

To Glorify and Enjoy God

LESSON 22: DELIGHTING IN THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Intro:

BIG IDEA: Rejoice in God who _____ you in _____.

WSC 36: What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A: The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of grace, and **perseverance therein to the end**.

WLC 79: May not believers, by reason of their imperfections, and the many temptations and sins they are overtaken with, fall away from the state of grace?

A: True believers, by reason of the unchangeable love of God, and his decree and covenant to give them perseverance, in their inseparable union with Christ, his continual intercession for them, and the Spirit and seed of God abiding in them, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

- "True believers" which indicates there can be _____ ones.
- Scripture indicates there are counterfeit believers like Judas and _____.
- True believers are not _____ but still experience temptations and sins.
- The _____ of every sin resides in your heart, awaiting only the right circumstances.
- The issue is not with the _____ of sin but rather with _____ of salvation.
- Arminians & Roman Catholics believe that Christians can _____ from the state of _____.
- Reformed Arminians teach "eternal _____" or "once saved always saved."

"If any person shall say that a man who has been justified cannot lose grace, and that, therefore, he who falls and sins was never truly justified, he shall be accursed." **The Council of Trent**²¹⁸

"That those who are incorporated into Christ by a true faith, and have thereby become partakers of his life-giving Spirit, have thereby full power to strive against Satan, sin, the world, and their own flesh, and to win the victory; it being well understood that it is every trough the assisting grace of the Holy Spirit; and that Jesus Christ assists them through his Spirit in all temptations, extends to them his hand, and if only they are ready for the conflict, and desire his help, and are not inactive, keeps them from falling, so that they, by no craft or power of Satan, can be misled nor plucked out of Christ's hands, according to the word of Christ, John 10:28. ... But whether they are capable, through negligence, of forsaking again the first beginnings of their life in Christ, of again returning to this present evil world, of turning away from the holy doctrine

²¹⁸ Decree on Justification, canon 23

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which was delivered them, of losing a good conscience, of becoming devoid of grace, that must be more particularly determined out of the Holy Scriptures, before we ourselves can teach it with full persuasion of our minds.” *The Five Arminian Articles* (1610)²¹⁹

“Let it be observed that the true doctrine is *not* that salvation is certain if we have once believed, but that *perseverance in holiness* is certain if we have truly believed.” **A.A. Hodge**²²⁰

1. They, whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

- We have to _____ with the fact that we are “_____ in his Beloved”.
- Our justification rests on Christ’s _____, so our sin doesn’t _____ that act.
- We are _____, _____ and _____ accepted in Christ.
- True believers have been effectually _____; born of imperishable _____.
- True believers have been sanctified or _____ by the Spirit who is our down payment.
- We have been _____, or have God’s seal of ownership, in the Spirit.
- There is a _____ & _____ in this phrase.
- We may continue in sin for a time, but will not _____ in it until we die.
- We see here God’s _____ of us by His _____.
- We also see our _____ by God’s _____ until the end.
- Hodges & Ryrie: justification is _____ from regeneration & sanctification.
- They believe that God may _____ us, but doesn’t then _____ us.
Ryrie’s “unbelieving believer”²²¹

...²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ... **1 Peter 1**

- Peter reminds these Christians they have been born again (_____).
- Regeneration is not a _____ flower. It is _____, not perishable.
- This is because regeneration is through the _____ & _____ Word of God.
- Imperishable seed will grow & bear _____ despite seasons of drought & flood.

²¹⁹ Schaff, Vol, 3, pp. 548-9.

²²⁰ Hodge, pp. 235.

²²¹ Ryrie, Charles. *So Great Salvation: What It Means to Believe in Jesus Christ*. Wheaton, Victor. 1989, pp. 141.

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“We persevere only because God, in his grace and power, preserves us. In and of ourselves, each one of us is capable of serious and radical falling, such as we saw in the life of David and in the life of Peter.” **R.C. Sproul**²²²

2. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ, the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace: from all which arises also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

- Perseverance is not _____ on our free will, since our will is _____.
- Perseverance depends on God’s eternal and unchangeable _____ of election.
- Perseverance is the _____ of the plan of salvation begun in election.
- It flows from God the Father’s _____ (unforced) & unchanging _____.
- It was this _____ that prompted the Father to send the Son to save sinners.
- This is the love of _____, which can’t change depending on our choices.²²³
- As a father _____ loves his children the Father _____ loves His children.
- The love of _____ is the love of a father toward his children which can change.
- It _____ with obedience and is _____ with their disobedience.
- It is the difference between _____ & _____.²²⁴
- Perseverance depends on the _____ & _____ of Christ.
- It depends on the _____ of the Holy Spirit who works in us to preserve us.
- It depends on the imperishable seed to God born in us thru the ministry of the _____.
- It depends on the nature of the _____ of grace by which we are _____.

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. **Hebrews 7**

- This is in the section on Christ as our _____ High _____.

²²² Sproul, pp. 202.

²²³ See *Antinomianism: Reformed Theology’s Unwelcome Guest?* by Mark Jones.

²²⁴ See *Union & Communion with Christ* by Maurice Roberts.

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- He is not able to save us just a _____, or _____.
- Jesus' able to save us from beginning to end rests on His earthly & _____ ministry.
- His superiority over the Aaronic priesthood includes the power of His _____ life.
- His resurrection and _____ mean He remains in office serving us by _____ us.

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor 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. **Romans 8**

- Paul focused on the _____ of our salvation from beginning to end.
- We are not _____ from the love of Christ, but are more than conquerors.
- They may _____ us but do not _____ us.
- They can't _____ the _____ we have received as a result of election!

“What it is really based upon is the character of God. ... He has an eternal purpose that he is executing in his plan of salvation for his people, for the elect.” **R.C. Sproul**²²⁵

“If their perseverance depended on their own resolution, their faith would soon fail.” **Robert Shaw**²²⁶

“If Christ made satisfaction on the cross for the sins of his people- not for some of them only, but for them all, as we are expressly assured- it would be contrary to justice to subject them also to the punishment.” **Robert Shaw**²²⁷

“The perseverance of believers in grace is wrought by the Holy Spirit, not irrespective of, but through, the free will of man himself.” **A.A. Hodge**²²⁸

3. Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins; and, for a time, continue therein: whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve his Holy Spirit, come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded; hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.

- Though _____ by God & _____ in faith we can _____ serious _____.

²²⁵ Sproul, pp. 203.

²²⁶ Shaw, pp. 174.

²²⁷ Shaw, pp. 178.

²²⁸ Hodge, pp. 236.

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- We experience the _____ presented by Satan and the world (1 Jn. 2).
- We are tempted because of the remaining _____ in us. We aren't perfect.
- Remaining corruption also leads us to _____ the means of our preservation.
- The _____ opposes the _____ who works in us to pray, read ...
- We need to make use of the _____ of grace in our struggle against _____.
- We not only may _____ in that grievous sin for a _____.
- While _____ they _____ the Father & grieve the Holy Spirit.
- Still justified. But the Father is _____ when we sin => _____.
- We may also be _____ of some graces or _____ while in sin.
- Our hearts can become _____, while we pursue sinful courses of action.
- Our grievous sins _____ & _____ others: spouses, kids, parents, congregations...
- Such grievous sins can bring the _____ judgments on us.

¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. **1 John 2**

¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. **James 1**

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ... **Hebrews 12**

“From the other side we see that God, while not ceasing to love his children, is **wondrously angry** toward them; not because he is disposed of himself to hate them, but because he would frighten them by the feeling of his wrath in order to humble their fleshly pride, shake off their sluggishness, and around them to repentance.” **John Calvin**²²⁹

“Though our final destiny is secure because of God’s preservation, there can be serious and radical falls along the way- not because of some weakness in God, but because of some weakness in us.” **R.C. Sproul**²³⁰

“When I sin, I incur the displeasure of God and grieve the Holy Spirit. I also wound, hurt, and scandalize others in the faith. ... He who rescued us the first time will continue the rescue operation until he brings us home to himself, safe and sound.” **R.C. Sproul**²³¹

²²⁹ Calvin, (III, II, 12) pp. 557.

²³⁰ Sproul, pp. 212.

²³¹ Sproul, pp. 215.

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“While guilt is gone and the reign of sin has ended, sin continues to indwell us and to beset us. It still has the potential to deceive us and to allure us. Once we understand this, we will not confuse the ongoing presence of sin with the absence of new life in us. Without that stability in our understanding, our assurance will be liable to ebb and flow.” **Sinclair Ferguson**²³²

“The exercise of grace may be interrupted, but the principle of grace, once implanted, shall never be entirely extirpated.” **Robert Shaw**²³³

How does this help you to glorify and enjoy God?

Conclusion:

²³² Ferguson, *The Whole Christ*, pp. 218-9.

²³³ Shaw, pp. 177.