

The Seven Nevers | Kevin Fitzgerald

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Preacher: Kevin Fitzgerald

[0:00] Good morning, Bethel Community Church. You know, the last time I was here, I was up here, you remember? It was like years ago when we did a study on the earthly kingdom.

! You remember that? I do want to caution you as you study eschatology. One new seminary student came home one day and his wife asked him how the class on eschatology went. He said, everybody was arguing, but for me, I'm not going to get upset. It's not like it's the end of the world. I want to thank you for having us.

Teddy called and said Frank was on the rotation and unfortunately couldn't be here this morning, so I am here in his place. I never did meet Frank. I'm sure he was a great guy, but we will see him. So you're leaving for two weeks to go down to Dayspring. Do you remember when we came back from Ecuador in 2000, we went with you for ten years in a row? To Dayspring, to the day camp, and we have great fond memories of that.

[1:03] And I do have an announcement for us old timers. For those who served at Dayspring before the renovation of the cabins, I don't know if you know this, but you have bonus eternal rewards?

You have double. You younger generation, we're back to regular rewards. Unless you stay in the speaker's cabin, that's triple rewards, I think. Open your Bibles, please, or if you're sophisticated like Moses and have the Scriptures on a tablet, please open to John chapter 4.

I have a title and a subtitle. The title is Embracing Certainty in an Age of Confusion. And the subtitle is The Seven Nevers of the Gospel of John.

Embracing Certainty in an Age of Confusion. The Seven Nevers of the Gospel of John. I think you'll agree with me that we live in an age of uncertainty.

Many live lives paralyzed with fear and worry and confusion. Is the next pandemic right around the corner? Is the stock market going to crash?

[2:17] Will my 401k be enough? Will Medicare and Social Security go bankrupt in my lifetime? Or will war break out in the Middle East?

Life is so unpredictable. You know, 70% of business leaders believe that uncertainty will be the dominant factor in the global economy in the next 10 years.

55% of startups cite market unpredictability as their top challenge. And to make things worse, spiritual leaders around the world in the church are adding to the uncertainty by presenting and offering up what I call a gospel of doubt.

A gospel of doubt. If someone is seeking eternal life or a believer is seeking assurance and security, uncertainty seems to be the only thing on the menu today.

Certainty, our 100% assurance of our salvation is not on the menu. Option one that is presented, I'll give you three. I'm sure there's more.

[3:33] Option one is you believe, but your struggles and failures prove you were never really saved, so you're a false professor. Option number two is you had it when you believed, but you lost it because of your subsequent sins and failure.

And the third one is kind of a new one. Your profession of faith is held in abeyance, put on hold as a present possession until your life has enough good works to demonstrate its reality.

And therefore, your final salvation, this is a big word now in coming out of certain camps of evangelical Christianity. Your final salvation, your final salvation then is determined by the life that follows your profession of faith.

In contrast to confusion and fear, Jesus offers us certainty in a world of confusion.

So let's begin by looking in John chapter 4 for the first of the nevers. But join me in prayer as we commit our time to the Lord.

[4:45] Father, thank you that we don't have to go through life wondering where we stand with you. You have given us light. Lord, I pray that we would bask, marinate ourselves in the light of your word.

Lord, I pray for the next two weeks as we go down, as they go down to day camp. Lord, I pray that it would be two weeks like never before.

That your spirit would work through the counselors and the cooks and the speakers. Lord, that many boys and girls would have their destiny changed in the next two weeks.

We commit them and this, the rest of our time today in Jesus' name. John chapter 4, you know the story well. It's the story of the woman at the well.

We're not going to go through it all. But we're briefly going to look at the seven nevers of the gospel of John. All coming, by the way, from the lips of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[5:53] And my prayer today is that they will provide for us a certain assurance as we journey through a world of uncertainty. For many of you, this will be nothing new.

But we are encouraged in the Bible to remember. As a matter of fact, when Moses was getting the second generation ready to go into the promised land, and you see the word remember multiple times in Deuteronomy.

It says, when you get in there and I bless your socks off, don't forget me. And Peter tells his readers, look, I'm paraphrasing here. I'm not giving you anything new, but I present this by way of remembrance.

And so as we look at this, for most of you, this is going to be remembrance. The first never is never thirst. This is the woman at the well.

You know, the woman came seeking water. And she knew it couldn't ultimately satisfy her because she'd have to come every day, every day. Just like us, we have to get water every day.

[6:59] But notice in John chapter 4, verse 14, we have our first never. Remember, I'm reading from the Christian Standard Bible. We're going to switch to the NIV once. Verse 14 says, But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again.

In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up in him for eternal life.

What's interesting here is she understands that Jesus is offering her something different.

Look at verse 15. Sir, the woman said to him, give me this water. Now watch. So that I won't get thirsty and come here to draw water.

She's starting to understand that what Jesus is offering her is going to ultimately satisfy her thirst. Give me this. I want it. Now go back to verse 10 of chapter 4.

And what we're going to see is Jesus gives her two conditions for her to have this living water.

Verse 10 says, If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, give me a drink, you would ask him and he would give you living water.

[8:18] So she must know, according to Jesus, she has to know two things to get this living water. The first one is she has to know that it is a gift. If you knew the gift of God, the woman must know that eternal life is a free gift.

Now if I had an opportunity to go on the world's highest mountain and have a megaphone that would reach the world and be translated into all languages, here is what I would say to the world.

I'm going to quote Romans 4, 4 and 5. I think it's from the Living Bible. The woman needed to understand that she could not merit or earn or work.

She needed to understand, and Jesus says, if you knew the gift of God. And then the second thing, she needed to know the giver.

She needed to know the gift. She needed to know the giver. If you knew the one saying to you. She needed to understand that he wasn't talking about Jesus that lives on the corner down in the barrio.

[9:44] This is the Messiah. To have this eternal water, this eternal life, she needed to know two things, the gift and the giver. Then Jesus reveals her identity.

And by the way, this is the first time in all the Gospels that Jesus reveals himself as the Messiah. And what I find interesting is, who did he pick to tell the first time?

This woman who's had five husbands and living with somebody that's not her husband. I find that very interesting. He chose her. Notice in verse 25, the woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming who is called Christ.

When he comes, he will explain everything to us. And now for the punchline. Jesus told her, imagine this, I, the one speaking to you, am he.

Imagine the wheels turning in the mind of this lady. Wait, what? You're the Messiah? This is important in light of the Gospel of Doubt.

[10:53] And I mention this is that, Notice that one sip of this water, One sip of the water, Equals, You receive the living water like a spring.

There's no sip and then waiting. One drink of living water equals immediate and irreversible eternal life.

It is a certainty that we can enjoy in our age of uncertainty. In other words, Jesus promises to satisfy our spiritual thirst, One drink, And you get it.

He promises that we will never thirst. Our second never, If you want to go to John chapter 6, please.

This is where I'm going to switch to the NIV, And it's also the same in the ESV.

In the CSB, It's, Will never go hungry. Sticking with my points, right? I have to have ever. John 6, 35, Jesus declared, I am the bread of life.

[12:05] Whoever comes to me will never go hungry. And whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. Did you notice that last line there?

The drinking equals believing. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. Now let me set the stage here. Jesus has recently fed the 5,000.

The crowd continues to follow him. They want more bread. I want you to look in John 6, Verse 26.

The crowd is looking for him. Jesus answered, Truly I tell you, You are looking for me. Not because you saw the sign, But because you ate the loaves and were filled.

Jesus exhorts them. Look at verse 27. Don't work for the food that perishes, But for the food that lasts for eternal life, Which the Son of Man will give you, Because God the Father has set his seal of approval on him.

[13:11] And if I may paraphrase, Verses 28 through 30, The crowd responds, Hey Jesus, Moses gave us, Moses gave our relatives bread in the wilderness for decades.

You've only done it once. Jesus responds in verse 32, Truly I tell you, Moses didn't give you the bread from heaven, But my Father gives you the true bread from heaven, For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven And gives life to the world.

And the crowd responds In verse 34. Then they said, Sir, give us this bread always. In other words, Do what Moses did. Don't give us the bread once.

Keep on coming. Give us this bread always. And so the second never, And by the way, This is the first of the seven I am's, Is, I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never go hungry. Isn't it just like Jesus? He's so kind. He takes everyday activities, Like drinking water, And eating bread, And he uses them to help us understand How to obtain eternal life.

[14:23] It's like taking a drink. It's like eating a piece of bread. One sip, One bite, And you're good to go. You'll notice in these passages, You don't need to go back For another piece of bread Or another drink of water.

And in this day of uncertainty, Brothers and sisters, No bread company, No bottled water company Can ever come close To what Jesus offers here. We will never thirst.

We'll never go hungry. Now let's stay in John 6 And go to our third never. Look at verse 37. I really like this one. Everyone the Father gives me Will come to me, And the one who comes to me, I will never cast out.

Music to our ears, right? Music to our ears. Bill Hull in his book, The Disciple Making Pastor, Estimates that upwards of 70% Of Christians around the world Struggle with security And assurance of their salvation.

It is by far the main view In the evangelical church. Matter of fact, I heard one seminary professor Who lived and worked in Eastern Europe said, If you believed in Once saved, Always saved in Eastern Europe, You are considered a heretic.

[15:45] And I will tell you, It is what I find In our culture, Our time in Ecuador. Very few people understand Once saved, Always saved.

As a matter of fact, You might have saw this In that little booklet I wrote. One day my colleague and I Were deep in the Amazon jungle Teaching at a Kichwa conference. And we were teaching The ABC's of the faith.

In the morning, We were teaching the security Of the believer. And how assurance is the birthright Of every believer. And at lunch, We were called in By the leaders. And they said, You have to stop teaching this.

We said, What are you talking about? Why do we have? And the response Just broke my heart. It's so sad. They said, Well, If you teach our people That they're eternally secure, They're going to stop Coming to church.

And they're going to stop Giving their money. They were holding Their congregation Over the flames of hell, Threatening them That if they didn't have Good attendance And good giving, That they would not be saved.

[16:49] We need to understand When you go down And you counsel at Dayspring Or the speaker speaks, We need to understand Exactly what Jesus Is promising To the person Who believes in him.

He is not promising Probationary salvation. He's not putting us On probation Or a wait and see. He is promising Immediate And irreversible Eternal life.

How could it be anyway? Any way other? Our eternal destiny Doesn't depend on our ups and downs Before, during, or after Our salvation. It depends on what Jesus Accomplished 2,000 years ago. That will never change.

When one believes in Jesus That person is accepted By God. They are as accepted By God As the people Who are already In heaven.

God has lived. I used to say, You know, God could look down The corridor Of your life, Which really isn't Theologically correct. He's eternal, So he's lived Every day of your life.

[17:56] He's been in Every day of your life Past, present, and future So there's never going to be A day where God goes Oh, oh, Calvin Man, if I knew You were going to do that I never would have Given you eternal life.

God is God already knows Every day of my life And what I will do All the boneheaded things And he still gives us Eternal life. Imagine how One's life would be different If they possessed The certain knowledge That God loves them And they are accepted By him forever.

Imagine the emotional stress That that would take Off of a person. So never thirst Never hunger Never be cast out. Please turn to John 8 For our fourth never.

John chapter 8 And look at verse 12. And to appreciate This blessing Keep in mind That the 7 plus billion People on planet earth Exists in the realm of darkness.

Remember what Paul said In Colossians To the Colossians That Jesus rescued us From the domain of what? The domain of darkness And has translated us Into the kingdom of the son He loves.

[19:10] Most of the people On the planet Live in the domain Of darkness. And Jesus comes along And in John chapter 8 Verse 12 Jesus says He's at the Feast of Tabernacles Right?

He stands up And he says I am The light of the world Anyone who follows me Will never walk in darkness But will have The light of life.

So each night At the festival of the tabernacles Except for the Sabbath Those that attended Waited for the lighting Of the The special lighting Of the festive golden lamps Of the tabernacle And the purpose Of the lighting of the lamps Was for Israel To remember How they went across The desert at night Led by the pillar of fire And Jesus stands up Jesus You know This Unknown carpenter And he says I'm the light of the world And when he says this This would have been Like a stick of Spiritual dynamite Going off in the ears Of the Pharisees Like what?

What did he say? And Jesus goes beyond The idea of light And claims to be Its source You see The light of the world For the Pharisees Or any Orthodox Jew Was considered A role Exclusively Of

God And so when Jesus Equates himself With God He blows The minds Of the Pharisees He was identifying Himself As the God Who gave Israel The actual feast Of the tabernacle He is the light Of the world Now notice This is a discipleship Verse Anyone who Follows Me We know We don't earn Eternal life By following Jesus That is a discipleship Issue Those who Apprentice under Jesus Will not walk In darkness In their experience Just as God Provided light At night For the people That cross The desert Those of us Who believe

In Jesus He gives us Light To live our lives Today In this dark world Many people Go through life In the dark Imagine what They're missing They have no idea How we got here Oh it was millions Of years of evolution Oh it was This or that We have the light We know how We got here And then most people Look around Why is there Poison ivy And cancer And death And so forth We know The fall Right I don't like The word fall It gives the idea That Adam and Eve Kind of Oops slipped No this was A rebellious jump Most people Go through life And they never Know what the Solution to the Darkness is Our eyes Have been Enlightened We know What the solution Is You're going to Preach it The next two Weeks Down at Dayspring And sadly Most people Live and die And don't know

[22:21] Where they're headed You have that light Imagine the blessing That we have We're now walking In darkness We know how we got here We know what went wrong We know what went wrong We know what the solution is And we know where we're headed Jesus provides this light To us Imagine how this impacts Your family Your marriage Your children To have this light We will never thirst We will never hunger We will never be cast out We will never walk In darkness I'm going to skip Over number five And do five and seven In a minute But number six Please turn to John chapter 10 For our next never John chapter 10 And we want to look At verse 28 A verse very familiar With everyone John chapter 10 Jesus is speaking And he says

In verse 28 Speaking of his sheep Number six Is never Perish I give them Eternal life And they will never Perish No one will snatch Them out of my hand So John gives us A negative And a positive The positive is I give them Eternal life The negative is They will never Perish You guys have Facebook accounts You can be Unfriended on Facebook Can't you God will never Unfriend you You will never Be cast out And the idea That God would Use hell To motivate His children To godly living Is foreign To the scriptures It's a good Motivator To believe in Jesus The bible Teaches that It is the Birthright of Every believer To be assured Of their salvation From the very Moment they Believe in Jesus And this

Assurance is Not based on Any worthiness In ourselves Either before During or after We believe One's performance Has no role Assurance of Salvation Is the Essence Of saving Faith What does That mean What are you Believing in Jesus for A good marriage Good finance No you're Believing his Promise to Give you Probationary Life Or eternal Life If it's not Eternal it Has the wrong Name Right But imagine The positive Impact it will Have on our Lives You're not Going to have To go through Life Seeking God's love You can go Through life Established in The foundation That God Already loves You and live Your life on That foundation You can go Through life Not having to Waste emotional Energy trying To please God that

Someday he'll Open the gates Of heaven for You No You can go Through life Knowing and Living from This foundation That you Already have Eternal life And had it Since you Believe The best that Life offers Us and you Know this if You do a An unscientific Survey anywhere You work or Live and you Ask people how Do you know You're going to Go to heaven What is the Most common Answer well I hope so That's the best This world can Offer is that Okay for you Jesus offers Us a no So Life And then The final Two We'll start In John 8 Look at Verse 51 The two Are The two Final ones Are never See death And never Die Never see Death And never Die John 8 51 Truly I Tell you That's code Word when Jesus says This is like What I'm Telling you Is very Important And sit Up And pay Attention Truly I Tell you If anyone Keeps my Word He will Never see Death Now in the Context of the Gospel of John the Expression if Anyone keeps My word Refers to Belief in Jesus promise Of eternal Life You look in The original It's the word Accepts You accept The truth That Jesus Tells you You believe The promise Of Jesus For eternal Life You will Never see Death And then The last Never Is in John 11 We're at The tomb Of Lazarus Obviously Martha and Mary are Pretty upset They kind Of take Jesus to Task Hey if You had A bread Here my Brother Wouldn't Have died And then He gives Those two Famous Verses Look at John 11 26 Everyone Who lives

And believes In me Will never Die And these Two phrases Is obviously Will never
[27:25] See death And will never Die Refer to Spiritual death So we know
All people Die physically Except for The rapture Generation And yet
Believers Will never Experience Spiritual death In other words They will
never Be separated From god In the lake Of fire Which the Bible Calls the
Second death Now I know This is familiar With us But let this Overwhelm
you Afresh Let this Hit your Ears Afresh You will Will never Die You will
Never Be Separated Now we Know that All people I believe From conception
On will Exist Forever But where They will Exist And the Life They will
Exist In the Future Will be Hugely Different For believers And
unbelievers And so in an Age of Uncertainty These two Statements Will
never See death And will Never die For me I think They are the Clearest

And most Positive Powerful Declarations Of eternal Security In all the Scriptures Jesus says Listen
You believe In me Here's the Deal You will Never see Death You will Never die Ever since I
became A senior Citizen I've been Receiving Mailings From funeral Homes Have you Been getting
Those You know What I'm Talking About I'm Serious They want You to Come in And you Sit down
With them And you Can pre Arrange Your funeral How the Service will Go What hymns You want
Who's going To give The liturgy And where You want To be Buried Now I Think it's Pretty cool It
kind of Takes the Pressure off Those final Days You can Do it Or not But imagine What Jesus Is
offering He's not Offering us An opportunity To rearrange
Our funeral He's given Us the Opportunity To wrap Up the Details of Where we're Going to Spend
Our eternal Destiny Imagine That We can Take care Of this Before And this Goes Totally Contrary
To what The world Believes Right I was Raised To believe That Jesus Came At Christmas And was
Born And grew Up And died And his Death Opens the Gates of Heaven But to Actually make It
through It's on Who It's on Me On my Works And all That And Jesus Says no You don't Understand
I'm giving You something Better than A funeral Home I'm giving You the Opportunity To get This
nail Down So you Can go Through Life Walking In the Light Knowing Where you Stand with Me I
believe

The greatest Gift A human Being Could possess Is not A boat Or a Mansion It is the Certain
Knowledge That God Loves you And you Are accepted By him Forever Now God takes Sin
seriously And so Should we Serious Mature Christians Deal with Their sins But dealing With your
Sins is an Issue of Discipleship In this World We will Have Tribulation Right But imagine Going
through This uncertain World Having The seven Certain Nevers Nevers That Jesus Offers us In the
Gospel Of John Never Thirst Never Hunger Never Be Cast Out Never Walk In Darkness Never
Perish Never See Death And Never Die

Gone the lottery of the universe. God is our Father. We're never going to see death and we're going
to be in His kingdom with Him forever with our brothers and sisters.

[32:02] When we're in the kingdom, we're going to look at that \$900
million lottery like it was pebbles on the side of a road. Let me close
with two quotes.

The first one comes from G.K. Chesterton. He says, unless the gospel sounds like a gun going off,
it has not been uttered at all. I love that.

Being a gun guy. When we hear the gospel, it should be like a gunshot. Bang! Whoa, what was
that? That's unusual. And then the last one is E.W. Borham.

The cross never finds its rightful place in a man's heart until it takes his breath away. My prayer is
that we hear this this morning and I know it's nothing new, but it takes our breath away afresh.
The promises of Jesus. Never thirst spiritually. Never hunger. Never be cast out. Never walk in
darkness. Never perish.

[33:08] Never see death. And never die. Let's pray. Lord, we certainly
don't deserve this. Matter of fact, we deserve the total opposite.

We thank you for your amazing grace. Lord, thank you that you have saved us in a line where we
get good teaching. Where we hear that eternal life is forever and can never be lost.

Where we hear that assurance is the birthright of every believer. Lord, we leave here today with
grateful hearts. And we thank you, Father, for the high cost that you paid so that we could have
these seven nevers.

We thank you, Lord, that you went to the cross. You had the power to save yourself, but you stayed there and absorbed the punishment for our sins. We thank you and we pray in your name.
Amen.