

The Doctrines of Grace #5
The Perseverance of the Saints
Job 17:9

Introduction:

1. Review the preceding doctrines of grace
2. Wouldn't it be silly if the Lord chose to save some people, then sent Jesus to die for them, then sent the Holy Spirit to draw them, but they somehow lost their salvation and went to hell anyway?
3. God will preserve His people and because of this true believers will persevere

I. Preservation of the Saints

A. What It Means

1. God preserves us
2. Believers are kept and guarded by God so that no one can snatch them out of God's hand
3. Preservation can be defined as that "continuous operation of the Holy Spirit in the believer, by which the work of divine grace that is begun in the heart is continued and brought to completion."
4. Some call this "eternal security of the believer" – once saved, always saved
5. Arminians teach just the opposite
 - a) *A saved person can lose his salvation and go to hell*
 - b) *They believe "in again" then "out again," now saved, now lost*
 - c) *First a child of God then a child of the devil*
 - d) *Now spiritually alive, then spiritually dead*
 - e) *Who can tell what his final state will be*
6. In the natural realm, God created and He also upholds His creation - If the lord should withdraw His upholding power for a second, the universe would go crashing back into nonexistence
7. This is true in the spiritual realm as well
 - a) *God saves us and keeps us spiritually alive every moment*
 - b) *If He should withdraw His Holy Spirit from us for a single moment, we too would instantly crash back into our natural, lost state*

B. Where It is Found in the Bible

1. Jn 6:39 – No One Slips Through the Cracks

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

- a) *The ones that the Father gave the Son shall not be lost*
- b) *None will be lost in the end*

2. Jn 10:27-30 – We are safe in God's Hand

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and my Father are one.

- a) *The People*
 - (1) They are sheep
 - (2) Ones Jesus came to die for
- b) *Their Practice*
 - (1) They hear his voice
 - (2) They follow him
 - (3) They do not fall from grace or go back to the old life of sin
 - (4) They persevere because of Phil 2:13
- c) *Their Provision*
 - (1) Eternal life
 - (2) This is a gift – Rom 6:23
 - (3) It is a present possession
- d) *Their Promise*
 - (1) They shall never perish
 - (2) Even if they sin
 - (3) The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin
- e) *Their Protection*
 - (1) No one shall pluck them out of my Father's hand
 - (2) God can preserve us safe in his hand

3. Eph 1:13-14 – Sealed with the Spirit

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

- a) *Believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit*
- b) *A seal guarantees the genuineness of the object*
- c) *A seal indicates ownership, protection*

4. 1Pet 1:4-5 – Our Inheritance is Reserved for Us in Heaven
4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
 - a) *Believers have an inheritance in heaven reserved for us*
 - b) *The weak Christian knows that the inheritance is there waiting but he thinks he is too weak to make it there*
 - c) *To fend off such an idea Peter says in vs 5 that we are kept (guarded) by the power of God*

II. Perseverance of the Saints

A. What It Means

1. Preservation is what God does
2. Perseverance is what the believer does
3. Believers will persevere in trusting Christ as Savior.
 - a) *They will not turn on and off*
 - b) *They keep believing forever*
 - c) *They will always be saved*
4. What does the London Confession of Faith say?

All those that have this precious faith wrought in them by the Spirit, can never finally nor totally fall away; seeing the gifts of God are without repentance; so that He still begets and nourisheth in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality; and though many storms and floods arise, and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock, which by faith they are fastened upon; not withstanding, through unbelief, and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of this light and love, be clouded and overwhelmed for a time; yet God is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God unto salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraven upon the palms of His hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.

B. Where It Is Found in the Bible

1. 1Jn 2:19 – Some Didn't Continue
19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.
 - a) *The believer is responsible to persevere or continue*
 - b) *Those who are truly saved will persevere*

2. Jn 8:31- True Disciples Continue
 - 31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;
3. Heb 3:6, 14 – We are to Hold Fast
 - 6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.
 - 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;
4. 2 Tim 4:7 - Paul is a Good Example
 - 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
5. One of the marks of the early church was steadfastness
 - a) *Ac 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*
 - b) *Ac 2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

III. Traditional Objections

A. What About Those Who are Saved then Apostatize?

1. We all know people who at one time expressed a faith in Christ.
 - a) *They went to church, read God's Word, prayed and seemed to be genuine believers*
 - b) *Something happened and gradually they departed from the faith until today they will have nothing to do with spiritual things*
 - c) *Doesn't this prove that there is no perseverance of the saints?*
2. Suppose that this person is a real Christian
 - a) *Perseverance does not mean that Christians are sinless*
 - b) *Remember the adultery and murder by David?*
 - c) *Don't forget the denials of Peter*
 - d) *At times we all backslide and are not as close to the Lord as we once were*
 - e) *If this person is truly a believer, then God chastens His own and God will bring him back, or take him out of this world*
3. Another explanation is that this person was not truly saved after all, even though it looked like it – Matt 7:22-23 ←
 - a) *Judas preached the gospel, healed the sick and performed other miracles, yet was not really saved*
 - b) *Some seed will fall on shallow ground and sprout for a time then the sun will scorch it and it will die. Some will hear an evangelistic message, become emotionally aroused, respond to the invitation and in a few months not even remember accepting Christ as Savior*

B. Won't This Doctrine Cause People to Sin More?

1. If God's people believe that "once saved, always saved" is true, then why not do anything they want?
2. Why not live it up and sin and sin?
3. Someone who thinks like this demonstrates that he is not saved
4. The Holy Spirit will never lead a true believer to do this
5. The same repentance and sorrow for sin that he had when he was saved, will be present when he sins during the Christian life
6. Rom 6:14 – "Sin will not have dominion over him"
7. I sin more than I want.

Conclusion:

1. The eternal security of the believer is one of the grandest of Biblical teachings
2. Let no one rob you of the joy of knowing that you are saved forever
3. How good it is to be able to commit your life to Christ, and to know that as soon as you do you will always be saved and will be guarded by the power of God unto the full salvation to be revealed when Christ returns
4. Praise the Father for His electing love, praise the Son for His atoning death, praise the Holy Spirit for His irresistible work
5. Praise God for preserving us until the end.

Mt 7:22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.