

# Kept by God

## The Perseverance of the Saints

### What Does it Not Mean?

- We are always kept from falling into sin.
- All who profess Christ are secure and will persevere.

### What Does it Mean?

- Historical views
  - Roman Catholic – genuine salvation can be forfeited by mortal sin.
  - Arminian – genuine salvation can be lost by willful sin.
    - John Wesley; Methodists; Nazarenes; Pentecostals; Assemblies of God.
  - Reformed – God preserves those that are truly saved in perseverance to the end.
    - Augustine; Calvin; Spurgeon

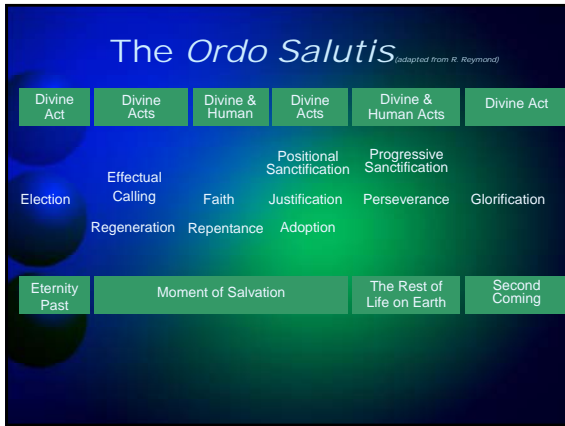
### What Does it Mean?

- Some Definitions
  - Berkhof: “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.”
  - Grudem: “all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again.”

### What Does it Mean?

- Westminster: “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. 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 ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof. Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalence 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.

### How Does it Happen?



### The Divine Responsibility

- Ps. 37:23-24 - The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.
- [John 6:37-40](#)
- [John 10:28-29](#)
- [Rom. 5:8-10](#)
- [Rom. 8:30-39](#)

### The Divine Responsibility

- Rom. 11:29 - the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.
- 1 Cor. 1:8-9 – [God] will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Eph. 1:13-14 – In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation— having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.
- Phil. 1:6 - *I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.
- Heb. 7:25 - He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.
- 1 Pet. 1:5 – who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

### The Human Responsibility

- 1 Pet. 1:5
  - By God – the cause
  - Through faith – the instrument

### What Do The Problem Passages Mean?

- The Christian is secure only if he perseveres in faith to the end.
  - Matt. 24:13 - "But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.
  - John 8:31 - Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine;
  - John 15:6 - "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up, and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.
  - 1 Cor. 15:1-2 - I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.
  - Col. 1:22-23 - He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach-- if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard.

### What Do The Problem Passages Mean?

- The Hebrews Warning Passages
  - [Heb. 6:4-6](#)
  - [Heb. 10:26-31](#)

## What Do Those Problems Passages Mean?

- Some passages seem to imply that true Christians may desert the faith and be eternally damned.
  - Matt. 13:20-22 - "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no *firm* root in himself, but is *only* temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.
  - Matt. 24:10, 12 - "At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.
  - 1 Tim. 1:19 - keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

## What Do Those Problems Passages Mean?

- Some passages seem to imply that true Christians may desert the faith and be eternally damned.
  - 1 Tim. 4:1 - the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.
  - 2 Tim. 4:10 - Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.
  - 2 Pet. 2:20-22 - if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire."

## 1 John 2:19

"They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us."

## What Do I Do with It?

- Let this doctrine be a source of comfort, strength, and encouragement.
- Be diligent to continue to obey the Scripture.
- Read and heed the warnings of Scripture.
- Pray for and evangelize those who profess Christ but who live year after year without signs of spiritual life or who walk away from the faith.