

1 What's the issue?

In the gospel for this Sunday, Jesus says these words:

- "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish;" (John 10:28 NIV)
- "καὶ γὰρ δίδωμι αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ ἔ μη ἀπόλωνται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα"

"They shall never perish" is a fine translation. But, it's a good example of why pastors learn the original languages and why they need to strive to bring them out in their teaching and preaching. The construction (in greek) here is called a *Strong Future Negation*.¹ It carries with it the idea that what is suggested will never happen—not now—not ever. One of my professors used to string along a couple 'evers' into the translation to convey the meaning. In this case, the translation would be: "And they will never ever ever ever be destroyed."

A very forceful way of saying your point! What's even more interesting is that Jesus could have stopped with just that statement. But he doesn't. He adds on the word "forever."

2 What's the point?

Jesus rose from the dead. And the effect of that is ever-so-clear. We will never ever ever be destroyed now. And even when we die, we will not be destroyed then. For we will be with Jesus, our Good Shepherd forever. No guilt. No sin. No shame. No darkness. No chill. No tears...forever.

¹4. marker of reinforced negation, in combination w. ἔ, μή has the effect of strengthening the negation (Kühner-G. II 221–23; Schwyzer II 317; Mlt. 187–92 [a thorough treatment of NT usage]; B-D-F §365; RLudwig: D. prophet. Wort 31 '37, 272–79; JLee, NovT 27, '85, 18–23; B-D-F §365: "μή," BDAG, 646.