

# Saved By Grace XI – Persevering Grace: Grace That Never Ends

**Introduction** – Often called ‘the perseverance of the saints’, once again, misunderstanding abounds. Paul argued vehemently against the idea that once you were saved by grace you would complete your salvation by your own perseverance. True saints *will* persevere, but the efficacious power comes from the persevering grace of God upon those saints, not their own gumption. We are “...confident of this very thing, that **He who has begun a good work in you will complete it** until the day of Jesus Christ” – Phil 1:6.

In the modern church, the emphasis of the gospel is upon ‘*your decision*’ that *you* must make to be saved. It is no wonder that many would then understand that *you* can go back on *your* decision and lose *your* salvation. But this is not what the scriptures teach.

**Grace That Saves to the End** (Rom 8:28-39) – If the point is that nothing can separate us from the love of God, how can we be left assuming that something can? A classic objection is that our own personal decision is an internal thing, unlike this list of external threats. But these external threats are the very temptations by which men are led to fall away. If an internal decision to abandon Christ was the thing that would cause me to lose my salvation, what comfort could this passage possibly be?

**God’s Work, Not Mine** (John 10:28-29) – We should consider each phrase.

“**Eternal life**” – Either what you have received is temporal or eternal. If it is temporal, it could (and will) come to an end. Jesus is as clear as day – it is eternal.

“**And they shall never perish**” – If one could lose his salvation, he could perish.

“**No one can snatch them out of My hand**” – We ask the wrong questions. Rather than asking if I could lose my salvation, we should ask if God can lose us. We cannot lose our salvation because it is not our salvation to lose. You were bought with a price (1 Cor 6:20).

“**My Father....is greater than all...**” God is omnipotent. He is greater than all external temptations and all inward corruptions which war against our souls.

**This Work is Sealed with the Holy Spirit** (Eph 1:13-14) – A seal was used to guarantee the sealed item’s authenticity, to indicate that it belonged to someone, and to protect it. This seal is also described as a pledge, an earnest payment. Anyone who had received this seal and later went to hell would take the Holy Spirit with him.

**How Powerful is the Power of God?** (1 Pet 1:4-5) – There is a promise that if we have been saved, we are guarded in that salvation by God Himself. Our perseverance is based upon God’s preservation, protection, and power.

**Falling Away Passages** – Some argue that the following passages teach that you can lose your salvation. Let’s consider.

“**it is impossible...if they fall away**” (Heb 6:4-6) – There is an effectual call of the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit works upon creation in many ways. It is possible to partake of the Holy Spirit in a way that does not lead to regeneration. In the context of Hebrews, the author is warning about a foundation being laid about Christ but not pressing on in faith to know Christ. This is more evident in the warnings in Chapter 10:26-31. There was a day that a man could offer up sacrifices in the temple in faith, but that day is now gone for the perfect sacrifice, the Antitype, has come and been offered. To turn back is to reveal that you do not have that faith in Christ’s sacrifice. Therefore, these are not passages about those who are regenerate losing their salvation.

“**denying the sovereign Lord who bought them**” (2 Peter 2) – Peter is describing false teachers. But false teachers do not announce themselves as ‘false teachers’. They declare themselves to be true believers, redeemed by Christ. Their warped teaching eventually reveals the fact that they are denying the very ‘Lord who bought them’. They are not proclaiming the Christ of the scriptures. They are proclaiming another Christ, another gospel. At the end of the chapter we see clearly that their true nature never changed. They were not princes that turned back into frogs, but clean pigs that returned to the mire they loved.

“**if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you either**” (Rom 11:20-21) – This does not teach that someone can lose their salvation. Those natural branches were unbelieving Israel. They were connected to God as His people, but they were not His people. We are warned that the same condition can occur in the church today. John tells us, “*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.*” (1 John 2:19)

**A Benediction of Perseverance** (1 Pet 5:10-11) – In a benediction, God, by means of His minister, places His name upon His people as they leave His place of worship and go out to their callings. Having heard the Word with faith, having renewed our covenant with Him, having feasted at His table, we are sent into the world with a grace that, in the midst of whatever sufferings, will “*perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle*” us. And so, we receive this benediction with our ‘Amen’ –an ‘amen’ acknowledging all that this series has declared: God’s ultimate, exhaustive, and good sovereignty over this coming week, and the next, and the next. Nothing will separate you from the love of God all the way to your final glorification.

**Why Do We Need a Benediction as We Go?** – Because “*in this world you will have tribulation*” (John 16:33); you will suffer a little while as the saints Peter was writing to did. But be of good cheer, Jesus has overcome the world, and the Rock of Ages will see to it that you overcome as well – by grace through faith – all the way to the end.

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