

The Perseverance of the Saints

Jer 31:3; “I have loved you with an everlasting love”

Definition: **The Westminster Confession of Faith**

Chapter XVII

The Perseverance of the Saints

I. They, whom God has accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

II. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ, the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace; from all which arises also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

III. Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins; and, for a time, continue therein; whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve His Holy Spirit, come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded; hurt and scandalize others and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.

Scripture References:

John 3:16, John 4:13-14, John 5:24, John 6:37-40, John 6:47-58, John 10:27-29,
John 11:25-26, John 12:25-26, John 14:1-4, John 18:9, I Cor 1:1-9, Jude 24

The Perseverance of the Saints

Introduction: Jer 31:3; "I have loved you with an everlasting love"

- loved ones, I begin our survey of "The Doctrines of Grace" with the study of the historical doctrine of the early church "**The Perseverance of the Saints**"
- I've chosen to begin our study with "**The Perseverance of the Saints**" because all the other doctrines of salvation stand or fall on this doctrine
- the doctrine of foreknowledge and predestination, the doctrine of election, the doctrine of regeneration, the doctrine of justification
- and of course the doctrine of sanctification along with the doctrine of glorification
- all these "Doctrines of Grace" would be called into question, if there was no eternity of salvation
- thus, this doctrine of "**The Perseverance of the Saints**" in more modern times has been called Eternal Security
- now, in essence the doctrine teaches that if you have saving faith, you will never lose it
- maybe you've heard it said "that once saved, always saved"
- now that's true
- but, the doctrine of perseverance does not rest on our ability to persevere, though we will, but rather, it rests on the promises of God to preserve us
- turn with me please to **Phil 1:6**
- beloved, Paul was "**confident**" that God through Jesus Christ would preserve him until his day of "**glorification**"
- in other words, Paul believed in the eternity of his salvation because his salvation was being preserved for him by Christ

- therefore, I prefer to title this historical doctrine **“The Preservation of the Saints”**
- yet, it is true that the genuine believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will persevere in the faith until the end
- thus, it was rightly titled by the men who penned it **“The Perseverance of the Saints”**
- that took place in the year 1644, at the famous church the “Westminster Abbey” in London England
- the men present were some of the greatest biblical scholars, theological minds, ministers of the United Kingdom at that time
- men like John Owens, Thomas Manton, Richard Baxter, John Usher, James Goodwin, Jeremiah Burroughs, and others
- the great Puritans, lovers of God and lovers of God’s Word
- their purpose was to study the Scriptures and pen a Christian creed, a statement of doctrine, that outlines the teachings of Scripture
- under the title **“The Perseverance of the Saints”** we find this declaration: “They whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.”
- loved ones, they were correct
- they were correct to recognize that no true believer “can totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace”
- now, this is supported by many, many Scriptures
- the men who penned this declaration didn’t have to look far to support their statement with Scripture
- turn with me please to the Gospel of John where “The Doctrines of Grace” were first introduced by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself
- and as you turn to the Gospel of John, please take note to all the references to the eternity of the believer clearly taught by Jesus

- John 3:16, John 4:13-14, John 5:24, John 6:37-40, John 6:47-58, John 10:27-29, John 11:25-26, John 12:25-26, John 18:9
- beloved, “most assuredly” in other words ‘without exception’ saving faith cannot fail
- why ??? because saving faith is a Divine gift of God, Eph 2:8-9, therefore, persevering faith is also a Divine power of God
- loved ones, if preservation is a human effort, it would fail
- but, the preservation of the saints is a Divine power of the Triune God
- read attached
- friends, our salvation is eternal, that’s why it is the most important component, the most important link in the chain of salvation
- break that link, deny that link, than your salvation is no longer eternal
- but, that would be a distortion of Scripture
- Jesus Christ clearly established that the entirety of your salvation is eternal
- you cannot have eternal life that is not eternal
- if it can be lost, it is not eternal
- so, I’ll say it again, the idea that salvation can be lost is a distortion of Scripture
- any idea of salvation that leaves out the eternality of the saint is a distortion of Scripture
- any idea that leaves out the preservation of the saints is a distortion of Scripture
- we cannot escape it
- turn with me please to I Cor 1:1-9
- in what we just read, I want to bring to your attention the word “confirmed”
- the word “confirmed” is used here in the verb form denoting ‘the action by another’

- the word literally means; ‘to make secure’
- God is ‘the action to make secure’ all believers
- to make them eternally secure
- I said to you earlier that all “The Doctrines of Grace” stand or fall with the doctrine of **“The Perseverance of the Saints”**
- look once again at **I Cor 1:1-9**
- **vs. 1; “Paul, called to be an apostle”** that’s the doctrine of election realized at the time of Paul’s calling
- notice the next phrase in **vs. 1; “. through the will of God”** that’s the doctrine of foreknowledge and predestination
- notice **vs. 2; “. to those who are sanctified in Christ”** that’s the doctrine of sanctification
- look a again at **vs. 2; “. called to be saints”** that’s the doctrine of election again realized at the time of our calling
- look at **vs. 4; “. for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus”** that’s the doctrine of predestination again
- **vs. 8; “who will also confirm you to the end”** that’s the doctrine of **“The Perseverance of the Saints”**
- and yet, notice Paul’s emphasis of the security of the saint in **vs. 9; “God is faithful by whom you were called”**
- you see, Paul wanted the reader to have no misunderstanding that the believer’s eternity of his salvation was secured by **“God (who) is faithful by whom you were called”**
- take away that security and all the other “Doctrines of Grace” fall like a house of cards
- loved ones, we can clearly see that Scripture teaches that the true believer who “has been accepted in His Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.”

- turn with me please to **John 14:1-4**
- friends, that is your guaranteed promise; **“Let not your heart be troubled”** because where Christ goes **“. (He) will come again and receive you to Himself; that where (He) is, there you may be also”**
- if you’ve believed in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior
- if you’ve placed your trust in Him for your salvation from sins
- eternal life awaits you, never to be lost
- because, in the chain of salvation rests the doctrine of **“The Perseverance of the Saints”**
- that’s why Jesus’ half-brother Jude has the anthem of praise to Christ found at the end of his epistle
- I’d like to invite you turn with me to Jude 24 and as we read together this paean of praise, this outpouring of an adoring heart for Christ, notice the claim to Christ, for the **perseverance** of faith