

## Once a Goat, Always a Goat—Once a Sheep, Never a Goat

By: Dan Jenkins

Church history shows there was a great rebellion against the Catholic Church in Europe in the 16th century. Who has not heard of Martin Luther and how he sowed the seeds for other Protestant churches who openly departed from the catholic (worldwide) church centered around the Vatican? At that same time, John Calvin, who was born in France but fled to Switzerland, and his writings became the basis for many of the doctrines so widely believed.

There were no mainline churches like Presbyterians, Methodists, or Baptist churches, but as the reformation movement spread, Calvin's writings became the doctrinal foundation of these various Protestant churches. There were five major aspects of the doctrine of Calvinism that were so widespread in these churches. One of these doctrines was predestination, which in our day is no longer in the forefront of the creeds of Protestantism but many of the others are widely held.

One of central teachings of Calvin affirms that once a person is saved he can never be separated from God. Calvin called it the "perseverance of the saints." In our day it is described as the "impossibility of apostasy," the "eternal security of believers" or the "impossibility of falling from grace." The clearest way to describe this teaching is that once one becomes a child of God, there is

absolutely no way he can forfeit his salvation. There is no sin or action that could cause him to ever be destined for the fires of hell.

Jesus used two animals, sheep and goats, to describe mankind. Predestination says, "Once a goat, always a goat," and there is nothing one can do to change that. The doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy says "Once a sheep, never a goat." A goat has free will to turn to Jesus and become one of His sheep, but once he is a sheep he loses his free will. He cannot go to hell, even if he wants to!

This aspect of Calvinism is part of the teachings of the largest denomination in the south. Just say the "sinner's prayer" and you can never lose that salvation. It is also widely believed by community churches today.

The important question is not who is right or who is wrong about these teachings. The most important question is, "What is right?" How do I find the answer to this? Go to the Bible and read the epistles written to the early Christians. Were they warned against falling away? Read the six chapters of Galatians and see what God said. Pay special attention to **Gal. 1:6-9; 3:1; 4:11; 5:1-2, 4, 7, 21; 6:7-8**. Truth is not determined by a pope, by a creed, by a statement of faith, by Luther or Calvin or televangelists today. Read the Bible to see what God teaches about sheep and goats, about sin and salvation.

# That Tempting Situation

By: Selected

In May 2022, Tyreek Hill, of the Miami Dolphins, purchased a 7-bedroom, 8.5-bathroom home for \$6.9 million. That's a really nice place! On January 3, 2024, a fire ripped through that house, and it took firefighters two hours to quell the flames, leaving extensive water and smoke damage throughout the house. A really nice place was nearly destroyed and left with severe and very costly damage.

How could something so valuable and beautiful so quickly be ravaged and left with lasting devastation? What could cause such destruction? Here it is: The fire was sparked by a child playing with a lighter in one of the bedrooms.

Do you think that child had any idea the damage that such a small, seemingly innocent act could cause? Playing with a lighter is no big deal, right? It's "small." It's "controllable." It's "easy to keep secret," so that no one will ever know, right? And, sure, it's a little risky, but that's what gives it a sense of excitement and intrigue. The child had no idea what would happen! But that's the point.

How often do we, as Christians, behave in a similar fashion to this little child? I'm not talking about playing with lighters, but I'm talking about playing with temptation.

How often (and why?) do we put ourselves in tempting situations (even if "only slightly tempting"), but we think we can "handle it"? Maybe we think it's just a "small" thing. Maybe we think that it's "controllable." Maybe we think that it's a

"secret" and nobody knows about it, so it's no big deal. And, maybe, we realize that we are bordering on the edge of temptation, but that little "risk" gives us a little spark of excitement and adrenalin and intrigue.

Friends, are you playing with temptation? Are you getting yourself too close, but you think you've got it under control? The book of wisdom says, "Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared?" (**Prov. 6:27-28**). Peter probably thought it was no big deal for him to go and warm himself with those who hated Jesus, but putting himself in that situation led him into sin (**Luke 22:54-62**). David probably thought it was no big deal for him to take a sneak peak at Bathsheba while she was bathing, but allowing himself to keep looking led him into sin (**2 Sam. 11:1-27**).

We need to "watch and pray" to keep ourselves from entering "into temptation" (**Luke 22:40, 46; 8:13; 11:4**). Our "own desires" entice us to think we can control temptation (**Jas. 1:13-14**). Let us not be fooled! Let us "flee" (**2 Tim. 2:22**) and "abstain" (**1 Thess. 5:22; 1 Pet. 2:11**), rather than playing with fire to see how close we can get without getting burned. Your soul is more valuable than a 6.9-million-dollar home!



Upcoming Events

TODAY: Monthly Potluck luncheon with a 12:45pm service. Please bring a dish/dessert to share.

Sunday, March 9: Monthly youth devo at the McCoy home. Girls bring desserts, boys bring drinks.

Area events:

\*Area events/details are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. Please check them out.\*

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Allen Clifton who had a PET scan this past week.

Rick Bass who is still having tests done to get a correct diagnosis.

Draven Garcia who will be having knee surgery in March.

Katy McCoy who is having back problems.

Benny Horton’s great niece Taylor Walker who is recovering from brain surgery and his great niece Tiffany Casey who is having seizures.

Kidron Lehtinen who had an MRI last week.

Richard Hill who fell last week and is sore.

Members

Jeff Cannady, Jerry FitzSimmons, James Hicks, and Veronica Serenil.

2025 Pocket Directories are available on the table in the foyer.

Marilyn Horst and Gerry Whitacre were married Feb. 14th, 2025

Please sign up to open/close the building, prepare communion, and host youth devos for 2025. The sign up sheets are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Service Roster

Week of March 2, 2025

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading..... Willie Fossati  
Song Leader ..... Jeff Cannady

Opening Prayer..... Ron White  
Closing Prayer..... Rick Bass

Lord’s Supper & Offering

Bread..... Ken Dorries  
Cup..... Doug Jobses  
Offering..... Barry Lehtinen  
Assist..... Mike Atkinson  
Assist..... Lupe Escojido  
Assist..... Bryant Siegel

Sunday Evening

Song Leader ..... Doug Jobses

Opening Prayer..... Ken Dorries  
Closing Prayer..... Caleb Lehtinen

Lord’s Supper & Offering.....Ken Dorries/  
Bill York

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class .....Cody McCoy  
Song Leader .....Luke FitzSimmons  
Devotional ..... Doug Jobses

Other

Prepare Communion .....Ferman Rosales

Congregational News This Week

Birthdays

Patsy Cope.....Mar.2  
Libby Jobses.....Mar. 4  
Josie Terry.....Mar. 6

Please get with Kelly Cannady if you would like a picture for the pictorial wall directory.

If you have any prayer requests, upcoming events to be announced, or updates/corrections please contact our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030 or email office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

## Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons  
Ron White

## Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism  
Lupe Escojido— Benevolence  
Doug Jobes—Safety, Men's Encouragement &  
Winter Youth Retreat  
Kevin Sheeran—Worship Organization and  
Communication  
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

## Our Minister

Cody McCoy

## Weekly Reading

He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord,  
and He will pay back what he has given.  
Proverbs 19:17 NKJV

## Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....9:00 A.M.  
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.  
Sunday Evening Worship.....5:00 P.M.  
Wednesday Bible Class.....7:00 P.M.

## Attendance Records

Week of February 23, 2025

A.M. Bible Class.....62  
A.M. Worship.....99  
P.M. Worship.....64  
Wednesday Worship.....67

*Financial information is located on the bulletin  
board in the hallway.*

## Supported Works

John & Carla Moore *Bible Land Passages*

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**midtown**  
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