

The Perseverance of the Saints

Further Evidence

Introduction: Matthew 24:13; “. he who endures to the end shall be saved.”

- the “P” of “TULIP” as already mentioned stands for perseverance
- but, like other terms represented by the acronym “TULIP” perseverance is somewhat misleading
- it suggests that the continuing of faith and obedience is accomplished by the believer alone
- indeed the believer does persevere in faith and godliness, but this is due to the gracious divine work of God on his behalf
- the perseverance is really preservation
- we persevere because we are preserved by God
- you see, if left to our own strength, none of us would persevere
- it’s only because we are preserved by God’s grace are we able to persevere at all
- thus, the doctrine of perseverance has to do with the permanency of our salvation
- so, here’s how it works, the verb “to save” appears in the Bible in various tenses
- that is, we have been saved, are being saved, and “. shall be saved”
- in other words, there is a past, a present, and a future dimension of salvation
- our salvation began in eternity past, is realized in real time, and it looks forward to heaven
- that’s why the N.T. speaks of “. enduring to the end” promising that “. he who endures to the end shall be saved.” Matt 24:13
- now, it’s sad to say that some Christians believe that a Christian can have assurance about his or her present state of salvation

- that they may be confident that at the moment he or she is in a state of grace
- yet, lack assurance that he or she will continue steadfast in that state
- you see, they believe it is possible to fall away from grace and to lose the salvation one presently enjoys
- but, the Reformed view, the Calvinistic view, believe that we can have assurance not only in our present state, but also in our continued state and future state
- in our permanent state
- because this assurance for the future rests in the doctrine of **“Perseverance of the Saints”**
- now, let’s look at this from another angle

I. The Merits of Grace:

- friends, the grounds of our justification is based on the merit of grace
- merit of no mere temporary value but of eternal value and efficacy
- why ??? because the merit of grace perseveres in our behalf
- let's take a look at election
- our election is likewise in Christ
- and thereby there is absolutely no danger or even the slightest possibility that Christ will lose His own election
- beloved, let's break away from the chase
- the question is, will Christ lose those whom God has elected in Him from eternity past ???
- the answer, absolutely not !!!
- John 6:37-40; "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."
- John 10:27-29; "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."
- friends, it is impossible for God's elect to fully and finally fall away from a state of grace
- but, it is possible for a Christian to fall into grievous sin for a season
- Scripture is replete with examples of believers who fall into grievous sin
- how about David

- he committed every conceivable sin because of one sin, the sin of pride II Sam 11-12
- you see, David was the King of Israel, and he decided he wasn't going to go to war that particular spring
- because, he was the King of Israel
- and look at the season of sin he found himself in
- how about the prodigal son, leaving his father's homestead to spend a season squandering his inheritance
- the son found himself wallowing with the swine of the world Luke 15:11-32
- how about Peter, he denied his blessed Lord three times Luke 22:54-62
- yet, Peter exhorted believers to seek the true assurance promised in the Gospel
- II Peter 1:10; "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure"
- you see, these men fell head strong into grievous sin for a season
- but, their fall was neither full or final
- they were restored to repentance and grace
- loved ones, the Apostle Peter calls us to pursue assurance with ". diligence"
- why ? ? ? because it is the assurance of our election which translates into an assurance of salvation
- in other words, all the elect are saved
- so, if we can be sure that we are the elect, then we can also be sure that we are and will be saved
- saved in the past, in the present, and in the future
- yes, true believers can have radical falls, but, such falls are only temporary and not permanent

II. The Apostates of Grace:

- now, I want to stop here and say that all of us have known people who have made a profession of faith and exhibited zeal for Christ
- only to repudiate their profession and turn away from Christ
- what should we make of this ???
- may I say, that their profession was not genuine in the first place
- they professed Christ with their mouths and then later committed a real apostasy from that profession
- you see, they are like the seed that fell in shallow soil and sprang up quickly, only to wither and die [Matt 13:5-6](#)
- the seed never really took root
- they gave some outward signs of conversion, but their conversion was not genuine
- they are like those who honor Christ with their lips but their hearts are far from Him [Matt 15:7-8](#)
- beloved, their faith was spurious from the beginning
- into this category of people we can assign Judas
- the one whom Jesus declared was of the devil from the beginning
- the Apostle John said of these people; [“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”](#) 1 John 2:19
- John acknowledges that some did leave the company of believers
- but, they were apostates
- John declared that they were really not [“. of us”](#)

- and their departure “. manifested” or revealed their true state
- and yet, those who departed are contrasted with those who are anointed by God
- those who have God’s Word abiding in them
- and John makes it clear if that Word truly abides in them, then they will abide in Christ and receive the promise of eternal life
- I John 2:24; “Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.”
- friends, the true believer does not persevere through the power of his own will
- no, God’s preserving grace makes our perseverance both possible and actual
- because once again, God’s decree is immutable
- in other words, His sovereign purpose to save His elect from the foundation of the world is **not** frustrated by our weakness
- now, if the Bible were to say nothing about perseverance, what it says about God’s electing grace would be sufficient to convince us of “The Doctrine of Perseverance”
- but, the Bible is not silent on these matters, declaring clearly and often that God will finish what He has begun in us
- Phil 1:6; “He who began a good work in you will complete it”
- note that Paul puts the emphasis on God and not man
- in other words, what God has started, God will finish
- what God begins, God finishes
- because His work is not left dangling as to what to do
- God’s not a victim but God is the Victor
- and you and I are His victorious people because of the Victor

- you see, God’s preservation of the saints is not based on a mere abstract deduction from His decree of election
- it rests on His free love
- a love that is abiding, meaning continuing
- a love that nothing can sever
- turn with me please to [Rom 8:31-36](#)
- what Paul is doing here is amplifying the general statement he will make next, that “. we are more than conquerors”
- turn with me please to [Rom 8:37-39](#)
- this love is enduring and permanent, and we persevere in grace because God perseveres in His love towards us
- turn with me please to [Rom 5:8-11](#), [Eph 1:15-20](#), [I Thes 2:13](#), [II Thes 2:13-17](#), [II Tim 2:8-12](#), [Titus 1:1-2](#), [I Pet 1:3-5a](#)
- loved ones, in every one of these passages God’s divine power is behind the believer’s perseverance
- but, to keep “**The Perseverance of the Saints**” quite simple, the doctrine rests on God’s promises of salvation
- we must remember that all human beings are covenant breakers, breaking promises, violating oaths, and failing to fulfill vows
- but, unlike fallen humanity, God is an absolute covenant keeper
- He never breaks vows
- He never breaks oaths
- He never breaks promises
- because He is the Supreme Promise Keeper

In Closing:

- if the preservation of our salvation depends on what believers themselves do or do not do, then their salvation is only as secure as their faithfulness
- which provides no security at all
- now, according to that view, believers must protect by their own human power what Christ began by His divine power
- to counteract such hopelessness, Paul assured the Ephesian Church with these comforting words; “I pray that the eyes of your understanding be enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance (for) the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places” Eph 1:18-20
- Paul’s prayer was that we as believers would be aware of the security that we now have and will have in Christ forever
- a security that does not depend on our own feeble efforts
- but, on the “. exceeding greatness of (God’s) power toward us”
- thus, our hope is not in ourselves but in our great God, who is faithful
- David declared that the Lord’s “. faithfulness reaches to the skies” Psa 36:5
- Jeremiah praised God by proclaiming; “. great is Thy faithfulness” Lam 3:23
- the writer of Hebrews proclaimed; “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.” Heb 10:23
- you see, our ability to hold fast is founded upon the Lord’s faithfulness, not our own
- let’s turn once again to Jude 24-25