

Of The Perseverance of the Saints, Part 1 (Philippians 1:6)

Baptist Confession of Faith (1689) Chapter 17, Paragraph 1

Doctrine: Concerning Three Christian Certainties

The Certainty of Perseverance

- Those whom God has accepted in the beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, and given the precious faith of His elect unto, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace (2 Tim 2:19).
- They shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved (Jn 10:28-29).
- For those who 'fall away' from faith, the issue is not that they 'lost' their salvation, it was that they were never saved (1 Jn 2:19).
- God's gifts and callings are without repentance (Num 23:19).
- We are persevered by the grace of God as He continues to beget and nourish in the Christian unto immortality:
 - i. Faith: In the LORD our God and His promises
 - ii. Repentance: Turning from sin to obedience
 - iii. Love: For God, His Church, and our neighbour
 - iv. Joy: Which comes with the Christian's fellowship with the triune God and one another
 - v. Hope: Confidence in the truthfulness of God's promises
 - vi. All the graces of the Spirit: Which are for the glory of God in the edification of His people and the advancing of His Kingdom
- God perseveres and nourishes His church by the [supernatural] work of His Spirit blessing the [natural] ordinary means of grace.

The Certainty of Trials

- Many storms and floods will arise and beat against the Christian.

i. Temptations

ii. Sin, the yielding to temptation and breaking of God's Law

iii. Sufferings of life

iv. Persecution for Christ's sake

- Through unbelief and the temptation of Satan, the sensible sight of the light and love of God may for a time be clouded and obscured from the Christian.
 - i. Doubt in salvation
 - ii. Depression/Anxiety
 - iii. Accusation from Satan and Remorse over past sin
- The Christian's life will be filled with trouble (Jn 16:33).

The Certainty of God's Faithfulness

- Yet, such trials shall never be able to take the believer off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon.
- God is still the same yesterday, today and forever (Mal 3:6).
- He will keep His church by His power unto salvation, wherein they shall enjoy their purchased possession.
- Christians are engraven, as it were, on the palm of His hands, their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.

Applications

- 1) Faith in Christ alone: Trusting His power and promises, counting them as both true and precious.
- 2) Faithfulness to Christ: Loving obedience and worship
- 3) Preparation for Suffering: By understanding the nature of it, and by storing up, as it were, the recollection of His faithfulness.
- 4) Perseverance through Suffering
- 5) Diligent Use of the Ordinary Means of Grace