

## The Five Points of Calvinism: Perseverance of the Saints

Also known as: *preservation of the saints, eternal security, "Once saved, always saved."*

From the Westminster Catechism:

I. **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.

II. 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 ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

III. Nevertheless **they may**, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevelancy of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their perseverance, **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.

In simple English: *The elect of God cannot lose their salvation. Their salvation and continued faithfulness is guaranteed because the power of God' is active in their lives and he will always achieve his purposes.*

**Questions:** Can we lose our salvation? What if I mess up really badly? What if I turn away from God completely?

### The unbroken chain

"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. And those whom he **predestined** he also **called**, and those whom he called he also **justified**, and those whom he justified he also **glorified.**" (Rom 8:29-30)

### We are sealed with the Spirit as a pledge

"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." (Eph 1:13-14)

"And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also **put his seal on us** and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee." (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

### How can we be sure we'll persevere?

"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, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who **by God's power are being guarded** through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1Peter 1:3-5)

### What about those who profess faith but fall away?

"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." (1John 2:19)

"Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, **does not have God**. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son." (2 John 1:9)

Jesus said to him, "**No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit** for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)

### Encouragement for the faithful

"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, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. **Consider him who endured** from sinners such hostility against himself, **so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.**" (Heb 12:1-3)

"Therefore, brothers, **be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election**, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall." (2 Peter 1:10)

"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." (Phi 2:12-13)

### Encouragement for screwups

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 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." (John 10:27-29)

"Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but **I press on** to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: **forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead**, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Phi 3:12-14)

"but **I have prayed for you**, that your faith may not fail..." (Luke 22:32).

"Now to him **who is able to keep you from stumbling** and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy..." (Jude 1:24)

"And I am sure of this, that **he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion** at the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

### The REAL point of TULIP

GOD  
SAVES  
SINNERS