”
5. How do most people in the church today understand the security of the believer? Has this study confirmed that understanding or challenged it?

The battle is lost or won in the secret places of the will before God.... The battle may take one minute or a year, that will depend on me, not on God; but it must be wrestled out alone before God.... Nothing has any power over the man who has fought out the battle before God and won there.... (Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest, 362)

'Tis Not that I Did Choose You

By Josiah Conder (1836)

*Lord, 'tis not that I did choose You;
That, I know, could never be,
For this heart would still refuse You
Had Your grace not chosen me.
You removed the sin that stained me,
Cleansing me to be Your own;
For this purpose You ordained me,
That I live for you alone.*

*It was grace in Christ that called me,
Taught my darkened heart and mind,
Else the world had yet enthralled me,
To Your heav'nly glories blind.
Now I worship none above You;
For Your grace alone I thirst,
Knowing well that, if I love You,
You, O Father, loved me first.*

*Haste then on from grace to glory,
Armed by faith and winged by prayer.
All but heav'n is transitory;
God's own hand shall guide you there.
Soon shall end this earthly story;
Swift shall pass the pilgrim days,
Hope soon change to heav'nly glory,
Faith to sight and prayer to praise.*