

Real Christianity Part C

Series: Real Christianity

Text: Matthew 10:22

Introduction: Let's look at Matthew 4:18-22; 9:9. The reason I want to look at the calling of the disciples in these passages, is because it is God who called them (Jesus) and it appears they did not mill around about it. When we read (Matthew 4) "Immediately they left their nets and followed Him" "Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him." And Matthew "And he got up and followed Him." All of this tells us that these men did not just decided to leave their jobs, businesses or families. Furthermore, we have read recently concerning the cost of being a disciple, Matthew 14:28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?" When many western churches tell people that being a follower of Christ means you will have it all here, wealth, health, good things and not suffer, isn't proclaiming the true gospel. It also means that we should glorify God every single day that we worship freely here because that is a work of God. But don't confuse being a genuine Christian with what you possess, Luke 12:15 "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."

NOTE: What does this have to do with our text in Matthew 10:22? It's called the doctrine of Perseverance of the saints, or eternal security of the believer. In other words, if God has saved you, all the things of this world will grow strangely dim. And it is not you who endure until the end, but it is God who keeps you and you endure not to be saved but because you are saved.

WHAT DOES ENDURED MEAN? The word for endure is a verb which means "to remain, persevere or to bear." We have already seen in the texts we have read over the past few weeks, the trials, persecutions and troubles that could arise for being a Christian. Here is a definition by Wayne Grudem "The perseverance of the saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have truly been born again." Note these two things (1) there is assurance to those who have been born again that God's ability and power to keep you (2) continuing in the Christian life is evidence of one's being born again.

ALL THOSE WHO ARE BORN AGAIN WILL PERSEVERE TO THE END. Cf. John 6:38-40, first Jesus says those that believe in Him will have eternal life. Truly believing in Christ will drive you to endure until the end. Second, the text emphasizes that Jesus does the will of the Father, all those given to Him, all those saved, will He will not lose. Cf. John 10:27-29, the sheep hear His voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Some have objected to this verse to say that even though no one can else can take us out of Christ's hands, we can leave on our own. However, you have to do some hermeneutical gymnastics to get that view. We know our hearts are far from trustworthy, Jeremiah 17:11 "The

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heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?" If you had the ability to walk away, you would, in fact, it's the keeping of God that retains us as His child.

THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH (vs. 28). This is the most forceful phrase in the text. The Greek construction is an aorist subjunctive, and is emphatic, thus it literally can be rendered "*and they shall certainly not perish forever.*" There are other Scriptural passages that affirm "eternal life" to those that believe. John 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." John 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." John 6:47 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life." 1 John 5:13 "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life."

In Romans 8:30 affirms such an eternal settled purpose, "And these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified." The glorification is a future event, which He has settled by saying He also glorified. In the text it seems to speak of glorification as if it has already occurred.

GOD SEALS THOSE WHO ARE BORN AGAIN. The seal is God's Holy Spirit within us, who also acts as God's guarantee that we will receive the inheritance promised. Cf. Ephesians 1:13-14, the Greek word translated "guarantee" in this passage is a legal and commercial term that means "*first installment, deposit, down payment, pledge.*" Furthermore, it represents a "*payment which obligates the contracting party to make further payments.*" When God gave us the Holy Spirit in salvation, He committed Himself to give all further blessings of eternal life in heaven with Him. This is why it is a guarantee of inheritance until we possess it. Therefore, if God guarantees it, how can it be lost?

We must be careful here not to imply something that's not here. In no way does this mean that a person can "live as they wish" fulfilling the desires of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. It is not a license to sin. This fact does not remove personal responsibility for ones actions. In Ephesians 4:30 "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." We are also assured of God's working in our lives as true believers, Philippians 1:6 "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." Here we have God working in us for good, to bring honor to Him to serve Him.

God's keeping ability, cf. 1 Peter 1:3-5, and the present participle in vs. 5 gives the idea of "*you are continually being guarded.*" Again, I emphasize this does not mean you do and live as you wish. In fact, God's keeping power should energize a man's faith in Him to do, live, serve and honor Him. This guarding isn't temporary either, it's a guarding that will be until eternity.

ONLY THOSE WHO PRESERVE TO THE END ARE TRULY SAVED, cf. John 8:31-32, and the warning that Jesus is giving here is one evidence of genuine faith is continuing in His word, that is, continuing to believe what He says and living a life of obedience to His commands. This text is a key link to our text in Matthew 10:22 "...but it is he who endures to the end who will be saved."

Cf. Colossians 1:21-23, in context many were joining the fellowship of believers in Colossae. He did not know every person's heart. However, here is the key, genuine faith will preserve until the end and those who do not have it will fall away. Genuine believers endure because of the hope of the gospel. Hebrews 3:14 "For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end." How do we know if we have true saving faith? The answer lies in the after of the if, that is, if we continue to the end.

WHAT CAN GIVE A BELIEVER GENUINE ASSURANCE? Do you have a present trust in Christ? John 3:16, the most quoted verse in the Bible, uses a present tense verb that may be translated literally as "whoever continues believing in Him." If your testimony goes back to a time or place 20 or 30 years ago and isn't present today, then something's wrong. Saying you were saved that long ago and have no evidence of righteous living today, that's not genuine faith. **Is there evidence of a regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in your life?** Cf. Galatians 5:19-23 and Jesus refers to false prophets this way but also applies to true saving faith, "You shall know them by their fruits." **Is there a pattern of growth in your Christian life?** Or did you make a profession years ago and have never really changed, but you rely on your church membership or good works to save you? Are you trusting in your own power keep believing or in God's power to keep you?