



GLORY of CHRIST FELLOWSHIP

ON THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH, 1647

Chapter 17: Of the Perseverance of the Saints

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. (Phil 1:6; 2 Pet 1:10; John 10:28-29; 1 John 3:9; 1 Pet 1:5, 9).

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. (2 Tim 2:18-19; Jer 31:3; Heb 10:10, 14; Heb 13:20-21; Heb 9:12-15; Rom 8:33-39; John 17:11, 24; Luke 22:32; Heb 7:25; John 14:16-17; 1 John 2:27; 1 John 3:9; Jer 32:40; John 10:28; 2 Thess 3:3; 1 John 2:19).

III. Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, 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. (Matt 26:70, 72, 74; Ps 51 title and v 14; Is 64:5, 7, 9; 2 Sam 11:27; Eph 4:30; Ps 51:8, 10, 12; Rev 2:4; Cant 5:2, 3, 4, 6; Is 63:17; Mark 6:52; Mark 16:14; Ps 32:3, 4; Ps 51:8; 2 Sam 12:14; Ps 89:31, 32; 1 Cor 11:32).

Chapter 18: Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation

I. Although hypocrites and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions of being in the favour of God, and estate of salvation; which hope of theirs shall perish: yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love Him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before Him, may, in this life, be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed. (Job 8:13, 14; Mic 3:11; Deut 29:19; John 8:41; Matt 7:22, 23; 1 John 2:3; 1 John 3:14, 18, 19, 21, 24; 1 John 5:13; Rom 5:2, 5).

II. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God: which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption. (Heb 6:11, 19; Heb 6:17, 18; 2 Pet 1:4, 5, 10, 11; 1 John 2:3; 1 John 3:14; 2 Cor 1:12; Rom 8:15-16; Eph 1:13, 14; Eph 4:30; 2 Cor 1:21, 22).

III. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it: yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure; that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance; so far is it from inclining men to looseness. (1 John 5:13; Is 1, 10; Mark 9:24; Ps 88 throughout, Ps 77:1-12; 1 Cor 2:12, 1 John 4:13; Heb 6:11-12; Eph 3:17-19; 2 Pet 1:10; Rom 5:1, 2, 5; Rom 9:17; Rom 15:13; Eph 1: 3-4; Ps 4:6-7; Ps 119:32; 1 John 2:1-2; Rom 6:1-2; Tit 2:11, 12, 14; 2 Cor 7:1; Rom 8:1, 12; 1 John 3:2-3; Ps 130:4; 1 John 1:6-7).

IV. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation, by God's withdrawing the light of His countenance, and suffering even such as fear Him to walk in darkness and to have no light: yet are they never utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart, and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may, in due time, be revived; and by the which, in the mean time, they are supported from utter despair. (Cant 5:2, 3, 6; Ps 51:8, 12, 14; Eph 4:30-31; Ps 77:1-10; Matt 26:69-72; Ps 31:22; Ps 88; Is 1, 10; 1 John 3:9; Luke 22:32; Job 13:15; Ps 73:15; Ps 51:8, 12; Is 1, 10; Mic 7:7-9; Jer 32:40, Is 54:7-10; Ps 22:1; Ps 88).

* See also the *Glory of Christ Fellowship Elder Affirmation of Faith*, Section 9: The Justifying Act of God, and Section 10: God's Work in Faith and Sanctification. (You can access this document at www.gcfmn.org – About Us – Elder Affirmation of Faith, or you can request an electronic or written copy from info@gcfmn.org and we will provide you with one).