

BIBLE TRUTHS EXPLAINED

What the Bible Teaches About

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Revised Edition, 2026

GORDON LYONS

ESV Edition

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Bible Truths Explained: *Perseverance*
First published: 2005, Revised 2026

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Perseverance

Revised: 1988, 1991, 1996, 2005
First Published: 2005
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Jones, Dr. D. Martyn-Lloyd	<i>God The Holy Spirit: Great Doctrines of the Bible</i> , Vol. 2: copyright ©1997 by Elizabeth Catherford and Ann Desmond, Published by Crossway Books, a division of Good News Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, U.S.A. This edition published by arrangement with Good News Publishers. All Rights Reserved. Electronic edition: The Ephesians Four Group, P.O.Box 1505, Escondido, Ca 92033.
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Special Acknowledgement

I must acknowledge a genuine debt of gratitude to the work of Dr. Charles Hodge. The writings of this theologian from a previous generation have helped considerably in preparing this work. On a number of occasions—as will be seen when reading these studies—I have cited or alluded to Dr. Hodge's remarks in his three-volume *Systematic Theology*. These references have been acknowledged in the footnotes to the study text.

Perseverance of the Saints

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PART 1

Synopsis: Perseverance of the Saints

The perseverance of the saints involves the absolute and infallible assurance that every regenerated and justified child of God will certainly continue in his or her faith and calling unto the day of final redemption in glory. Perseverance does not depend on the degree of faith of the believer nor on his degree of assurance. Perseverance depends on the immutable decrees of God in election, which he purposed in Christ Jesus from before the creation of the world. All those whom God has called to himself in Christ Jesus will, without fail, persevere in their calling unto the end. Perseverance applies only to the elect of God—none of whom can ever perish. Once saved, they can never be lost. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of every child of God to make their calling and election sure by producing consistently in their lives the fruit of the Spirit, and by engaging in spiritual warfare in the strength of the Lord.

Note 1: Final Perseverance is Assured

To persevere means to continue steadfastly in the faith, in spite of all the obstacles, difficulties, trials and dangers. The perseverance of the saints is guaranteed to all those who belong to Christ. Although, often, they may stumble, they cannot stumble to the extent that they fall away from God's grace. At times, a believer may be beset—and nearly overwhelmed—by many doubts concerning his or her salvation. Yet, regardless of their lack of assurance at these times, their perseverance to the end is rendered certain. Those who truly belong to Christ, and who are endeavouring to walk with Christ in their daily lives, are doing so because the Lord has given them eternal life and is sanctifying them by his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also seals them eternally unto God until the day of final redemption: therefore, they can never perish. (John 10:28; 2 Cor. 1:8-11; 4:8-14; Eph. 1:13-14)

Scripture References (ESV)

Final Perseverance is Assured

John 10:27-28

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. (See vv.24-30)

2 Corinthians 1:8-11

⁸ For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. ¹¹ You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on

our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many. (See vv.3-7)

2 Corinthians 4:8-10

⁸We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. (See vv.7-14)

Ephesians 1:13-14

¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Note 2: Perseverance Depends on God's Faithfulness

Perseverance does not rest on the believer's fluctuating faith, but on the unchanging faithfulness of God. What God has promised, that he will surely fulfil; and nothing in heaven or earth can hinder or thwart his intentions. From before the creation of the world, God, in Christ Jesus, purposed the full and final redemption of all his elect people. That purpose cannot fail of accomplishment. Nor can it be hindered in its execution by the present imperfections of God's own people, or by their temporary lack of faith, or by their temporary lack of assurance. (Eph. 1:4-14; 1 Thess. 5:24; Heb. 10:22-23)

Scripture References (ESV)

Perseverance Depends on God's Faithfulness

Ephesians 1:4-5

⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, (See vv.1-10)

Ephesians 1:11

¹¹In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, (See vv.12-14)

1 Thessalonians 5:24

²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Hebrews 10:22-23

²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. (See vv.9-25)

Note 3: True Believers Cannot Fall Away

Perseverance of the saints is guaranteed only to those who belong to Christ by the grace of regeneration and adoption. Many people belong to a church, but they do not necessarily belong to Christ. Many people make a profession of faith in Christ, and they may continue in their profession for a while. These people may give all the outward evidences of belonging to Christ. However, in time of trial or persecution, they renounce their profession and abandon their faith. Such were never true believers, for true believers—those whom God has called, regenerated, justified, and sealed by his Holy Spirit, cannot apostatise or abandon their faith. True believers have been born of God, and they belong to God. Again, true believers are being kept by the power of God unto final salvation, and unto the inheritance that God has prepared for them in glory. They cannot fall away from God's grace or salvation until the day that God can prove unfaithful to his promises. (John 6:66; Heb. 10:38-39; 1 Pet. 1:1-9)

Scripture References (ESV)

True Believers Cannot Fall Away

John 6:64-66

⁶⁴ But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) ⁶⁵ And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. (See vv.60-69)

Hebrews 10:38-39

³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith,
and if he shrinks back,
my soul has no pleasure in him." {Hab. 2:3-4}

³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls. (See vv.35-37)

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ *who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.* (See vv.1-9) (emphasis added)

Note 4: Perseverance Must be Accompanied by Holiness

God guarantees to all of his redeemed children the grace to persevere to the end. However, holiness of life and the fruit of the Spirit must accompany perseverance. Those who do not endeavour to pursue holiness of life, and who are not bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit in their lives, are barren branches. If barren, however, the Lord will cut them from the vine, and cast them into the fire. For barren professors of faith are false professors, and false professors possess no inheritance in the kingdom of God. (John 15:2,6; Gal. 5:22-24; Heb. 12:14)

Scripture References (ESV)***Perseverance Must be Accompanied by Holiness*****John 15:2**

² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

John 15:6

⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. (See vv.1-8)

Galatians 5:22-24

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (See vv.25-26)

Hebrews 12:14

¹⁴ Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. (See vv.15-17)

Related Bible Truths

Closely related to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, is the doctrine concerning the predestination of the elect. The doctrine of perseverance also connects inseparably with the believer's assurance of grace and salvation, and with the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit on behalf of all his people. Because of their election, the perseverance of the saints in their faith and calling, and in increasing holiness of life, is absolutely certain. All those whom God has called, justified, and sealed by his Spirit will—through God's grace—certainly persevere until the end.¹

Summary below

¹ See further on Bible Truths Explained: *Predestination; Assurance*.

Part 1 Summary

BTE15 Summary — Perseverance of the Saints (ESV Edition)

Part 1: Synopsis of Perseverance

Definition

The Perseverance of the Saints is the biblical doctrine that all those whom God has regenerated, justified, adopted, and sealed by the Holy Spirit will certainly continue in faith and ultimately reach final salvation in glory. Perseverance rests not upon the strength of the believer, but upon God's eternal decree, sovereign grace, faithfulness, and preserving power. Those whom God has truly saved can never finally fall away from Christ.

Key Truths

1. **Perseverance is guaranteed for every true believer** — all whom God has saved will continue in faith until the end.
 2. **Perseverance is rooted in God's eternal decree** — it rests upon His election and purpose in Christ before the foundation of the world.
 3. **Perseverance does not depend on the believer's strength** — God's faithfulness secures the believer's final salvation.
 4. **A believer's assurance may fluctuate** — doubts and fears may occur without jeopardising ultimate salvation.
 5. **True believers may stumble, but they cannot be finally lost** — God preserves them through every trial and weakness.
 6. **Christ gives His sheep eternal life** — they can never perish or be removed from His hand.
 7. **The Holy Spirit seals believers for final redemption** — His presence guarantees their inheritance.
 8. **God's promises cannot fail** — what He has purposed in election and redemption He will certainly accomplish.
 9. **True perseverance is evidence of genuine salvation** — those born of God continue in faith.
 10. **Temporary profession is not the same as true conversion** — some people appear to follow Christ for a time but eventually abandon their profession.
 11. **Those who permanently fall away were never truly regenerate** — genuine believers are preserved by God's power.
 12. **Believers are guarded by God's power through faith** — divine preservation secures their eternal inheritance.
-

13. **Perseverance must be accompanied by holiness** — genuine faith produces spiritual fruit and growth in godliness.
 14. **The fruit of the Spirit is evidence of spiritual life** — perseverance is demonstrated through transformed living.
 15. **False professors ultimately prove barren** — a profession without fruit reveals an unchanged heart.
 16. **God's preserving grace produces both endurance and sanctification** — perseverance and holiness belong together.
-

Biblical Foundations

Final Perseverance is Assured

1. **John 10:27-28** — Christ gives His sheep eternal life and they shall never perish.
2. **2 Corinthians 1:8-11** — God preserves His people through severe afflictions and deliverances.
3. **2 Corinthians 4:8-10** — believers may be afflicted but are never ultimately destroyed.
4. **Ephesians 1:13-14** — the Holy Spirit seals believers and guarantees their inheritance.

Perseverance Depends on God's Faithfulness

5. **Ephesians 1:4-5** — believers were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.
6. **Ephesians 1:11** — all things occur according to God's sovereign purpose.
7. **1 Thessalonians 5:24** — the God who calls His people is faithful and will accomplish His work.
8. **Hebrews 10:22-23** — believers are exhorted to hold fast because God is faithful.

True Believers Cannot Fall Away

9. **John 6:64-66** — some outward followers left Christ, revealing their unbelief.
10. **Hebrews 10:38-39** — God's people are distinguished from those who shrink back and perish.
11. **1 Peter 1:3-5** — believers are guarded by God's power for their final salvation.

Perseverance Must Be Accompanied by Holiness

12. **John 15:2** — fruitful branches are pruned to bear more fruit.
 13. **John 15:6** — barren branches are removed and judged.
 14. **Galatians 5:22-24** — the fruit of the Spirit evidences belonging to Christ.
 15. **Hebrews 12:14** — holiness is essential to those who will see the Lord.
-

Practical Implications

1. **Take comfort in God's preserving grace** — salvation rests upon His faithfulness, not your strength.
 2. **Do not despair during seasons of doubt** — assurance may fluctuate, but God's promises remain unchanged.
 3. **Trust Christ's promise of eternal security** — His sheep are eternally safe in His hand.
 4. **Live in dependence upon the Holy Spirit** — He is the guarantee of your final redemption.
 5. **Persevere through trials and difficulties** — God uses them to strengthen faith and reliance upon Him.
 6. **Examine your life for spiritual fruit** — holiness evidences genuine conversion.
 7. **Do not rely on mere profession of faith** — true faith produces lasting obedience and growth.
 8. **Pursue sanctification diligently** — perseverance and holy living cannot be separated.
 9. **Rest in God's eternal purposes** — His saving plan cannot fail.
 10. **Give thanks for God's faithfulness** — He preserves, guards, and completes the work He has begun in His people.
-

Summary Sentence

The perseverance of the saints is God's unfailing work of preserving all whom He has elected, regenerated, justified, and sealed by the Holy Spirit, ensuring that they will continue in faith, produce the fruit of holiness, overcome every obstacle by His grace, and ultimately attain their final salvation in glory.

PART 2

Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints

Justified, Sealed, and Sanctified

In Romans chapter 8, Paul discusses and proves the perseverance of the saints, and the Spirit-inspired apostle assures the people of God of the certainty of their final salvation.

The chapter begins by declaring:

Romans 8:1

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.² (See vv.2-17)

Believers are no longer under God's wrath and condemnation. In his grace, God's Holy Spirit has called and regenerated them. Upon their confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, God has justified them, and has adopted them into his family as children and heirs. As proof of their regeneration and adoption, God has given them the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit, by whom they are sealed and sanctified.

Thus, the Scripture says:

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

²¹ And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us,
²² and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (See vv.18-20)

Ephesians 1:13-14

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,
¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (See vv.11-12)

From this, it follows that everyone whom God has regenerated and justified must live a new and holy life. This new life, or new creation, expresses itself by being separated from the world and being set apart and consecrated to God in body and soul. *Separation* from the world, however, does not imply *isolation* from the world.

Those whom God has regenerated and justified must no longer live to fulfil the desires of the flesh—i.e. the old sinful nature. Rather, they must live to fulfil the desires of the Spirit. For the Spirit of God

² Romans 8:1 Some manuscripts add *who walk not according to the flesh (but according to the Spirit)* (ESV footnote)

indwells and sanctifies them—and the Spirit of God is holy. There is no such thing as salvation *in* sin, or salvation *apart from* holiness of life.

Security of Believers

Summary of Arguments

The following points, derived mainly from Romans chapter 8, exhibit Paul's argument for the certainty of the believer's salvation.³ We will summarise each point briefly below. Then, in Part 3, we will consider these points more fully under the section entitled, *The Grounds of Security*.

1. The first argument for the security of believers is founded on *the perfect righteousness of Christ*. Those who have believed on Christ can never perish. This is because God has imputed the perfect righteousness of his Son to the believer's account. By that righteousness, every demand of God's law has been fully met and satisfied on the sinner's behalf. By that righteousness also, God has fully and forever justified the repentant and believing sinner. He has passed from a state of condemnation to justification, and from death to life. (Isa. 53:11b; Rom. 4:23-25; 2 Cor. 5:21)
2. The second argument for the security of believers is founded on *the gift of the Holy Spirit*. Every believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit seals and signifies each believer as belonging to God, until the day of final redemption. The same Holy Spirit sanctifies the believer, or continues the process of making him holy in all manner of life. Those whom the Holy Spirit indwells, and who are walking by the Spirit, have Christ—together with eternal life. Those who are not indwelt by the Holy Spirit do not have Christ, nor do they have eternal life. (Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30)
3. The third argument for the security of believers is founded on *the believer's adoption*. As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. Since they are God's children, then they are also heirs. God has adopted every believer into his own family, and has pledged to give them an eternal inheritance in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the earnest—i.e. the pledge or deposit—of that inheritance. His indwelling presence guarantees its fulfilment. Those who are heirs in the household of God, therefore, cannot fail to inherit the promise. This promise includes the preservation or safe-keeping of every child of God until he or she inherits the promised reward. It also includes the gift of eternal life, the completion of the believer's salvation in his or her glorification, and a place in our heavenly Father's dwelling. (Rom. 8:14-23; Gal. 3:26 - 4:7; Eph. 1:5)
4. The fourth argument for the security of believers is founded on *the eternal purposes of God in election*. From eternity, God purposed the salvation of everyone whom he had given to his Son, and whom the Holy Spirit would draw or effectually call to God's Son in repentance and faith. These, and these alone, constitute the elect of God; and all whom the Spirit of God thus calls to repentance and faith in Christ are members of God's elect. As such, they can never perish. They are being kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation; and they are being kept for the redemption that the Lord will reveal to them in the last day. (John 6:37,44,65; 17:2,6,9,24; Eph. 1:4,11; 1 Pet. 1:3-5)
5. The fifth argument for the security of believers is founded on *the love of God*. God did not spare his one and only Son, but gave him up to the cross for our redemption. Therefore, it

³ Based on C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 3 [Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1977 reprint] pp.110-113.

is certain that his plan of redemption will not fail, nor will it fall short of its accomplishment. Everyone whom the Son has redeemed (ransomed) will be included in God's kingdom—and not one will be missing. God loves each believer with an everlasting love, for he sees in each one the perfect righteousness of his one and only Son. Again, concerning God's Son, having loved his own, he loves them unto the end. Nothing in heaven or earth can separate the believer from the eternal love of God in Christ Jesus. (John 3:16; 15:9,13; Rom. 5:5-8; 8:35-39)

6. The sixth argument for the security of believers is founded on *the vicarious atonement*. Christ died to make full atonement for the sins of his people. This atoning sacrifice was vicarious; i.e. Christ died as a substitute (for sinners). He bore their sin, guilt and condemnation in his own body on the tree. He did this so that everyone whom the Spirit effectually calls and who repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ might experience forgiveness, justification, and reconciliation with the Father. Through the death and resurrection of his Son, God has forgiven and reconciled the repentant and believing sinner to himself. How much more, therefore—now that he is no longer at enmity with God—shall that believer be saved from God's wrath through Christ his living Redeemer and Mediator? (Rom. 3:25-26; 5:9-11; Heb. 10:10,14)

Summary below

Part 2 Summary

BTE15 Summary — Perseverance of the Saints (ESV Edition)

Part 2: Justified, Sealed, and Sanctified

Definition

The Perseverance of the Saints is the doctrine that all whom God has regenerated, justified, adopted, sealed, and sanctified will certainly continue in faith and ultimately inherit eternal glory. The believer's security rests not upon human effort, but upon the accomplished work of Christ, the indwelling Holy Spirit, God's eternal decree of election, His covenant love, and Christ's completed atoning sacrifice.

Key Truths

1. **There is no condemnation for those in Christ** — justified believers have been permanently delivered from God's judgment.
 2. **The Holy Spirit seals every believer** — His indwelling presence guarantees the believer's final redemption.
 3. **Salvation produces a new and holy life** — regeneration results in separation from sin and consecration to God.
 4. **Believers are called to walk according to the Spirit** — perseverance is accompanied by ongoing sanctification.
 5. **The security of believers rests upon Christ's righteousness** — His perfect obedience is credited to those who believe.
 6. **The believer's standing before God is based on justification** — God's verdict of righteousness cannot be reversed.
 7. **The Holy Spirit guarantees the inheritance of believers** — His presence is the pledge of future glory.
 8. **Adoption secures the believer's place in God's family** — God's children are also His heirs.
 9. **God's eternal purpose in election cannot fail** — all of God's elect will certainly reach final salvation.
 10. **The Father effectually draws His people to Christ** — those whom He has chosen will come to the Son.
 11. **God's love guarantees the completion of redemption** — those whom He redeemed will never be abandoned.
 12. **Nothing can separate believers from God's love** — His eternal affection remains fixed upon His people.
 13. **Christ's atonement fully satisfied God's justice** — believers are reconciled, forgiven, and accepted through His sacrifice.
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14. **The risen Christ continues to secure His people** — their salvation depends on a living Saviour and Mediator.
 15. **God preserves His people through every stage of salvation** — from calling and justification to glorification.
 16. **The entire Trinity is engaged in the believer's perseverance** — the Father elects, the Son redeems, and the Spirit seals and sanctifies.
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Biblical Foundations

Justified, Sealed, and Sanctified

1. **Romans 8:1** — there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
2. **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** — God establishes believers in Christ and seals them by His Spirit.
3. **Ephesians 1:13-14** — the Holy Spirit is God's seal and guarantee of the believer's inheritance.

Grounds of the Believer's Security

The Perfect Righteousness of Christ

4. **Isaiah 53:11** — Christ's righteousness justifies many.
5. **Romans 4:23-25** — believers are justified through Christ's death and resurrection.
6. **2 Corinthians 5:21** — Christ became sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

7. **Romans 8:9** — those indwelt by the Spirit belong to Christ.
8. **Ephesians 4:30** — believers are sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption.

The Believer's Adoption

9. **Romans 8:14-23** — believers are children of God and heirs with Christ.
10. **Galatians 3:26-4:7** — adoption grants the full privileges of sonship.
11. **Ephesians 1:5** — believers were predestined for adoption through Christ.

God's Eternal Purpose of Election

12. **John 6:37,44,65** — all whom the Father gives to Christ will come to Him.
 13. **John 17:2,6,9,24** — Christ preserves those given to Him by the Father.
 14. **Ephesians 1:4,11** — God's elect were chosen before the foundation of the world.
 15. **1 Peter 1:3-5** — believers are kept by God's power through faith.
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The Love of God

- 16. **John 3:16** — God's love provides redemption through His Son.
- 17. **John 15:9,13** — Christ's love for His people is sacrificial and enduring.
- 18. **Romans 5:5-8** — God's love is demonstrated through Christ's death.
- 19. **Romans 8:35-39** — nothing can separate believers from God's love.

The Vicarious Atonement

- 20. **Romans 3:25-26** — Christ's sacrifice satisfies God's justice.
 - 21. **Romans 5:9-11** — believers are reconciled and saved through Christ.
 - 22. **Hebrews 10:10,14** — Christ's sacrifice perfects those who are being sanctified.
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Practical Implications

- 1. **Rest in the certainty of your justification** — God no longer condemns those who are in Christ.
 - 2. **Trust the Spirit's preserving work** — He has sealed you for final redemption.
 - 3. **Pursue holiness diligently** — genuine perseverance is accompanied by sanctification.
 - 4. **Find assurance in Christ's righteousness** — your acceptance before God rests on His work, not yours.
 - 5. **Remember your identity as God's child** — adoption secures your place in His family.
 - 6. **Take comfort in God's eternal purpose** — your salvation originates in His sovereign plan.
 - 7. **Depend on God's faithfulness rather than your feelings** — assurance may vary, but God's promises do not.
 - 8. **Be encouraged during spiritual struggles** — God's preserving power is greater than your weakness.
 - 9. **Rejoice in God's unchanging love** — nothing can separate you from Christ.
 - 10. **Give thanks for Christ's complete atonement** — His sacrifice has fully secured your reconciliation with God.
 - 11. **Live as an heir of eternal glory** — your inheritance is guaranteed by God's promise.
 - 12. **Worship the triune God for your salvation** — Father, Son, and Spirit together secure your perseverance.
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Summary Sentence

The perseverance of the saints is secured by the perfect righteousness of Christ, the sealing and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, the believer's adoption into God's family, God's eternal purpose of election, His unchanging love, and Christ's vicarious atonement, ensuring that every true believer will be preserved by divine grace until final glorification.

PART 3

Grounds of Security (A)

Secure by Justification

1. Our first argument for the security of believers is founded on *the perfect righteousness of Christ*.

But how do we relate this to the perseverance of the saints?

The people of God have been justified by faith; i.e. God has declared them righteous in his sight. God has clothed the believer with the perfect righteousness of Christ (or he has imputed the perfect righteousness of Christ to the believer's account). When, therefore, God looks upon a justified sinner, he sees in him the righteousness of his own Son.

Therefore, God's Word says:

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed.
⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all. (Cf. 1 Pet. 2:24)

Isaiah 53:11

¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

Zechariah 3:1-5

¹ Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. ² And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?" ³ Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. ⁴ And

the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.” ⁵ And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD was standing by. (See vv.6-10)

1 Corinthians 1:30

³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, (See vv.18-31; cf. 2 Cor. 5:17)

2 Corinthians 5:21

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (See vv.11-20)

Philippians 3:9

⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— (See vv.1-14)

Concerning the fact that God imputes or counts this righteousness to the believer by faith, the Scripture says concerning Abraham:

Romans 4:20-22

²⁰ No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²² That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness”. (See vv.1-19; see Gen. 15:1-6; cf. Heb. 11:11-12)

Romans 4:23-25

²³ But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

We must remember that we are speaking of imputed righteousness—not inherent righteousness. God has imputed or counted Christ's perfect righteousness to the believer's account. This act, however, does not make the believer inherently (inwardly) righteous. The justified believer is still very

imperfect. He is still subject to sinful attitudes, inclinations, thoughts, words and deeds. God, however, is not looking upon the believer's imperfections. Rather, he is looking upon the perfections of his one and only Son, which, by grace, he has credited or imputed to the believing sinner's account.

God considers the believer to be righteous (with the imputed righteousness of his own Son). Therefore, he treats the believer as though he were actually righteous (even although the believer is not inwardly and personally righteous). Since God treats the believer as righteous, then—according to God's Word—the believer is entitled to the inheritance of eternal life. And if entitled to share in the Father's inheritance in glory, then the believer must be kept secure for that inheritance. He cannot be lost.

Justification is the declaration or pronouncement that a believing sinner is righteous in God's sight. This is a forensic or legal pronouncement and it is based on the fact that God has imputed the perfect righteousness of his Son to the believer's account. Thus, in virtue of Christ's substitutionary payment of the death penalty on the sinner's behalf, God is able, in perfect righteousness, to acquit or justify the believing sinner.

Since God justifies everyone who has faith in Jesus, who is he that condemns? (Rom. 8:31-34)

First Argument Summation: **Justification** (the imputing of Christ's perfect righteousness to the believer), guarantees the believer's perseverance in the faith unto the end.⁴

Secure by The Holy Spirit

2 Our second argument for the security of believers is founded on *the gift of the Holy Spirit*.

Firstly, we must emphasise that only those who walk by the Spirit are indwelt by the Spirit. Those who claim to be indwelt by the Spirit—but who live consistently according to the desires of the sinful nature (i.e. the flesh)—have no part in kingdom of God.

Thus, the Scripture says:

Romans 8:8-9

⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. (See vv.5-11; cf. John 14:16; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 3:24; 4:13)

The Spirit of God is the Spirit of holiness. Every born again believer must show the fruit of holiness in his or her life; for, without holiness, no one will see the Lord. None, therefore, but the redeemed of the Lord receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In what way, however, does God's Spirit guarantee the perseverance of the saints?

The indwelling Holy Spirit is the firstfruits of the believer's redemption. The Bible also speaks of the Spirit as the 'earnest' of the believer's inheritance. An 'earnest' is a pledge or deposit of more to

⁴ See further on Bible Truths Explained: *Justification*.

follow. It is the guarantee that those whom God's Holy Spirit has sealed, will certainly be kept secure unto the day of final redemption.

To this end, God's Word tells us:

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

²¹ And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us,
²² and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Ephesians 1:12-14

¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (See v.11)

Ephesians 4:30

³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

We must remember that the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son in power and in glory. It is he—the eternal Spirit of God—who indwells each believer. It is by his almighty power that the believer is being preserved. It is by his sanctifying influences that the believer is being prepared for his inheritance in glory. Similarly, it is by the same work of the Spirit of holiness that the Lord Jesus will present the believer faultless and blameless before the throne of God, with rejoicing.

Colossians 1:21-22

²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds,
²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, (See vv.18-23)

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

¹³ But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ¹⁴ To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (See v.15)

Jude 1:24-25

²⁴Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵to the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen.

If a single regenerated child of God should fail to attain to his promised inheritance, then the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of Almighty God—would have proved incapable of keeping that believer safe. Manifestly, this is an impossibility.

Second Argument Summation: The **Holy Spirit** indwelling, sealing, preserving and sanctifying every true believer guarantees the believer's perseverance in the faith unto the end.

Summary below

Part 3 Summary

BTE15 Summary — Perseverance of the Saints (ESV Edition)

Part 3: Grounds of Security (A)

Definition

The **perseverance of the saints** rests upon objective grounds established by God rather than upon the believer's feelings, strength, or consistency. The first two grounds of the believer's eternal security are **justification through the imputed righteousness of Christ** and the **indwelling, sealing, and preserving work of the Holy Spirit**. Because both are God's work, the perseverance of every true believer is certain.

Key Truths

Secure by Justification

1. **Believers are justified by faith in Christ** — God declares them righteous in His sight.
 2. **Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer** — God credits the perfect righteousness of His Son to those who believe.
 3. **Justification is based on Christ's obedience, not the believer's performance** — acceptance with God rests entirely upon Christ.
 4. **Christ bore the guilt and punishment of His people** — their sins were laid upon Him.
 5. **God treats the justified believer as righteous** — because Christ's righteousness has been credited to his account.
 6. **Justification is a legal declaration** — God pronounces the believer righteous before His divine court.
 7. **The believer still possesses imperfect personal holiness** — justification concerns imputed righteousness, not inherent perfection.
 8. **God sees believers clothed in Christ's righteousness** — their acceptance before Him depends on Christ's merits alone.
 9. **A justified believer is entitled to the inheritance of eternal life** — God's verdict cannot be reversed.
 10. **No accusation can overturn God's justification** — if God has declared a sinner righteous, none can successfully condemn him.
 11. **Christ's substitutionary death secures the believer's standing before God** — the penalty of sin has already been paid.
 12. **Justification guarantees final perseverance** — those whom God has justified will certainly inherit eternal life.
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Secure by the Holy Spirit

13. **Only true believers possess the indwelling Holy Spirit** — the Spirit dwells in those who belong to Christ.
 14. **The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of holiness** — His presence produces sanctification and spiritual fruit.
 15. **The Spirit is God's seal upon the believer** — He marks believers as God's own possession.
 16. **The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of the believer's inheritance** — His indwelling presence assures future glory.
 17. **The Spirit continually sanctifies God's people** — preparing them for their final inheritance.
 18. **The Spirit preserves believers by divine power** — perseverance depends on God's power, not human strength.
 19. **Believers are sealed until the day of redemption** — the Spirit's work continues until final salvation is complete.
 20. **The Spirit will present believers holy and blameless** — God's saving work will reach its appointed goal.
 21. **The Spirit's omnipotence guarantees success** — no true believer can finally be lost.
 22. **The Spirit's preserving ministry guarantees perseverance** — all whom He seals will reach glory.
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Biblical Foundations

Secure by Justification

1. **Isaiah 53:4-6** — Christ bore the sins and punishment of His people.
2. **Isaiah 53:11** — through Christ many are accounted righteous.
3. **Zechariah 3:1-5** — God removes filthy garments and clothes His people with righteousness.
4. **1 Corinthians 1:30** — Christ has become our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.
5. **2 Corinthians 5:21** — believers become the righteousness of God in Christ.
6. **Philippians 3:9** — true righteousness comes through faith in Christ.
7. **Romans 4:20-22** — righteousness is credited through faith.
8. **Romans 4:23-25** — Christ was raised for our justification.
9. **Romans 8:31-34** (referenced) — no charge can stand against God's justified people.

Secure by the Holy Spirit

10. **Romans 8:8-9** — those who possess the Spirit belong to Christ.
 11. **John 14:16** (referenced) — the Spirit abides permanently with believers.
 12. **Galatians 4:6** (referenced) — the Spirit confirms the believer's sonship.
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13. **1 John 3:24** (referenced) — God's Spirit dwells in His people.
 14. **1 John 4:13** (referenced) — the Spirit assures believers of their union with God.
 15. **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** — believers are established, sealed, and guaranteed by the Spirit.
 16. **Ephesians 1:12-14** — the Spirit is the pledge of the believer's inheritance.
 17. **Ephesians 4:30** — believers are sealed unto the day of redemption.
 18. **Colossians 1:21-22** — Christ will present His people holy and blameless.
 19. **2 Thessalonians 2:13-14** — salvation comes through sanctification by the Spirit.
 20. **Jude 24-25** — God is able to keep believers from stumbling and present them blameless.
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Practical Implications

1. **Rest in Christ's righteousness rather than your own** — your acceptance before God depends upon Him.
 2. **Do not confuse justification with sanctification** — believers are fully justified even while still growing in holiness.
 3. **Reject salvation by human merit** — perseverance rests upon Christ's finished work.
 4. **Take comfort when conscious of personal weakness** — God's verdict does not fluctuate with your performance.
 5. **Live thankfully for Christ's substitutionary sacrifice** — He bore your guilt and condemnation.
 6. **Recognise the Holy Spirit's presence in your life** — He is God's seal and guarantee.
 7. **Pursue holiness diligently** — the Spirit always produces sanctification in true believers.
 8. **Trust the Spirit's preserving power** — He is committed to completing God's saving work.
 9. **Find assurance in God's promises** — the Spirit's indwelling points forward to final glory.
 10. **Rejoice in eternal security grounded in God Himself** — justification and the Spirit's sealing cannot fail.
 11. **Depend upon the Spirit daily** — perseverance is sustained through His continual work.
 12. **Look forward confidently to glorification** — God will finish what He has begun.
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Summary Sentence

The believer's perseverance is secured first by justification, whereby God imputes Christ's perfect righteousness to the believer and declares him righteous forever, and second by the indwelling Holy Spirit, who seals, sanctifies, preserves, and guarantees that every true child of God will safely attain the promised inheritance in glory.

PART 4

Grounds of Security (B)

Secure by Adoption

3 The third argument for the security of believers is founded on the *believer's adoption*.

Every person whom God has regenerated and justified, has been adopted into the family of God. He or she is a child of God, and is entitled therefore to all the rights and privileges of heirship or inheritance. All those whom God has made his own children by adoption will share in the inheritance of the saints in light, together with God's one and only Son.

As the Scripture says:

Romans 8:14-15

¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons ⁵ of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" (See vv.12-13)

Romans 8:16-17

¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (See vv.18-25)

Galatians 3:26-27

²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (See vv.28-29)

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ So

⁵ sons: Romans 8:14, Greek υἱός (*huios*), sons or descendants. In the present context, 'sons' should be understood to mean both sons and daughters (of God). See Romans 8:16 where the apostle Paul uses the phrase, 'children of God'. (Greek, τέκνον (*teknon*), a child, son, or daughter.

you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.
(See vv.1-3)

Ephesians 1:4-5

⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,
(See vv.3-10)

A member of God's family can never be disowned or disinherited. As a loving Father, God will discipline his children—sometimes severely. However, as a Father who is faithful to his promises, he will never disown or disinherit the children he has chosen to adopt.

God disciplines his own children in love, so that they might share in his holiness. The fact that we receive discipline is proof that we belong to God. Each believer experiences and endures discipline, to prepare him in character and conduct for his Father's home. From this it follows, that—until that day—our heavenly Father will keep each one of his redeemed children secure in his everlasting love, compassion, and protective care.

The Scripture reminds all those who are undergoing God's discipline:

Hebrews 12:4-6

⁴ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor be weary when reproved by him.

⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and chastises every son whom he receives.”
{Prov. 3:11-12; cf. Ps. 94:12-14} (See Heb. 12:1-3)

Hebrews 12:7-8

⁷ It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸ If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. (See vv.9-11)

God always disciplines his own true sons and daughters. Discipline, however, involves instruction and training in the ways of the Lord, as well as chastisement and punishment. The Lord does not intend all discipline to be punitive in nature. However, he intends all discipline to be instructive and corrective, and to lead to ever-increasing holiness of life.⁶

⁶ See further on Bible Truths Explained: *Adoption*, under *Discipline*.

At the Last Judgment, the Lord will judge every believer according to his deeds. Many will be rewarded. Some will lose part or all of their reward. None, however, will lose their inheritance in glory.

Third Argument Summation: The **believer's adoption** into the family of God, and his being made a joint heir with Christ to the Father's inheritance, guarantees the believer's perseverance in the faith unto the end.⁷

Secure by Election

4 The fourth argument for the security of believers is founded on *the eternal purposes of God in election*.

From before the creation of the world, God decreed to set apart a people for himself. The Father implements this eternal decree through Jesus Christ his Son. All whom, by God's grace, the Holy Spirit effectually calls, are enabled—freely and willingly—to respond to that grace by repenting and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Regarding this decree, God's Word says:

Ephesians 1:4-5

⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, (See vv.1-12; see esp. v.11)

Romans 8:29

²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (See v.28)

Romans 8:30

³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (See vv.31-39)

All those whom the Father had thus predestined from eternity, he also gave to his Son. The Son of God undertook to redeem his elect out of every tongue, tribe, people and nation on the face of the earth. All those whom God has given to the Son are effectually called or drawn to the Son by the Holy Spirit.

⁷ See further on Bible Truths Explained: *Adoption*.

Thus, the Lord Jesus says:

John 6:37

³⁷ All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. (See vv. 35-42)

John 6:44-45

⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' {*Isaiah 54:13*} Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me— (See vv. 43-59,65; cf. Matt. 11:25-30)

John 17:2

² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

John 17:6

⁶ "I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. (See vv.1-26; see esp. vv. 9,11-12,24)

From all eternity, God had purposed to redeem everyone whom he had given to his Son, and whom his Holy Spirit would draw to his Son in repentance and faith. Because the Father has given every elect child of God into his Son's safekeeping, it follows that they are eternally secure.

The believer's perseverance is assured because they belong by gift to the Son of God. He has ransomed them by his precious blood, and they are being kept by him. No one can pluck them out of the Son's safekeeping, or out of the Father's hand. For both Father and Son are one. They are the same Almighty, and Eternal God.

To this end, Jesus said:

John 10:27-30

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one." (See vv.22-33; cf. v.27 with vv.4,14)

It is utterly inconceivable that God's purposes should fail of accomplishment. The Almighty God has predestined the elect unto eternal life. In fact, they have eternal life from the moment that they believe: for they have passed from death to life—abundant and eternal life. Again, it is impossible that anything in all creation should be able to remove the believer from the Father's hand. Each believer is

being held secure by the Almighty God and no power in heaven or on earth can prevail to pluck that believer from the Father's hand.

It is of no avail to say that a believer may lose his salvation through his own sinfulness. If he is a true believer, and if he possesses the Holy Spirit, then God's Spirit has sealed that believer unto the day of redemption. God already knew about that person's sinfulness when Christ died as his substitute, and that sinfulness was punished in Christ when he hung upon the tree. God will never again condemn those whom he has justified through faith in Christ. This is because Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, has borne—and atoned for—their sin, and freed them from condemnation and guilt.

We must never, however, use this fact as an excuse for practising any form of sinful behaviour. Those who continue to practise sin show by their evil behaviour that they do not belong to Christ. For the Spirit of holiness cannot live in the temple of sin. That temple is the believer's body.

Again, we must remember that although a truly born-again child of God cannot forfeit his salvation, he can forfeit his life. This happened to certain believers in the church at Corinth when they despised the sanctity of the Lord's ordinances, desecrated the Lord's Supper, and brought the name of Christ into disrepute. (1 Cor. 11:20-22; 27-32)

However, the Word of God gives this certain assurance of final salvation to all of God's true people:

1 Peter 1:2-5

² elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (See vv.1-9; see esp. v.9; cf. Jude 24)

Fourth Argument Summation: The **election** of God's children according to, and in fulfilment of, the eternal purposes of God, guarantees the believer's perseverance in the faith unto the end.⁸

Summary below

⁸ See further on Bible Truths Explained: *Predestination*.

Part 4 Summary

BTE15 Summary — Perseverance of the Saints (ESV Edition)

Part 4: Grounds of Security (B)

Definition

The **perseverance of the saints** is secured not only by justification and the sealing of the Holy Spirit, but also by the believer's **adoption into God's family** and by God's **eternal decree of election**. Because believers are God's adopted children and Christ's fellow-heirs, and because their salvation was purposed by God from eternity, their final perseverance and glorification are absolutely certain.

Key Truths

Secure by Adoption

1. **Every justified believer is an adopted child of God** — salvation brings believers into God's family.
2. **Adoption grants full heirship rights** — believers become heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ.
3. **The Spirit of adoption confirms sonship** — believers may confidently call God their Father.
4. **God's children can never be disowned** — adoption into God's family is permanent.
5. **God disciplines His children because He loves them** — discipline is evidence of genuine sonship.
6. **Divine discipline is corrective and instructive** — its purpose is growth in holiness.
7. **All true children of God experience discipline** — those without discipline give evidence of not belonging to God's family.
8. **God disciplines in preparation for glory** — His children are being fitted for their heavenly inheritance.
9. **Believers may lose rewards but never their inheritance** — salvation remains secure even where rewards may be forfeited.
10. **The Father's love guarantees preservation** — He keeps His children until they enter their eternal home.

Secure by Election

11. **God chose His people before the foundation of the world** — salvation originates in His eternal purpose.

12. **Election guarantees the success of redemption** — God's decree cannot fail.
 13. **The elect are effectually called by the Holy Spirit** — God brings His chosen people to faith in Christ.
 14. **All whom the Father gives to the Son will come to Him** — none of God's elect are lost.
 15. **Christ has undertaken the redemption of His people** — He secures the salvation of all entrusted to Him.
 16. **Believers are held securely in the hands of both the Father and the Son** — no power can remove them.
 17. **God's eternal purposes cannot be frustrated** — what He predestines He certainly accomplishes.
 18. **Election leads inevitably to glorification** — every person predestined, called, and justified will ultimately be glorified.
 19. **The believer's security rests on God's power rather than human ability** — preservation depends on divine grace.
 20. **God's foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification form an unbreakable chain** — no true believer falls out of God's saving purpose.
-

Biblical Foundations

Secure by Adoption

1. **Romans 8:14-15** — believers receive the Spirit of adoption and cry, "Abba, Father."
2. **Romans 8:16-17** — God's children are heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ.
3. **Galatians 3:26-27** — believers are sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ.
4. **Galatians 4:4-7** — Christ's redemption secures adoption and inheritance.
5. **Ephesians 1:4-5** — believers were predestined for adoption through Jesus Christ.
6. **Hebrews 12:4-6** — God disciplines those whom He loves.
7. **Hebrews 12:7-8** — discipline proves genuine sonship.
8. **Proverbs 3:11-12** (quoted) — the Lord chastens the children He receives.
9. **Psalms 94:12-14** (referenced) — the Lord does not forsake His people.

Secure by Election

10. **Ephesians 1:4-5** — believers were chosen before the foundation of the world.
 11. **Romans 8:29** — God predestined His people to be conformed to Christ.
 12. **Romans 8:30** — those predestined, called, and justified are also glorified.
 13. **John 6:37** — all whom the Father gives to Christ will come to Him.
 14. **John 6:44-45** — the Father draws His people to the Son.
 15. **John 17:2** — Christ gives eternal life to all whom the Father has given Him.
 16. **John 17:6** — those given to Christ belong to the Father and are kept by Him.
 17. **John 10:27-30** — Christ's sheep can never perish and cannot be snatched from His hand.
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18. **1 Peter 1:2-5** — God's elect are guarded by His power for salvation.
 19. **Jude 24** (referenced) — God is able to keep His people from stumbling.
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Practical Implications

1. **Rejoice in your adoption** — believers enjoy the privileges and security of God's family.
 2. **View discipline as evidence of sonship** — God's correction demonstrates His fatherly love.
 3. **Submit to God's training** — His discipline is intended to increase holiness.
 4. **Take comfort in your heavenly inheritance** — it cannot be lost or taken away.
 5. **Trust God's eternal purposes** — your salvation originated in His sovereign decree.
 6. **Find assurance in God's unchanging plan** — election guarantees the completion of redemption.
 7. **Rest in Christ's safekeeping** — no enemy can remove you from His hand.
 8. **Reject confidence in self-effort** — perseverance rests upon God's grace and power.
 9. **Pursue holiness without fear of rejection** — God disciplines His children but never abandons them.
 10. **Look forward confidently to glorification** — every true believer will reach the inheritance prepared by God.
 11. **Worship God for His sovereign grace** — salvation is entirely His work from beginning to end.
 12. **Live as a child and heir of God** — your future is as secure as God's promises.
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Summary Sentence

The believer's perseverance is secured by adoption into God's family and by God's eternal decree of election, for all whom the Father has chosen, given to the Son, called by the Spirit, justified through faith, and adopted as His children are preserved by divine power and will certainly inherit eternal glory.

PART 5

Grounds of Security (C)

Secure by God's Love

5. The fifth argument for the security of believers is founded on *the love of God*.

All mankind has sinned, and all unregenerate mankind is living in a state of enmity and rebellion against God. Even so, God still loves men, women and children throughout the entire world. Although man must perish eternally because of his sin and rebellion—unless he be redeemed—yet God still loves lost sinners. God, however, is not only a God of infinite love, mercy and compassion; he is also a God of infinite righteousness, justice and holiness. He can by no means clear the guilty. God loves sinners, yet the world of fallen mankind must pay the penalty of sin. The penalty of sin is death; and since all have sinned, all must die.

All mankind would indeed die, and would perish eternally—for this is the just penalty of our sin. God, however, intervened. Out of the whole fallen human race, God determined that a vast multitude—whom no one could number—should be saved; and should live to the praise of his glory. On these especially, God set his everlasting love. Out of his great love for men, women and children, he gave his one and only Son to be their Redeemer. As the Scripture says:

John 3:16

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (See vv.14-18; cf. Rev. 1:5-6; 5:9-10)

All those who believe on Christ receive the gift of eternal life. They are born of God; and if born of God, they have received the Spirit of God. They are children of God, and they are being kept eternally secure by the love of their Father in heaven.

As has been said already, God disciplines all those whom he receives as his children. He does this in love, to effect their holiness (cleansing and separation), and to prepare them for future glory. Some forms of discipline may be painful—but the pain is temporary. The love of God is eternal. God's love for his people shall never end, until the day that God ceases to be—for God is love. Since God is love, he will never cast away from his presence anyone whom he loves.

The love that God has for his one and only Son is fully reflected in the Son's love for each believer. Thus, the Scripture says:

John 15:9

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. (See vv.10-17; cf. John 17:23-24,26)

The following Scripture further exemplifies God's love:

Romans 5:5-8

⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (See vv.1-11)

Regarding the degree and permanence of Christ's love, and therefore of the believer's security and perseverance, the Scripture says:

Romans 8:35

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Romans 8:38-39

³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (See vv.36-37)

All whom God the Father has loved from eternity, and whom he has given to the Son, will appear with their Lord in his glory. There, these beloved saints of God will worship with the angels in the presence of the Lamb.

Fifth Argument Summation

The **love of God** for the believer (a love that transcends the eternal ages and that is based on God's matchless love for his one and only Son) guarantees the believer's perseverance in the faith unto the end.

Secure by The Atonement

6. The sixth argument for the security of believers is founded on the nature and purpose of the *vicarious atonement* or atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Before a sinner's conversion, and because of his evil deeds (or 'wicked works'), he is living in a state of alienation from, and enmity with, God. These wicked works—these unrighteous attitudes and inclinations of the mind, and sinful deeds of the body—are the fruit of his sinful nature. Because of his sin, the unbeliever is at enmity with God, and the just wrath of God remains on him. To turn aside this wrath, propitiation (or satisfactory atonement) must be made to God. A holy, just and righteous God can be propitiated only by an acceptable sacrifice of atonement—a sacrifice of infinitely meritorious value. Nothing less can make atonement for sin, or turn away the just wrath of God against sinners.

This sacrifice of atonement for sin must be holy, spotless, and undefiled; separate from sinners and from sin. The blood to be shed—or the life to be sacrificed—must be pure, spotless or perfect in every respect. Such was, and is, the Son of God. God set forth his one and only Son—Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God—as a propitiation [from Gk. ἱλαστήριον (*hilastērion*) *sacrifice of atonement, mercy seat, or atonement cover*]. Christ died to make atonement for our sin. He was the Lamb slain from before the creation of the world (Rev. 13:8) to redeem those whom God had chosen from before the creation of the world. With his life of perfect obedience to God, and with his atoning sacrifice, Jesus satisfied God's justice—fully and forever. In his life and death, Christ suffered vicariously. On this ground, God

can now justify the believing sinner. That is, God can pardon (or forgive) the repentant sinner, and furthermore he can pronounce him righteous in his sight.

God does not justify the believer for what he is, or for what he has done. Rather, he justifies him for what Christ is, and for what he has done on the believing sinner's behalf. By Christ's atoning death and subsequent resurrection, God can now reconcile the believing sinner to himself. Christ, by his death and resurrection, has removed the enmity and sin that once created an impassable barrier between God and man. Furthermore, since God has reconciled the believing sinner to himself by the death of Christ, and since Christ now lives to intercede for him, the believer is forever delivered from God's enduring wrath against sin.

Concerning these things, the Scripture says:

Romans 3:24-26

²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (See vv.21-31)

Romans 5:8-11

⁸but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (See vv.6-7)

Hebrews 10:10

¹⁰And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Hebrews 10:14

¹⁴For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. (See vv.1-18)

The believer has received the benefits of the atonement. (Rom. 5:11.) God has justified him and reconciled him to himself. Therefore, that believer can no longer be condemned. Christ has died in the believing sinner's place. God has accepted the atoning death of his one and only Son as fully sufficient for every sin the believer has committed, or will commit. He stands secure on the grounds of the shed blood of Christ, his Redeemer. Since, on this ground he stands, then his perseverance is assured.

Sixth Argument Summation: The **vicarious atonement** of Christ, which he effected once-for-all on behalf of all God's people, and which fully satisfies the demands of God's justice against the sinner, guarantees the believer's perseverance in the faith unto the end.⁹

Summary below

⁹ See further on Bible Truths Explained: *Justification*.

Part 5 Summary

BTE15 Summary — Perseverance of the Saints (ESV Edition)

Part 5: Grounds of Security (C)

Definition

The perseverance of the saints is secured by God's everlasting love and by Christ's completed atoning sacrifice. Because God has set His saving love upon His people from eternity, and because Christ has fully satisfied divine justice through His substitutionary death, every true believer is eternally secure and will certainly persevere unto final glory.

Key Truths

Secure by God's Love

1. **God loves fallen sinners** — despite mankind's rebellion and sin, God shows mercy and compassion toward the lost.
2. **God's love provided redemption** — He gave His only Son to save sinners from eternal separation from God in hell.
3. **Believers receive eternal life through faith in Christ** — all who believe are born of God and become His children.
4. **God's love is everlasting** — His commitment to His redeemed people will never fail.
5. **God disciplines His children in love** — discipline is intended for holiness and preparation for glory.
6. **Divine discipline is temporary, but God's love is eternal** — His corrective dealings never diminish His affection for His people.
7. **Christ loves believers as the Father loves Him** — believers are the objects of God's covenant love in Christ.
8. **The cross is the supreme demonstration of God's love** — Christ died for believers while they were still sinners.
9. **Nothing can separate believers from Christ's love** — no earthly, spiritual, or cosmic power can sever that bond.
10. **The love of God guarantees final salvation** — those whom God loves will ultimately appear with Christ in glory.

Secure by the Atonement

11. **All people are naturally under God's wrath because of sin** — sin creates enmity between God and mankind.

12. **Divine justice requires satisfaction for sin** — God's holiness demands a perfect atonement.
 13. **Christ alone is the acceptable sacrifice for sin** — His perfect obedience and spotless life qualify Him as the Lamb of God.
 14. **Christ's atonement was substitutionary** — He bore the guilt, punishment, and condemnation of His people.
 15. **Christ's sacrifice fully satisfied God's justice** — no additional payment for sin is required.
 16. **The atonement reconciles believers to God** — the barrier created by sin has been removed.
 17. **Believers are justified through Christ's blood** — God declares them righteous on the basis of Christ's work.
 18. **Believers are delivered from God's wrath** — Christ has borne the judgment they deserved.
 19. **Christ's intercession continues to secure believers** — the risen Saviour preserves those He redeemed.
 20. **A completed atonement guarantees perseverance** — those fully reconciled and justified cannot finally perish.
 21. **The sacrifice of Christ was once-for-all** — it permanently secures the salvation of God's people.
 22. **The benefits of the atonement cannot be reversed** — those reconciled through Christ remain eternally secure.
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Biblical Foundations

Secure by God's Love

1. **John 3:16** — God loved the world and gave His only Son so that believers may have eternal life.
2. **Revelation 1:5-6** (referenced) — Christ redeemed His people by His blood.
3. **Revelation 5:9-10** (referenced) — Christ purchased a people from every nation.
4. **John 15:9** — Christ loves believers with the same love that the Father has for Him.
5. **John 17:23-24, 26** (referenced) — believers share in the love of the Father and the Son.
6. **Romans 5:5-8** — God's love is demonstrated in Christ's death for sinners.
7. **Romans 8:35** — no trial or suffering can separate believers from Christ's love.
8. **Romans 8:38-39** — nothing in all creation can separate believers from God's love in Christ.

Secure by the Atonement

9. **Romans 3:24-26** — Christ is the propitiation who satisfies God's justice and secures justification.
 10. **Romans 5:8-11** — believers are justified, reconciled, and saved from wrath through Christ.
 11. **Hebrews 10:10** — believers are sanctified through Christ's once-for-all offering.
 12. **Hebrews 10:14** — Christ has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.
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13. **Revelation 13:8** (referenced) — Christ is the Lamb appointed for redemption.
 14. **Colossians 1:21-22** (theme implied from previous section) — Christ reconciles sinners to God through His death.
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Practical Implications

1. **Rest in God's unchanging love** — your salvation depends on His eternal affection, not your fluctuating feelings.
 2. **Look continually to the cross** — Christ's atoning death is the foundation of your security.
 3. **Do not interpret discipline as rejection** — God's correction is an expression of His fatherly love.
 4. **Find assurance during trials** — suffering cannot separate believers from Christ's love.
 5. **Remember that God's love is demonstrated, not merely declared** — He gave His Son for His people.
 6. **Trust the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice** — no further atonement is needed for your sins.
 7. **Rejoice in reconciliation with God** — hostility has been replaced by peace through Christ.
 8. **Reject any confidence in personal merit** — salvation rests entirely upon Christ's finished work.
 9. **Pursue holiness from gratitude, not fear** — believers obey because they are loved and redeemed.
 10. **Take comfort in Christ's ongoing intercession** — the risen Saviour continues to secure His people.
 11. **Face death and eternity with confidence** — the believer's future rests upon God's love and Christ's blood.
 12. **Worship God for His saving grace** — both the Father's love and the Son's sacrifice guarantee final perseverance.
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Summary Sentence

The believer's perseverance is guaranteed by God's everlasting love and Christ's once-for-all atoning sacrifice, for the Father has eternally loved His people, the Son has fully satisfied divine justice on their behalf, and therefore nothing can separate them from God's love or overturn the salvation that Christ has secured for them through His death and resurrection.

PART 6

Kept Secure by God

Kept by the Power of God

Because of the perfections of Christ, and of what he has done on the believer's behalf, every true child of God will certainly persevere in holiness of life, and in his or her salvation, unto the end. Perseverance does not depend on the believer's sometimes wavering faith, but on the unwavering faithfulness and almighty and sovereign power of God. It is God who keeps the believer safe. God's Son—who has gone to prepare a place in heaven for the believer—will one day take every believer safely into his Father's glorious presence.

The Lord Jesus gives this assurance to each child of God:

John 14:1-3

¹ “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; ¹⁰ believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ¹¹ ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. (See v.4)

Hebrews 9:28

²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. (See vv.23-27)

God's Word reminds us of the nature of the inheritance, which the Father is reserving for every believer in glory. The Word of God also reminds us of the power that keeps the believer secure until that day:

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (See vv.8-9; see esp. v.9)

¹⁰ [John 14:1](#) Or *You believe in God.* (ESV footnote)

¹¹ [John 14:2](#) Or *In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.* (ESV footnote)

The promise is secure, for it is founded on the eternal purposes of God. It is, however, the believer's duty and responsibility to make his calling and election sure. In everything that he says and does, he must show the evidences of holiness of life and conduct. Everyone who is bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit, is proving by their actions that they are sealed by the Spirit. Everyone whose life is thus controlled by the Spirit—and not by the flesh or sinful nature—is a true child of God. Since he is a child, then he is also an heir: an heir of glory, and a joint heir with the Son of God. We will share with the Lord in his glory, provided we share with him in his sufferings; i.e. provided we endure suffering and hardship for the sake of his name. For if sinful men have despised and rejected the Master of the house, how much more will they despise and reject the Master's servants?

Kept by Redeeming Blood

The perseverance of the saints is assured, and the security of believers is certain, because each child of God has been redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb. Through the redeeming work of God's Son, and through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, each believer is being brought to glory. Perseverance, therefore, does not depend on the believer's sometimes faltering faith, but on the work of redemption. The work of redemption is a work of eternal redemption. (Heb. 9:12.) Christ has accomplished this work once-for-all. It can never be repeated, and it can never be augmented. It is a finished work, and it is a perfect work. Even now, Christ—our Great High Priest—ministers in the heavenly sanctuary; pleading the merits of his atoning sacrifice on our behalf.

For the redeemed child of God, the work of the Holy Spirit begins at effectual calling and regeneration. The work of the Spirit continues throughout the believer's life, in the ongoing process of sanctification. However, none are ever sanctified who do not belong to Christ. By contrast, none who belong to Christ will ever fail of their eternal redemption.

He Who Stands Firm Will be Saved

While, however, it is true that the perseverance of the saints is certain of accomplishment, it is also true that each child of God must prove the reality of their faith and salvation. Believers afford proof of their salvation to others, by the fact that they continue to persevere in the faith—even under the most arduous of circumstances.

The Bible warns clearly of a time when the love of many will grow cold because of increasing wickedness in the world. It is under circumstances such as these that a true child of God makes his calling and election sure. He does this by continuing to persevere in the faith; i.e. by pressing on toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, regardless of unfavourable circumstances.

Thus, the Scripture says:

Matthew 24:10

¹⁰ And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another.

Matthew 24:12

¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

Matthew 24:14

¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (See vv.9-13)

The true child of God perseveres in the faith, even in the teeth of fierce opposition—opposition that may include being shunned or abandoned by friends and loved ones.

Thus, God's Word warns:

Mark 13:12-13

¹² And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. ¹³ And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (See vv.9-11)

In the reference quoted above, we read the following words (v.13b): ... *But the one who endures to the end will be saved*. Essentially, this sentence means that those who persevere under such opposition are proving—by their perseverance—that they are being kept by the power of the Lord. The fact that they are able to withstand such intense opposition, is proof that they are the redeemed of the Lord.

Summary below

Part 6 Summary

BTE15 Summary — Perseverance of the Saints (ESV Edition)

Part 6: Kept Secure by God

Definition

The **perseverance of the saints** is God's continual work of preserving His redeemed people by His almighty power until they reach their final salvation in glory. Believers persevere not because of the strength of their faith, but because they are kept by God's power, secured by Christ's redeeming blood, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and destined for the inheritance prepared for them in heaven.

Key Truths

Kept by the Power of God

1. **Perseverance rests upon God's power, not human strength** — believers are preserved by God's faithfulness rather than their own ability.
2. **Christ has prepared an eternal inheritance for His people** — every believer has a place reserved in the Father's house.
3. **Christ will personally bring His people into glory** — He will return and gather His redeemed to Himself.
4. **Believers are guarded by God's power** — divine preservation secures their final salvation.
5. **The heavenly inheritance is secure** — it is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.
6. **God preserves believers through faith** — the same God who saves also keeps His people.
7. **Perseverance must be accompanied by holy living** — believers demonstrate their calling through the fruit of the Spirit.
8. **Suffering often accompanies faithful discipleship** — believers share in Christ's sufferings before sharing in His glory.
9. **Evidence of perseverance confirms genuine faith** — continued faithfulness demonstrates the reality of salvation.

Kept by Redeeming Blood

10. **Believers are secured by Christ's redeeming blood** — redemption is the foundation of perseverance.
 11. **Christ accomplished eternal redemption** — His saving work was completed once for all.
 12. **The atonement is perfect and sufficient** — nothing can be added to Christ's finished work.
 13. **Christ continues His ministry as High Priest** — He intercedes for His people in heaven.
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14. **The Holy Spirit applies redemption to believers** — sanctification continues throughout the Christian life.
15. **Every redeemed person will attain final salvation** — none whom Christ redeemed will be lost.
16. **Perseverance is God's work from beginning to end** — calling, regeneration, sanctification, and glorification are all secured by divine grace.

He Who Endures to the End Will Be Saved

17. **True believers continue despite opposition** — perseverance manifests itself through endurance.
18. **Many professing believers may fall away** — not all who profess faith truly possess saving faith.
19. **Increasing wickedness tests genuine discipleship** — true believers remain faithful even when others abandon the faith.
20. **Endurance proves the reality of salvation** — perseverance is evidence of God's preserving work.
21. **The gospel will continue to advance despite opposition** — God's purposes cannot be thwarted.
22. **Faithful endurance under trial glorifies God** — it demonstrates the power of grace in the believer's life.

Biblical Foundations

Kept by the Power of God

1. **John 14:1-3** — Christ has prepared a place for His people and will receive them to Himself.
2. **Hebrews 9:28** — Christ will return to bring full salvation to those waiting for Him.
3. **1 Peter 1:3-5** — believers are guarded by God's power for a salvation ready to be revealed.
4. **Romans 8:17** (theme referenced) — believers are heirs with Christ and destined for glory.

Kept by Redeeming Blood

5. **Hebrews 9:12** (referenced) — Christ obtained eternal redemption.
6. **Hebrews 10:14** (theme implied from previous sections) — Christ's work perfects those being sanctified.
7. **Romans 5:11** — believers have received reconciliation through Christ.

Perseverance Proven by Endurance

8. **Matthew 24:10** — many will fall away during times of testing.

9. **Matthew 24:12** — increasing lawlessness causes many professing believers to grow cold.
 10. **Matthew 24:14** — the gospel will be proclaimed to all nations before the end.
 11. **Mark 13:12-13** — believers may endure rejection, hatred, and persecution.
 12. **Mark 13:13** — the one who endures to the end will be saved.
 13. **Philippians 3:14** (theme referenced) — believers press toward the goal of their heavenly calling.
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Practical Implications

1. **Trust God's preserving power** — your security rests upon Him, not upon your fluctuating strength.
 2. **Take comfort in Christ's promises** — He has prepared a place for His people and will return for them.
 3. **Live with eternity in view** — your inheritance is secure and awaiting you in heaven.
 4. **Pursue holiness continually** — perseverance is evidenced through sanctified living.
 5. **Expect opposition and hardship** — suffering is often part of faithful discipleship.
 6. **Remain steadfast during difficult times** — endurance demonstrates genuine faith.
 7. **Do not be discouraged by widespread unbelief** — many may fall away, but God preserves His own.
 8. **Look to Christ's finished work** — your confidence rests upon His redemption, not your performance.
 9. **Depend daily on the Holy Spirit** — He sanctifies and prepares believers for glory.
 10. **Encourage fellow believers to persevere** — endurance is strengthened through mutual support and faithfulness.
 11. **Find assurance in God's promises** — He who began the work of salvation will complete it.
 12. **Await Christ's return with confidence** — He will bring every redeemed believer safely home.
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Summary Sentence

The perseverance of the saints is secured by God's almighty preserving power, Christ's finished work of eternal redemption, and the sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit, so that every true believer will endure in faith through trials and opposition and will ultimately be brought safely into the eternal inheritance prepared by Christ in glory.

PART 7

Perseverance Involves Spiritual Warfare

The fact that the believer's perseverance in the faith is guaranteed must never be made the grounds of complacency. It is by his grace that God has saved us, and it is by his grace that he will keep us. However, we must never presume upon the grace of Almighty God. The believer has been called by the grace of God. God has called him, however, to enlist in spiritual warfare. The Lord expects each of his redeemed people to engage in that spiritual warfare—on every appropriate battlefield. Thus, it is written in the Word of God:

Philippians 1:28-30

²⁸ and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰ engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have. (See v.27)

Ephesians 6:10-12

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (See vv.13-18)

As an example of the need to fight in persevering, we will consider briefly three areas of conflict in the Christian life. These are

- (1) *perseverance against sin,*
- (2) *perseverance against sloth or laziness, and*
- (3) *perseverance in doing the will of God.*

There are, of course, many other similar areas of conflict in the Christian life. These three, however, will serve to illustrate the point that perseverance involves active engagement in the war against sin, laziness, and opposition.

(1) Perseverance in the Fight Against Sin

Many types of sin are obvious to everyone for what they are. The Bible, however, speaks of the deceitfulness of sin, thereby implying that there are occasions when sin does not immediately appear as pernicious or evil. These forms of evil may not always be immediately recognised and identified as sin—perhaps because of some immaturity or lack of spiritual knowledge on the part of the believer. Again, an immature believer may not immediately recognise certain forms of evil as sin. This may

happen because—over a prolonged period before his conversion—that person had become accustomed to accepting these types of sinful behaviour as normal.

Whatever the reason, the believer must continually guard against being deceived by sin. Sin is sin, no matter what guise it assumes. Sin is sin, whether a person recognises it as sin or not. Sin is sin, no matter what form it takes. Sin is sin, no matter how acceptable it has become to other people. The only safe way of recognising sin for what it is, is to become thoroughly familiar with the teaching of God's Word. Those who know that Word, are able to discern much more clearly between right and wrong, and to help and exhort others in knowing the difference between good and evil. Thus, the Scripture tells us:

Hebrews 3:13-14

¹³ But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today", that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. (See vv.7-19; cf. v.14 with Col. 1:23)

The fact that the believer perseveres in the faith, and in the fight against sin, is an evidence that he belongs to the Lord and that he is being kept secure by the power of Almighty God.

(2) Perseverance in the Fight Against Sloth

Those whom the Holy Spirit has called to faith and partnership with Christ, have been called to suffer for the sake of Christ's name. God has called them to endure ill treatment, unfounded suspicion, and hostility, as a mark of the fact that they belong to Christ.

If, however, a believer has not taken up his cross to follow his Lord and Master, the marks of discipleship will not appear in that person's life. Those who do not follow the Lord wholeheartedly may escape much of the unjust criticism directed at times against the true followers of Christ. They may succeed in avoiding many of the hostile accusations and malicious remarks that the Lord Jesus enjoins his servants to endure without retaliation. They may escape the persecution of the world—but perhaps only because they have not proved faithful to their Lord and Master. This principle is expressed by the Scripture that says:

Matthew 10:32-33

³² So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, ³³ but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. (See vv.17-31)

Matthew 10:38-39

³⁸ And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (See vv.34-37)

Such believers, however, will have little experience of spiritual warfare and of standing against the opposition of the world. They will fail to understand the trials and difficulties of the truly faithful people of God. They will be unable to support and encourage these saints because they themselves lack practical experience. Again, they will prove unfit for the Lord's service, simply because they have not prayerfully and actively engaged in the conflict to which God has called them.

Those who belong to Christ must *follow* Christ—regardless of the cost. Those who belong to Christ must *walk* with Christ—regardless of the sufferings that the Lord may call upon them to endure. Those who belong to Christ must *run* with the message of the Gospel—for those who do not belong to Christ will perish without it. There can be no place for sloth, apathy, laziness, prayerlessness, or any other form of inactivity in the lives of God's redeemed people. Discipleship demands full surrender of our lives to Christ's sovereign control. If, however, we will not yield all to him, and if we fail to follow him unreservedly, then we are withholding ourselves from God's rightful control. This is the sin of rebellion.

The way of the cross is the way of suffering. If we would be faithful in persevering for the Master, we must be diligent in following that way—regardless of the cost. As the Scripture says:

Hebrews 6:11-12

¹¹And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹²so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (See Heb. 5:11 - 6:10; cf. Heb. 11:1-40)

The fact that a believer perseveres against apathy, sloth, prayerlessness, and every other lazy inclination, and that he remains diligent in following the Lord under all circumstances, is an evidence of one thing: It demonstrates that he belongs to the Lord, and that he is being kept secure by the power of Almighty God.

Thus, it is written:

Hebrews 10:32-34

³²But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, ³³sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. ³⁴For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. (See vv.19-31)

Hebrews 10:35-39

³⁵Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. ³⁷For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; ³⁸but my righteous one shall live by faith,

and if he shrinks back,
my soul has no pleasure in him." {Hab. 2:3-4}

³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

(3) Perseverance in Doing the Will of God

It is the will of God that the believer should be sanctified. It is, therefore, imperative that the fruits of sanctification are always being produced in increasing measure in each believer's life. Thus, God's Word says:

1 Thessalonians 4:3

³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; (See vv.1-8)

2 Peter 1:4-7

⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. (See vv.1-3)

2 Peter 1:8-9

⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁹ For whoever lacks these qualities is so short-sighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

2 Peter 1:10-11

¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, ¹² be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practise these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹ For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

¹² [2 Peter 1:10](#) Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church. (ESV footnote)

It is the will of God that the believer should engage in good works—works that benefit others, and that bring glory to God. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the believer proves the validity of his faith by his actions. Thus, it is written:

Ephesians 2:10

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (See vv.1-9)

James 2:14-17

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled”, without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (See vv.18-26; see esp. v.26)

It is the will of God that each believer should seek to know the purposes of God for his life. It is, therefore, essential that—once these purposes are clearly known—the believer applies himself with all diligence to fulfilling the will of God. Thus, God’s Word says:

Romans 12:2

² Do not be conformed to this world, ¹³ but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (See v.1)

Ephesians 5:17

¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. (See vv.8-21)

Colossians 1:9-10

⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. (See vv.3-14)

¹³ [Romans 12:2](#) Greek *age*. (ESV footnote)

Whatever God calls him to do, that he must do. Wherever God chooses to send him—whether near or far—there he must go. For however long the Lord chooses to keep him in that service, there he must remain—until the Lord himself directs otherwise. Thus, the Scripture says:

Hebrews 10:36

³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. (See vv.35-39)

1 Peter 4:19

¹⁹ Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good. (See vv.12-18)

The fact that a believer perseveres in doing the will of God in all its various aspects, and under all circumstances, is an evidence that he belongs to the Lord. Again, since he is persevering in the faith, then it is certain that he is being kept secure by the power of Almighty God.

Faithful to God

Perseverance in the fight against sin, against sloth, and in doing the will of God, are three examples of what it means to persevere in our faith and calling unto the end. We could cite many more, but these three examples demonstrate the principle of remaining faithful to God—regardless of the circumstances.

God remains faithful to all his promises, and he has promised to bring every believer safely to glory. For his part, the believer must remain faithful to God in every aspect of his life and work. He must show by his manner of life and conduct that he is persevering in the faith and in his holy calling, against all difficulties, trials and dangers.

The grace of God alone keeps the believer secure. God's grace toward the believer, however, must be matched by a resolute determination on the part of each believer to continually make progress in the faith. Those who are persevering can never become indifferent about doing God's will. For they realise that God has chosen them to live to the praise of his glory, and not for the satisfaction of self. Thus, God's Word declares:

1 Peter 3:13-17

¹³ Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, {*Isaiah 8:12*} ¹⁵ but in your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behaviour in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. (See vv.8-22)

Summary below

Part 7 Summary

BTE15 Summary — Perseverance of the Saints (ESV Edition)

Part 7: Perseverance Involves Spiritual Warfare

Definition

The perseverance of the saints does not produce passivity or spiritual complacency. Although God guarantees the preservation of His people, believers are called to actively engage in spiritual warfare, resisting sin, overcoming spiritual laziness, and faithfully doing the will of God. Perseverance is God's preserving grace working through the believer's continual obedience, diligence, endurance, and faithfulness.

Key Truths

1. **Perseverance does not excuse spiritual complacency** — God's preserving grace calls believers to active faithfulness.
 2. **Every believer is enlisted in spiritual warfare** — Christians are called to engage in conflict against sin, the world, and spiritual evil.
 3. **Believers fight in God's strength** — victory comes through the power of the Lord, not human ability.
 4. **Perseverance involves resisting the deceitfulness of sin** — sin often disguises itself and seeks to harden the heart.
 5. **God's Word is essential for discerning sin** — spiritual maturity grows through knowledge and application of Scripture.
 6. **Perseverance against sin demonstrates genuine faith** — believers continue battling sin because they belong to Christ.
 7. **Perseverance requires overcoming spiritual laziness** — discipleship demands diligence, effort, and wholehearted commitment.
 8. **Faithful disciples must carry the cross** — following Christ often involves sacrifice, suffering, and opposition.
 9. **Spiritual sloth hinders usefulness in God's service** — laziness, prayerlessness, and indifference weaken spiritual growth.
 10. **Believers are called to endurance** — steadfastness is necessary for receiving God's promised reward.
 11. **Perseverance involves doing God's will** — Christians are called to seek, understand, and obey God's purposes.
 12. **Sanctification is God's will for every believer** — growth in holiness is a necessary aspect of perseverance.
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13. **Spiritual fruit should continually increase** — character qualities such as faith, self-control, and love should develop throughout life.
 14. **Good works demonstrate living faith** — genuine faith expresses itself through obedience and service.
 15. **Believers must remain faithful regardless of circumstances** — obedience is required in both ease and hardship.
 16. **Perseverance proves the reality of salvation** — endurance provides evidence that God is preserving His people.
 17. **Faithfulness to God requires continual progress** — believers must not become stagnant or indifferent.
 18. **God's grace preserves believers while motivating obedience** — divine sovereignty and human responsibility work together.
-

Biblical Foundations

Spiritual Warfare

1. **Philippians 1:28-30** — believers are called both to believe in Christ and to suffer for His sake.
2. **Ephesians 6:10-12** — Christians must put on God's armour and stand against spiritual forces of evil.

Perseverance Against Sin

3. **Hebrews 3:13-14** — believers must guard against the deceitfulness of sin and hold firmly to Christ.
4. **Colossians 1:23** (referenced) — believers continue steadfastly in the faith.

Perseverance Against Sloth

5. **Matthew 10:32-33** — faithful believers acknowledge Christ before others.
6. **Matthew 10:38-39** — disciples must take up their cross and follow Christ.
7. **Hebrews 6:11-12** — believers must avoid sluggishness and imitate faithful saints.
8. **Hebrews 10:32-39** — endurance through suffering demonstrates genuine faith.

Perseverance in Doing God's Will

9. **1 Thessalonians 4:3** — God's will is the believer's sanctification.
 10. **2 Peter 1:4-7** — believers are called to grow in Christian character and virtue.
 11. **2 Peter 1:8-11** — increasing spiritual fruit confirms one's calling and election.
 12. **Ephesians 2:10** — believers were created in Christ for good works.
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13. **James 2:14-17** — faith without works is dead.
14. **Romans 12:2** — believers must discern and pursue God's will.
15. **Ephesians 5:17** — Christians are called to understand the Lord's will.
16. **Colossians 1:9-10** — believers should walk worthy of the Lord, bearing fruit.
17. **Hebrews 10:36** — endurance is necessary for receiving God's promises.
18. **1 Peter 4:19** — believers must continue doing good while suffering according to God's will.

Faithfulness Under Opposition

19. **1 Peter 3:13-17** — Christians should remain faithful and zealous for good despite suffering.
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Practical Implications

1. **Do not become complacent because of eternal security** — perseverance requires active participation in God's work.
 2. **Engage daily in spiritual warfare** — resist temptation and stand against the enemy's schemes.
 3. **Study Scripture diligently** — God's Word helps identify and defeat sin.
 4. **Encourage fellow believers regularly** — mutual exhortation strengthens perseverance.
 5. **Reject spiritual laziness and apathy** — cultivate prayer, service, and diligence.
 6. **Take up your cross faithfully** — be willing to endure hardship for Christ.
 7. **Pursue holiness intentionally** — sanctification is not optional for God's people.
 8. **Seek God's will continually** — obedience grows through spiritual discernment.
 9. **Demonstrate faith through good works** — genuine faith produces visible fruit.
 10. **Remain faithful under opposition** — perseverance is revealed during trials.
 11. **Make your calling and election sure** — confirm your faith through a life of growing obedience.
 12. **Depend on God's grace while striving faithfully** — perseverance is both God's gift and the believer's responsibility.
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Summary Sentence

The perseverance of the saints involves an active life of spiritual warfare in which believers, strengthened by God's preserving grace, continually resist sin, overcome spiritual laziness, pursue holiness, perform good works, and faithfully do God's will, thereby demonstrating the reality of their salvation and proving that they are being kept secure by the power of God unto final glory.

Final Summary of entire study follows below

BTE15 (ESV) — Final Summary:

Perseverance of the Saints

Definition

The Perseverance of the Saints is the biblical doctrine that every person whom God has elected, regenerated, justified, adopted, and sealed by the Holy Spirit will certainly continue in faith and holiness until final glorification. Perseverance rests not upon the believer's strength, but upon God's eternal purpose, Christ's finished work, and the preserving power of the Holy Spirit.

Key Teachings

1. Perseverance is Certain for Every True Believer

- Every regenerated child of God will persevere unto the end.
- True believers may stumble, doubt, or suffer periods of spiritual weakness, but they cannot finally fall away from Christ.
- Salvation is secure because it rests upon God's faithfulness rather than human strength.
- Those who are truly born of God cannot ultimately perish.

2. Perseverance Rests on God's Eternal Purpose

- God chose His people in Christ before the foundation of the world.
- Election, calling, justification, sanctification, and glorification form one unbreakable chain.
- God's eternal purpose cannot be frustrated or overturned.
- All whom the Father has given to the Son will certainly come to Him and remain secure in Him.

3. Perseverance is Secured by Christ's Righteousness

- God justifies believers by imputing Christ's perfect righteousness to them.
- The believer stands accepted before God because of Christ's obedience and sacrifice.
- God's verdict of justification can never be reversed.
- Since the believer is justified, he cannot again come under condemnation.

4. Perseverance is Secured by the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit indwells every true believer.
- The Spirit is God's seal and guarantee of the believer's inheritance.

- The Spirit preserves, sanctifies, and prepares believers for glory.
- Those sealed by the Spirit will certainly reach final redemption.

5. Perseverance is Secured by Adoption

- Every believer has been adopted into God's family.
- Believers are children of God and heirs with Christ.
- God disciplines His children, but He never disowns them.
- His fatherly discipline is designed to produce holiness and prepare His children for glory.

6. Perseverance is Secured by God's Love

- God's love for His people is eternal, sovereign, and unchanging.
- Christ loves His people with the same covenant love shared with the Father.
- Nothing in heaven or earth can separate believers from God's love in Christ.
- The God who loved His people before time will love them throughout eternity.

7. Perseverance is Secured by Christ's Atonement

- Christ's sacrifice completely satisfied God's justice.
- His atonement was substitutionary, once-for-all, and eternally effective.
- Believers are justified, reconciled, and delivered from God's wrath through Christ.
- Because Christ's work is perfect and complete, the believer's salvation cannot fail.

8. Perseverance is Secured by God's Power

- Believers are guarded by the power of God through faith.
- Christ is preparing an eternal home for His people.
- The inheritance reserved for believers is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.
- God preserves His people until they receive their promised inheritance.

9. Perseverance Requires Spiritual Warfare

- Assurance of salvation must never lead to complacency.
- Christians are called to engage actively in spiritual warfare.
- Believers must persevere:
 - Against sin.
 - Against spiritual laziness.
 - In doing the will of God.
- Endurance through trials demonstrates the reality of saving faith.

10. Perseverance Must Be Accompanied by Holiness

- Genuine faith always produces spiritual fruit.
 - Holiness is evidence of regeneration and preservation.
 - Good works do not secure salvation, but they demonstrate its reality.
 - Those who belong to Christ increasingly exhibit the fruit of the Spirit.
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Major Biblical Foundations

Security in Christ

- **John 10:27-29** — Christ's sheep can never perish.
- **Romans 8:1** — no condemnation remains for those in Christ.
- **Romans 8:29-30** — God's saving purpose culminates in glorification.
- **Romans 8:35-39** — nothing can separate believers from God's love.
- **John 14:1-3** — Christ prepares an eternal dwelling place for His people.

Security Through the Spirit

- **Ephesians 1:13-14** — the Spirit is the seal and guarantee of inheritance.
- **Ephesians 4:30** — believers are sealed until the day of redemption.
- **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** — God has sealed believers and given His Spirit as a guarantee.

Security Through God's Purpose

- **Ephesians 1:4-5,11** — believers were chosen and predestined in Christ.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:24** — God is faithful and will complete His work.
- **1 Peter 1:3-5** — believers are guarded by God's power.

Perseverance and Holiness

- **John 15:2,6** — fruitfulness marks true branches.
 - **Hebrews 12:14** — holiness is essential.
 - **2 Peter 1:5-11** — believers must diligently cultivate Christian virtues.
 - **James 2:17** — faith without works is dead.
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Practical Implications

1. **Rest in God's faithfulness rather than your own strength.**
 2. **Do not allow temporary doubts to undermine confidence in God's promises.**
 3. **Pursue holiness as evidence of genuine faith.**
 4. **View trials as opportunities to demonstrate perseverance.**
 5. **Engage actively in spiritual warfare against sin.**
 6. **Remain diligent in prayer, Scripture, and obedience.**
 7. **Receive God's discipline as proof of His fatherly love.**
 8. **Take comfort in God's eternal love and preserving grace.**
 9. **Remember that Christ's atonement is fully sufficient for all your sins.**
 10. **Live in hope of the inheritance reserved in heaven.**
 11. **Seek continually to make your calling and election sure through faithful living.**
 12. **Persevere faithfully until Christ returns or calls you home.**
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Final Summary Statement

The perseverance of the saints teaches that all whom God has elected, regenerated, justified, adopted, redeemed, and sealed by the Holy Spirit will certainly continue in faith and holiness until they are glorified. Their security rests entirely upon God's eternal purpose, Christ's perfect righteousness and atoning sacrifice, the preserving power of the Holy Spirit, and the unchanging love of God. Therefore, every true believer is eternally secure in Christ, yet is called to demonstrate that reality through steadfast faith, ongoing holiness, spiritual warfare, and faithful obedience until the end.

Key Teaching

God preserves all who truly belong to Christ, and those whom God preserves will persevere in faith, holiness, and obedience until they enter their eternal inheritance in glory.

END

