

## Amazing Grace: Intro to Reformed Theology

### Week 8 – *Perseverance of the Saints*

*Reformed Theology* – “An expression of the Christian faith that is centered and grounded on the Sovereignty of God in all things.”

The 5 Points of Calvinism (main distinctive of RT)

- T – total depravity
- U – unconditional election
- L – limited atonement
- I – irresistible grace
- **P – perseverance of the saints**

Can a person lose their salvation? “If you have it you will never lose it. If you lose it you never had it.” – RC Sproul

#### Salvation is of the Lord

- Salvation by grace, through faith, in Christ alone!
- Ephesians 2
- Works don’t get you into heaven and works can’t get you out of heaven.
- Salvation is solely on the basis of Jesus’ work. It is final!

#### Persevering to the End

- Romans 8:29 – “golden chain of salvation”
- Romans 8:31-39 – Eternal Assurance/Security through Faith
- Philippians 1:6 – What God begins, he finishes

#### The Preserving Grace of God

- John 10:27-29 – The preserving care of the Shepherd
- Hebrews 7:25 – The preserving intercession of the High Priest
- Ephesians 1:13 – The preserving seal of the Spirit

### **Why Does It Matter? (practical application)**

- Real security in the face of suffering and death.
- Redirected focus on Jesus, and away from ourselves.
- Motivation towards holiness.
- Hope in the midst of discouragement and trials.

“Not strong enough to fall away as long as God has resolved to hold you.” – JI Packer

## Reflection Questions

1. What is a proper definition of the doctrine of perseverance of the saints?

What would you say to someone who said, “This doctrine teaches that someone can live a life of reckless sin and without concern for Christ, but will be saved anyway because he once prayed to accept Jesus”? Is that an accurate statement? What does saving faith look like?

2. In light of everything that has come before (total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace), how does the doctrine of perseverance relate to the rest?

Consider the main points of the Reformation:  
salvation in  
Christ alone (**solus Christus**)  
by grace alone (**sola gratia**)  
through faith alone (**sola fide**)  
to the glory of God alone (**solus Deo gloria**)  
as revealed in the Scriptures alone (**sola Scriptura**).

In the same way, how does Reformed theology truly emphasize these other Protestant doctrines?

3. Read Romans 8:31-39. How does this passage relate to the idea of perseverance? How does the Arminian argument that salvation *can* be lost fail to capture the confidence with which Paul speaks about the absolute certainty of our salvation in Christ?
4. One danger of misunderstanding the doctrine of perseverance is that some have thought that they could only ever feel confident about their salvation if they had a powerful, subjective conversion experience. Some Puritans went so far as to not allow someone to become a full member without having such an experience!

How is that understanding a misconception of salvation? What if someone doesn't have an experience like that – should they doubt that Christ has saved them if they truly believe? Why should this doctrine point us away from us and our subjective experience *toward Christ*?

5. How does this doctrine make a difference to you on a personal level? How can this help increase your confidence? How does this change the way you relate to others?