

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS – 3RD PART

(To the saints at Westboro Baptist on June 17, 2018)

*God's election is the ground
Of our hope to persevere;
On this rock your building found,
And preserve your title clear.
Infidels may laugh;
Pharisees gainsay and rail;
Here's your tenure (keep it safe) --
God's elect can never fail!*

- Joseph Hart's hymn

This doctrine of grace, the saints' final perseverance in grace to glory is, that those who are truly regenerated, effectually called, and really converted, and internally sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God, shall persevere in grace to the end, and shall be everlastingly saved; or shall never finally and totally fall, so as to perish everlastingly. On February 18, 2018, and April 22, 2018, I provided sermons on this topic, and I recommend that you read those again. Today, with the Lord's help, I hope to speak about this doctrine as shown from God's purposes and decrees, his promises, his gracious acts and his love.

God's purposes and decrees cannot be frustrated and are always accomplished, and therefore we can have great boldness in our belief in the preservation and perseverance of the saints.

The final perseverance of the saints may be concluded from the purposes and decrees of God; which are never frustrated, and are always accomplished. See for example **Isaiah 14:24, 27**. "*The Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?*" or make it void, and of no effect? And "*his hand is stretched out,*" to execute his purposes, "*and who shall turn it back*" from doing the thing he is resolved to do? As he has "*thought, so shall it come to pass*"; and as he has "*purposed, it shall stand.*" There are thousands of devices in the hearts of men and devils. (See, e.g., **Job 5:12**, **Psalm 33:10**, **Proverbs 19:21**, **Ecclesiastes 7:29** ("*Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.*" Inventions=devices), and **2 Corinthians 2:11**). **Proverbs 19:21**: "*There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.*" They can never counteract, nor undermine the decrees of God. **Isaiah 46:10** "*Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*" His "*counsel shall stand,*" every purpose of his, and particularly his *purpose according to election of grace* (**Romans 9:11, 11:5**); which stands not upon the foot of "*works*" (**Romans**

11:6), but upon the will "*of him that calleth*" (**Romans 9:11**), which is unalterable and irreversible. "*The election hath obtained it,*" (**Romans 11:7**) or the elect, in all ages, have obtained *righteousness* (**Romans 4**), *life* (**John 17:2**), and *salvation* (**1 Peter 1:9**); it is not possible they should be deceived (**Matthew 24:24**); nor can any charge be laid against them by law or justice (**Romans 8:33**), and therefore they must be saved. Election is an ordination of men to eternal life (**Acts 13:48**), and therefore they shall never die the second death (**Revelation 2:11 and 20:6**); it is an appointment of them to salvation (**1 Thessalonians 5:9**), and therefore they shall be saved. They are chosen to obtain the glory of Christ (**2 Timothy 2:10**), through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth (**2 Thessalonians 2:13**); and accordingly they are sanctified by the Spirit (**Romans 15:16**), and do believe in Christ (**Philippians 1:29**), who is the truth (**John 14:6**), and shall be glorified (**Romans 8:30**); for between their predestination and glorification, there is an inseparable connection; "**Whom he did predestinate...them he also glorified.**" (**Romans 8:29-30**) "*(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)* It was said unto her, *The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*" (**Romans 9:11-13**). This is what offends unregenerate men when we preach on our signs that "God Hates Fags": These words testify to God's purposes and decrees which are infrustrable and always accomplished. Visit the Westboro Baptist Church on the world wide web at www.godhatesfags.com for more gospel preaching, instruction and learning.

God's promises are sure and yea and amen, so we know the preservation and perseverance of the saints is sure and yea and amen.

The argument in favor of the saints' final perseverance, receives great strength from the promises of God, which are sure, and are all yea and amen in Christ. **2 Corinthians 1:20**: "*For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*" His promises are always fulfilled; not one of the good things God has promised has ever failed. (See, e.g. **Joshua 21:45, 23:10, 23:14; 1 Kings 8:24, Ezra 1:1, Lamentations 2:17, Daniel 4:33, Matthew 1:22-23, 2:15, 2:17, 2:23, 4:14, 8:17, 12:17, 13:14, 26:56, 27:9, 27:35, and John 14:29**). Many are his promises, concerning the perseverance and preservation of his people. See, for example: **Job 17:9**: "*The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.*" **Jeremiah 32:40**: "*And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts.*" **Hebrews 13:5**: "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*" Look up and read these verses, too, for similar strong language about God never leaving his elect people: **Genesis 28:15; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5; 1 Samuel 12:22; 1 Chronicles 28:20; Psalm**

37:25, 28, and 46:5; and, Isaiah 41:10, 17, 43:2, and 63:9. Therefore it is impossible they should perish (**Matthew 18:14, John 3:15-16, and 2 Peter 3:9**); for then his promises and his faithfulness in them would be of none effect; which ought not to be thought or said.

God's gracious acts, flowing from his everlasting and unchangeable love, confirm the truth of the doctrine of the preservation and perseverance of the saints.

The love of God to his people is an everlasting love, which it would not be should they perish. None can perish and remain the objects of his love. As our signs says: "*God Hates the People in Hell. Matthew 7:21-23.*" But God's love for his elect always remains (**Jeremiah 31:3**), it is never taken away, nor does it ever depart (**Isaiah 54:10**), nor can there be any separation from it (**Romans 8:35-39**). **Jeremiah 31:3:** "*The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*" Consequently, those granted an interest in God's eternal love can never be finally and totally lost. There are many acts of grace arising from this love, which show the preservation and perseverance of the saints. In previous sermons on this topic I have taken notice of His act of election, which secures their salvation. I have also talked of the covenant of grace, from the perpetuity of which this point has been argued. The act of putting the elect into Christ's hands, from whence they can never be plucked, has been opened in the first sermon on this topic. And now, several more:

The adoption of the children of God into his family is an act of God's free grace to his elect arising from his love for them.

The adoption of the children of God into his family; by which he takes them for his sons and daughters; is a wonderful instance of his love, **1 John 3:1:** "*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*" **Ephesians 1:5-6:** "*Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*" He calls it a "*putting them among the children,*" in **Jeremiah 3:19**. And it is not within the power of men or devils to put them out; nor can they put their own selves out. The prodigal son proves that for us in Luke 15. (We have more than once entertained the thought of our utter unworthiness to be called a son of God, but thank God when God sees us he sees the imputed righteousness of Christ on our account; therefore, he sees his only begotten Son when he sees his elect people.) "*[I] am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.*"

But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.” (Luke 15:19-24) The blessing of our being sons and daughters is bestowed in the covenant of grace and is irreversible. (**2 Samuel 23:5**). Christ by his redemption has made way for the reception of it, which makes his redemption a “*plenteous*” one (**Psalm 86:5,15; 130:7**). **John 1:12-13**: “*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*” His Spirit witnesses to theirs that they are so, and by faith it becomes manifest. **Galatians 4:6**: “*And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*” There is a close connection between sonship and heirship: **Romans 8:15-17**: “*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*” And can a child of God become a child of the devil? Shall an heir of heaven be seen in the flames of hell? Or shall one that is a joint heir with Christ, come short of the incorruptible inheritance? No, that is reserved for them, and they are kept to that by the power of God. **1 Peter 1:4-5**.

Justification is another act of God’s free grace, and the fruit of his ancient love, strongly insuring the preservation and perseverance of the saints.

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Romans 3:24-26). “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:17) The sentence is pronounced in the mind of God by himself, and none can reverse it; it is God that justifies, and who shall condemn? (**Romans 8:34**). Such as are justified by him can never come into condemnation and everlastingly perish (**Romans 8:1**); otherwise how could he be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus? If, after all, notwithstanding his imputation of the righteousness of his Son to them, and the justification of them by it, and their reception of it by faith, they should be condemned, how could he be just and justifier of him that believes in Jesus? Or how would Christ’s “*righteousness*” be an “*everlasting righteousness*” (**Psalm 119:142**) and answer for his people in a time to come, should they be condemned with the world (**1 Corinthians 11:32**) and excluded from the kingdom of heaven? Or

how would this righteousness of his be unto *“justification of life”* (**Romans 5:18**)? Or what would signify their being made heirs of eternal life through it (**Romans 5:21**)? Or of what avail would their title to it by it be unto them, if after all they perish eternally? But the connection between justification and glorification is inseparable. **Romans 8:30**: *“Whom he justified them he also glorified.”* And most certain it is, that the righteous, who are justified by Christ’s righteousness shall go into everlasting life when the wicked will go into eternal punishment. **Matthew 25:46**: *“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”*

Pardon of sin is another act of the riches of divine grace and flows from unmerited and distinguishing love; which pardon results in the preservation of the saints.

Those whom God forgives for Christ’s sake (**Ephesians 4:32**), on account of his blood shed for the remission of their sins (**Matthew 26:28**), and upon the foot of satisfaction made for them by him (**Isaiah 53:11**), he forgives all their iniquities (**Psalms 103:3; Hebrews 8:12, 10:17**); not one sin is left unforgiven; and if so, how can they be destroyed or perish everlastingly? Is it possible that a man should go to hell with a full and free pardon of all his sins in his hands? Was ever any man executed, having received the king’s pardon? And especially can it be thought that any whom the King of Kings (**Revelation 19:16**) has pardoned, whose acts can never be made void, should yet suffer everlasting punishment for sin? No! **Jeremiah 50:20**: *“In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.”* He reserves them for himself; and if reserved for himself, being fully pardoned by his grace, they shall be preserved from everlasting destruction.

The saints’ final perseverance in grace to glory, and security from ruin and destruction, may be concluded from the love of Christ to them, his interest in them, and theirs in him.

Christ’s love to them was from everlasting (**Jeremiah 31:3**: *“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”*), his delights were with those sons of men before the world was (**Proverbs 8:23-31**), and from it nothing can separate them: *“having loved his own, which were in the world, he loves them to the end”* (**John 13:1**). To the end of their lives, and to all eternity; and therefore, they can never perish (**John 10:28**). And they are not only the objects of his love (**Psalms 146:8**), dear unto him, but they are his care (**1 Peter 5:7**) and charge (**Psalms 48:14; Psalms 73:24**), who are committed to him to be kept by him (**2 Thessalonians 3:4**); and he has undertaken the care of them, has eternal life to give them, and does give it to them (**1 John 5:11**), and they shall never perish (**John 10:28**). Indeed, they have it already, a right unto it and earnest of it (**Ephesians 1:14**); and as they are his Father’s “gift” to him (**John 6:37**), to be preserved by him (**1**

Thessalonians 5:23; Jude 1), so they are the "purchase" of his blood, the flock he has purchased with it (**Psalm 74:2; Acts 20:28**). **Ephesians 1:14**: "*Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*" He will not lose one of them (**Luke 15:4**); should he, so far his blood would be shed for nought, and his death be in vain. They are "*members*" of his body (**Ephesians 5:30**) and can never be separated from it (**Romans 8:35**); should they, even the least member of them, his body, the church, would not be "*the fulness of him that filleth all in all*" (**Ephesians 1:23**). If any member in a natural body should be missing, even the least, it would not be a complete body; and this would be the case of Christ's mystical body, should any member in it perish. But as sure as Christ the head lives, so sure shall every member of his body live also, and never die. (**1 Corinthians 12:12, et seq.**) They are his "children," his spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he stands in the relation of an "*everlasting Father*" (**Isaiah 9:6**); these are a "*seed*" (**Romans 9:8**) that it is promised he shall see and enjoy forever (**Isaiah 53:10**), and that they shall "*endure for ever*" (**Psalm 89:29, 36**). Nor shall anyone of them be missing at the great day; but Christ will present them to his Father complete and safe, who gave them to him, saying, "*Lo, I, and the children thou hast given me!*" (**Hebrews 2:13**). They are his "*spouse*" (**Song of Solomon 5:1**) and bride (**Revelation 21:2,9**), whom he has betrothed to himself in lovingkindness, and that forever (**Hosea 2:19**), to whom he stands in the relation of an "*husband*" (**2 Corinthians 11:2**); and between whom there is an indissoluble union; whom he has so loved as to give himself for, to sanctify and cleanse, and make them spotless and glorious in his sight (**Ephesians 5:25-27**). After all the cost and pains he has been at to make her so, can it be thought he will suffer this choice one, and beloved spouse of his, or any of them that make up this spiritual body, to perish eternally? They are his "*portion, and the lot of his inheritance,*" (**Deuteronomy 32:9**) his Father has given him (**John 18:9**), and he is well pleased with. They are his "*jewels,*" (**Malachi 3:17**) and he will never lose any of them (**John 18:9**); they are a crown of glory, and a royal diadem in his hand (**Isaiah 62:3**); his Hephzibah, in whom he delights (**Isaiah 62:4**); his Beulah, to whom he is married (**Isaiah 62:4**), and he will employ all his power in the preservation and security of them (**Matthew 28:18; Job 11:18; Psalm 12:7, 121:7-8; 2 Timothy 4:18**). They are on him the "*foundation*" laid in Zion, which is sure and everlasting (**Isaiah 28:16**); on which all those who are laid are safe, and from whence they can never be removed by all the winds and waves, storms and tempests (**Psalm 89:9, 107:29; Proverbs 10:30, 20:29; Isaiah 28:17; Isaiah 54:11-14; Matthew 7:25**), raised by sin, Satan, and the world; they are built upon a rock immoveable (**Psalm 27:5, 40:2, 46:4, 112:6, 121:3; Matthew 7:25-26; Acts 2:25; Hebrews 12:28**), against which the gates of hell cannot prevail (**Matthew 16:18**).

They are interested in the intercession of Christ, which always prevails; for he is always heard; and he ever lives to make intercession for them; not only for all the necessary supplies of grace, for grace to help them in time of need (**Hebrews 4:16**); but for their eternal glorification, **John**

17:24: *“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”* 1 John 2:1: *“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”* Isaiah 53:12: *“Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”* Romans 8:26-27: *“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”* Romans 8:34: *“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”* Hebrews 7:25: *“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”*

Lastly, Christ is making "preparations" in heaven for them; he is gone beforehand and entered into heaven as their forerunner (**Hebrews 6:17-20**), and in their name to take possession for them; he is gone to prepare a place, and build up mansions of glory for them; and has promised to come and take them to himself, that where he is they may be also. **John 14:1-3**: *“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”* And are these mansions preparing in vain? And shall these seats and dwelling places be empty of those for whom they are designed, or any of them? This would be the case should any perish for whom Christ is gone to prepare a place.

A further proof of this doctrine may be taken from the work of grace, and the nature of it; and from the Spirit’s concern in it, as the author of it, in those in whom it is wrought.

Grace is an incorruptible seed, that never dies; it always remains. **1 Peter 1:23**: *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”* This grace is the reason why those in whom it is shall not sin unto death, or so sin as to die eternally. (**1 John 5:16**). It is a well of living water, springing up unto eternal life (**John 4:14**). Grace and glory are inseparably connected; to whom God gives the one, he assuredly gives the other (**Psalms 84:11; Romans 8:28-29**). The several graces of which the work consists, are abiding ones, as faith, hope, and love (**1 Corinthians 13:13**).

Faith ever remains; it is more precious than gold that perisheth, **1 Peter 1:7**. Christ, who is the author, is the finisher of it (**Hebrews 12:2**), it shall not fail (**Luke 22:32; Hebrews 1:12**), through his powerful and prevailing mediation (see above); he that truly believes in Christ, shall be most certainly saved by him (e.g., **Mark 16:16**), if there is any truth in the gospel of Christ.

"Hope," is a lively one (**1 Peter 1:3**), and is an anchor sure and stedfast (**Hebrews 6:19**); and is of great use to the saint under all his trials and afflictions in life (**Psalms 71:5; 1 Corinthians 13:7**), and will continue with him till death (**Psalms 16:9, 131:3; Hebrews 3:6**); "*For the righteous hath hope in his death*" (**Proverbs 14:32**); nor will it ever make ashamed (**Psalms 119:116; Romans 5:5; Philippians 1:20**), because it never disappoints, nor is disappointed (**Proverbs 10:28**).

Love, though it sometimes waxes cold (**Matthew 24:12**), and the first love may be left, though not lost (**Revelation 2:4-5**); it is of such a nature, that all the floods of afflictions, persecution, and temptations, can never quench (**Song of Solomon 8:7**). The church in darkness, and without the presence of Christ, and sight of him, could even then describe him as the Person whom her soul loved (**Song of Solomon 1:7; 3:1-4**). Peter, though he fell so grievously, through the temptations of Satan, yet did not lose his love to Christ; but upon first meeting with him, when asked the question, and that repeated again and again, declared he did love him; yea, he appeals to him, as the omniscient God, that he knew he loved him. (**John 21:15-17**).

The Spirit of God is the author of this work of grace; it is he who begins it, and will perform it, till the day of Christ, and finish what he has begun. **Philippians 1:6**. He has his residence in the hearts of the Lord's people, and dwells in them, as in his temple (**1 Corinthians 6:19**); nor does he ever utterly depart from them; he is given to abide with them, and he does (**1 John 4:15**). Yea he is given as the earnest and pledge of their glorious inheritance; and having such an earnest (**2 Corinthians 5:5, 7:7; Ephesians 1:14**), can they doubt, or have any reason to doubt, of their full enjoyment of it, since by him, they are sealed unto the day of redemption (**Ephesians 4:30**)? In a word, the glory of the three divine Persons is concerned in the final perseverance of the saints; for should any of them perish, where would be the glory of the Father in choosing them to salvation? Where would be the glory of the Son in redeeming them? Where would be the glory of the Spirit in the sanctification of them (**2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2**)? Their glory would be lost, should any one of them come short of heaven and happiness; but since the doctrine of the saints' final perseverance is bound together with this threefold cord, which cannot be broken, the certainty of it may be depended upon.

I love you. Amen.