

- God the Holy Spirit  
*Ephesians 1:13-14*, “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, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

**Summary** = Westminster Confession 17.1-2 (modern English)

17.1. Those whom God has 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 in it to the end and be eternally saved.

17.2. The perseverance of the saints does not depend upon their own free will, but on the unchangeableness of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; on the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ; on the continuing presence of the Spirit and the seed of God within them; and on the nature of the covenant of grace. These are grounds of the certainty and infallibility of their perseverance.

**Discuss**

1. How have we been warned? Encouraged?
2. Why do we need both warnings and encouragements?

**A hymn: A debtor to mercy alone**

**Perseverance: keeping going as a Christian**

Romans 8:28-39

**Discuss:**

- What do you think is *hardest* about being a Christian? What's *best*?

**1. Not everyone who says they believe will persevere**

**(a) “falling away” or apostasy is real**

*Matthew 13:20-21*, “As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away”

*See also Matt. 24:10-12, John 15:1-2,6, 1 Tim. 1:19, 4:1, 2 Tim. 4:10*

“It is possible to give all the outward signs of faith in Christ and obedience to him, to witness for a time a good confession and show great zeal for Christ and his kingdom and then lose all interest and become indifferent, if not hostile, to the claims of Christ and of his kingdom.”” John Murray,

*Redemption accomplished and applied*

**(b) Understanding apostasy and false faith**

*Hebrews 6:4-6*, “For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup> and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, <sup>6</sup> and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.”

*Hebrews 10:29*, “How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?”

*See also 2 Peter 2:20-22.*

*1 John 2:19*, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

## **2. Real saints must PERSEVERE**

*Matthew 24:13*, “But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”

*John 8:31*, “... If you abide in my word you are truly my disciples.”

*John 15:6*, “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.”

*1 Corinthians 9:27*, “But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.”

*1 Corinthians 15:1-2*, “Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.”

*Colossians 1:23*, “if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard...”

*Also Matt. 10:22, Hebrews 3:6,14, 10:36-39, 2 Peter 1:10-11, 1 John 2:19*

## **3. Saints persevere because they are PRESERVED by God**

### **(a) God has planned an unbreakable chain of salvation**

*Romans 8:28-30*

*Psalm 37:23-24*, “The steps of a man are established by the Lord, when he delights in his way; though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord upholds his hand.

*Also: Psalm 73:1-2, 23, Romans 5:8-10, 1 Cor 3:15, 1 Peter 1:5*

### **(b) Each person of the Trinity works to keep us**

- God the Father

*John 10:28-29*, “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 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.”

*See also 1 Corinthians 1:8-9, Philippians 1:6.*

- God the Son

*John 6:37-40*, “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. <sup>38</sup>For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. <sup>39</sup>And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. <sup>40</sup>For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.””

*Romans 8:31-39*

*Hebrews 7:25*, “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.”