

SS Doctrine 2 Perseverance of the Saints

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Last week we laid a foundation for our study of Biblical doctrine with the Bible's claim that it is the Word of God and that it is true and accurate.

Let's review just a few Bible verses...

2 Tim 3:16 ... **All Scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for **doctrine**, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

All Scripture is God breathed... every word was planned by God and is being preserved and protected by God Himself.

Jer 1:12 for I will hasten my word to perform it... I will watch over My Word...

Psalms 12:6 The words of the LORD are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times.
⁷ You shall keep them, O LORD, **You shall preserve them** from this generation... **forever**.

Prov 30:5 **Every word of God is pure**: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth shall pass away:
words shall not pass away.

but my

Then Peter tells us that God's Word is not only true... but that it is even more reliable than what we see or hear with our own eyes and ears...

2 Pet 1:18 ¹⁸ **And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount (of Transfiguration)...** but...¹⁹ **We have also a more sure word of prophecy**; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.

And Peter writes that some of the things God has told in His Word are difficult to understand... they don't mesh with our human thinking...

2 Pet 3:14... ¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; ¹⁵ and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, **according to the wisdom given to him**, has written to you, ¹⁶ as also in **all his epistles**, speaking in them of these things, in which **some things are hard to understand**, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction...

God said, in **Isaiah 55**... “For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are your* ways My ways,” says the LORD.
⁹ “For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Nevertheless, **God's Word is true... it is complete... it is perfect...**

And God is not bound by our human understanding.

Then in verse 20, he tells us God's Word has a correct interpretation, one interpretation, God's interpretation...

²⁰ Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. ²¹ For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. God's Word is perfect, but our understanding is not necessarily so...

Now we will begin to look at... Salvation.

Soteriology is the study of Salvation... God's purpose in Salvation, His method in Salvation and the extent of His Salvation of us, His children.

His purpose in salvation is often misunderstood. Many believe that God first created a perfect world because He wanted children to have relationship with. Then sin happened and God had to develop a plan B to redeem His fallen world and so, He is now pleading with lost man to come to Him... 'Oh please come to me so I can save you... so I can have that relationship I so crave... please.'

First... God needs nothing. He craves nothing. He is complete within Himself, within the relationship of the Trinity, the perfect union and fellowship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

God plans and accomplishes completely... all His will.

His will, His plan, His purpose in everything He does is first and foremost... His glory... the glory of God.

Mal 1:11 from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name *shall be* great among the Gentiles... For My name shall be great among the nations," Says the LORD of hosts.

Isa 5:16 But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, And God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness.

Psa 46:10 Be still, and know that I *am* God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

All Scripture teaches us God's method of Salvation... through our faith in the life, death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as full payment for our sin. This is where so many fall in their understanding of Salvation... that Jesus paid the **full price for all the sin** of everyone who comes to Him... all sin... past, present and future... forever.

Psa 103:12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Isa 38:17 But You have lovingly *delivered* my soul from the pit of corruption, For You have cast all my sins behind Your back.

Isa 43:25 "I, *even* I, *am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake;
And I will not remember your sins.

That brings us to the **extent** of God's Salvation.

We must never make the mistake of thinking that God is in any way answerable to us, or in any way bound by our fallen view of what is fair and right and good... we'll come back to that...

God's Word teaches us that His Salvation is **Complete and Forever**.

The hallmark of every false religion and cult is their deviation from this central fact of Scripture.

Every false religion denies the sufficiency of Christ's atoning death on the Cross. Something must always be added to it... works of righteousness or penance... and even then, no one can know for sure they are saved.

The Mormons have their special rules and extra works...

The Jehovah's Witnesses have their special rules and extra works...

The Catholics have their special rules and extra works...

Tragically, the same is true of many branches of the Church... the Nazarenes, the Pentecostals, the Charismatics and many others... all teach that Salvation is only conditional, temporary, even probation-ary until you finally make it to death as a righteous person, and your righteousness is ultimately determined by your own good works.

Conditional Eternal Life / Temporary, Probationary Eternal Life

In other words... not really 'Eternal' Life.

Every time you sin, you must quickly confess and ask forgiveness... otherwise, you can be lost again.

What does God's Word say?

Ecc 3:14 I know that whatever God does, It shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it.

Psalms 18:30 *As for God, His way is perfect;*

Psalms 145:17 *The LORD is righteous in all His ways, Gracious in all His works.*

Deuteronomy 32:4 *He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.*

Heb 7:25 ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him... since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Let's look at that intercession of Jesus Christ... for us...

John 17... 1. Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ² as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent...

⁶ "I have manifested Your name to the men whom **You have given Me** out of the world. ***They were Yours, You gave them to Me...***

⁹ "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom **You have given Me**, for they are Yours. ¹⁰ And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and ***I am glorified in them.***

He said, I am glorified in them... why... because they are now perfectly sinless? No... because even in those 11 guys... still sinners, still doubters, still fearful... God was glorifying Himself in them... the glorification of Himself is also His work... He is doing it. Salvation is God's work... that is why it is perfect and complete. Then...

¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them through Your name... those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as *We are*. ¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, Judas, that the Scripture might be fulfilled...

¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. *Satan has no power or access to us except what is specifically granted to him by God.*

¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Sanctify them... our sanctification is also God's work... we don't make ourselves holy... He does it... Remember Phpp 2:13... for it is God Who is at work within you... both to will and to do for His good pleasure

Jesus continues... ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

John 6:37 ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me **I should lose nothing**, but should raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰ And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Everything God thinks, plans, says and does is good, righteous and perfect.

God does not do, think or say something because it is good, righteous and perfect... Rather, something is good, righteous and perfect **because God does it.**

Do you see the difference... God is not bound by any human understanding of goodness.

What He does is good because He does it... He is good. He is righteous, He is perfect.

One of those things which Paul teaches, over and over, that Peter said are hard to understand, that are difficult for many to grasp and hold on to...

Salvation is Eternal... Salvation is forever. Salvation is God's gift to us... eternal life... which describes not merely its duration, but even more, its quality... eternal life is the life of God. He places His eternal Holy Spirit in us... and He is one with our newly created spirit never to leave.. He said, I will never leave you or forsake you.

Once a person is saved, truly born again... that salvation is forever.

Sometimes called, **once saved, always saved...** which is essentially true, but then we must be quick to explain what is not true.

A person is not saved by simply saying a prayer or by asking Jesus to be their friend or even asking Jesus into their hearts or by saying Yes to Jesus or by joining a church or by being accepted by church.

Remember what Jesus said in Matt 7:21 ²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Jesus is speaking of these last days (He said, in that day) when there would be many... many who think of themselves as saved, who refer to Him as Lord... but they would be disastrously, eternally mistaken. And notice that He says... 'I never knew you!' These are not people who once were saved but are no longer.

Look at Jude 24. This is Jude, the brother of Jesus and James. In benediction he writes... Now to Him who is able to keep you from falling, And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, ²⁵ To God our Savior...

This is what God teaches us about our salvation... His salvation for us... God is the One Who keeps us secure. He is the One Who keeps us from falling.

Yes, we all stumble in many ways at many times... but He continually draws us to Himself... He keeps us moving forward... ever onward...

This Doctrine is better called, the Perseverance of the Saints...

If we are truly born again, God will, by His Holy Spirit in us, cause us to persevere... to continue on... We may fall, we will sin, but we will never fall irretrievably to be abandoned by God... we are His children.

Matt 18:12 ¹² "What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? ¹³ And when he finds it... assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that *sheep* than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. ¹⁴ Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

Isa 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done,
Saying, 'My counsel shall stand,
And I will do all My pleasure

Psa 33:11 But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Isa 14:24 The LORD Almighty has sworn, "Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will happen.

The parable of the Prodigal Son is God's perfect example of this.

Remember what Jesus said... depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!

John writes in 1 John 3:5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. ⁶ Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. ⁸ He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

What is John saying here... Christians don't sin? Obviously not, because he is the one who wrote just 2 chapters earlier... in 1:8, ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

Remember, he said, He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.

If you practice righteousness, it is proof you are saved.

If you practice sin, it is proof you are not saved.

You shall know them by their fruit...

Remember Jesus said, depart from Me, you who practice lawless-ness! I never knew you.

What about someone who is saved and then changes his mind...

It does not happen...

In 1 John 2:18 John writes... ¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. 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 they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

We have too often believed... my salvation depends on me... that I am good enough... or I stay good enough...

Salvation is God's work, from beginning to end.

Phpp 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

He Who began a good work in You... He is the One Who will complete it... He is the One Who is at work within you.

He chose us for Himself, before He even created the world, and He did so for His own purposes and His glory... accomplishing His will.

Eph 1:4 Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

He made us acceptable... not He is making us acceptable... not He will make us acceptable... He did, once for all make us acceptable.

He made us perfect in Christ... an already accomplished fact...

Heb 10:12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified... "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.

⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins... according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself... In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will... ¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Just as Noah was sealed into the Ark by God... we have been sealed inside of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.

Just as no one could have unsealed the Ark before its time to be opened, no one can unseal us until the time we are presented faultless, perfect and complete... before God's throne.

John 10:27 ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone 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 My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one."

1 Pet 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Remember, this is Peter writing, saying that our inheritance is reserved in Heaven and that it won't fade, but is kept for us by the power of God.

This is the same Peter who blew it time and time again... especially when He actually denied Jesus not once, but 3 times. If anyone might have cause to doubt his salvation, that he was not good enough, it was Peter. Yet Peter declares the certainty of our salvation.

Our salvation does not depend on us.

In one sense, it is not even about us.

How can that be?

You see, all humans belong to God. He has chosen some for salvation, for His own reasons... He has given each one of us to His Son, as a gift. God the Father would never give His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ some kind of 'maybe it's a gift and maybe it's not... we'll have to wait and see how it all plays out.'

We are the Father's love gift to His Son.

Remember Ecc 3:14... I know that whatever God does, It shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it.

Whatever God does... It shall be forever.

Isaiah 45:17 *But* Israel shall be saved by the LORD With an everlasting salvation; You shall not be ashamed or disgraced Forever and ever.

saved by the LORD With an everlasting salvation... has Israel deserved to be saved? Not at all! But God's choice stands according to election.

What if that only means Israel? just a few verses later in 22... "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I *am* God, and there *is* no other. ²³ I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth *in* righteousness, And shall not return

God said, in Rom. 9 "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.

Rev 7:10 "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

Rev 19:1 "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God.

Psalms 37:39 But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD:

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: ...

Salvation is all God's work from beginning to end.

He plans it... He accomplishes it... He finishes it.

Heb 12:1 ...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith.

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