

## **“ENDURE UNTO THE END” Mark 13:13**

***“And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”***

WE believe in the security of the true believer in Christ, so how do we handle such a verse as this? Scripture is our one rule of faith and practice, and Scripture interprets itself. How is a sinner going to endure forever, even unto the end? Note Psalm 89:29, “His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.” This is, of course, first a prophecy concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, who is indeed God’s “Seed” — but Christ’s seed are the believers who shall endure for ever. They are the ones who partake of the “first resurrection” (spiritual birth) and because they are “blessed and holy” (Rev. 20:6), “on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

Be sure that you never get away from the precious truth that all believers in Christ as His spiritual and eternal “seed.” “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus ... And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:26, 29).

Then our text affirms that ENDURERS will be saved, although it does not explain *how* they are to endure, or *why*. They *must* endure for God makes it so: “The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger” (Job. 17:9). They *will* endure because that is in their nature, as new-born sons of God: “Therefore is any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). They *cannot do otherwise* but endure for it was to this end they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world: “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will” (Eph. 1:4-5).

Then the saved *are persevering* or enduring to the end, for they belong to Christ and He is under a Divine Summons to redeem them, justify them and present them faultless before God the Father at the last day: “As thou hast given him (the SON) power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou (the Father) hast given him ... Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled” (John 17:4, 12). Then we can be assured that all *the sheep of Christ will come* into the Eternal Fold of God because our Lord Christ, as the Good Shepherd, led them and protected them every step of the way: “And I give unto them (the sheep) eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (John 10:28). Christ preserves His sheep, and they actively, obediently, deliberately, seek to follow Him.

God’s elect cannot fail to endure as long as God’s promises stand fixed, and since He has exalted His Word so high that no one, man or devil, is able to get to it and change it — they are safe! “Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name” (Psalm 138:2). His promises to His own are sure — not to all men, head for head, but to the precious heirs of the promises and the inheritors of the Covenant blessings. “God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; Whither the forerunner is for

us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 6:17-20).

And so, while the heirs have a “duty” to press on, to never turn aside, to hold their hands faithfully to the plow, as our Lord commanded, yet this “duty” of theirs is also a “grace” of Christ’s without which none would be saved or secured. John Owen, the Puritan, wrote a book, *The Grace and Duty of Being Spiritually Minded*, and a valuable treatise it is. But we find, in the life of faith, so many things that are both a grace-gift of the Heavenly Father, and yet in the commands of Scripture also constitute “duties” of those who are of the household of faith. And how blessedly true it is that, if you are a child of His, you find all along that the journey is not at your own expense — what God demands, He also provides!

In this connection, mark down some precious truths that are absolutely stated in the Bible, and in these truths you will see that God has done abundantly precious things for His people, things that undergird and support their perseverance in the way of grace. The saints of God are secured by Jesus, and yet they also endure, press on, look to Jesus and run the race. There is nothing in the doctrine of salvation by grace that will excuse slothfulness and inattention to duty. And you will find that while much of the New Testament is given to setting forth the doctrine of Christ, His person and His work, and the things we are to believe and rejoice in — yet two-thirds of Paul’s epistles are given to exhortations and instructions in our duties within the realm of Christian faith. “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (1 John 2:6). “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46). And in the Epistle of Hebrews, we read that Christ “became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:9). No perseverance, no obedience, equals no salvation!

**1. A sinner must be born again, but God gives the new birth.** “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13). Listen to the sovereign statement of our Lord Jesus: “As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will” (John 5:21). “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing” (John 6:63). “And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1). Now we do not preach that it is the duty of the natural man to do God’s work in his own salvation, but to seek God’s face and favors.

**2. A sinner must repent, but God gives repentance.** True evangelical repentance is a missing note in the religious profession of our days, hence there are many professing to be secured for Heaven who are not Christians at all, for Christ will never receive an impenitent soul. “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). Acts 5:31 says that Christ has been exalted to “give repentance to Israel” and in Acts 11:18, we read, “Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” He who tells you there is an easier way than through this narrow gate of repentance, that God has lowered His standards and/or that His demand of repentance and a sharp turning was for the Jews only, such a one is not your friend and is not true to the Word. Miss repentance and you have no faith. Miss saving faith and you have no Christian life. Without a Christian life, you miss Heaven and are doomed to the pits of Hell. If you don’t know Christ, you are not truly involved in this matter of preservation by God and perseverance in the faith.

While the preaching and commanding of repentance is universal, true repentance is only accomplished in a quickened heart. All men see some need of repenting or mending of their

ways, but by nature they see neither God's grace nor His gift of repentance in dust before the God of the Bible.

**3. A sinner must believe in order to be saved, but God gives faith.** Whenever the earthquake had done its mission, according to the will of God, the jailor who held Paul and Silas in his prison was brought down before God in repentance. The messengers of the Gospel gave him the right answer to his earnest query, "What shall I do to be saved?" They told him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31). This man had witnessed the power of God, had faced his own explicit part in the persecution of God's saints, and under a sense of his guilt therein, he must face certain death if the prisoners had escaped. The jailor was an awakened sinner, one who knew his case was bad and his judgment fair, who bowed before the Lord in repentance and desired the deliverance of his soul from the wrath of Almighty God. He was ready to receive the Gospel message, and the context tells us that Paul and Silas had much more to say in the instruction of this needy sinner — "They spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house" (Read Acts 16:25-34).

Faith is God's gift to every soul that He saves. We don't preach saving faith as a mere "duty" of natural man, but we stress at all times that this is a gift of the Spirit and not a flower of nature's garden. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Nor of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10). Paul testified "through the grace given unto me" (Rom. 12:3), and it was by that grace he obtained salvation and was ready to preach the Gospel he formerly sought to destroy. It was by that grace also that Paul could write and teach the truths of grace so clearly. Saved believers, who need the Gospel and need the help of the ministry of the Word, are such as have "believed through grace" (Acts 18:27).

**4. A saint must overcome, but God gives the victory by giving grace and faith.** There are two sides to the coin that is treasured in the bosom of the saints — preservation and perseverance. We see not God's visible hand in preserving them, but we know it is reality as we behold them persevering in the Christian life, fighting the good fight of faith. As we need help from above, the Holy Spirit who has been called along as our Paraclete, and who is the Third Person of the Godhead, "giveth more grace" (James 4:6). "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ... If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: the that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life: and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life ... And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen" (1 John 5:4-5, 9-12, 19-21).

And so we have PERSEVERANCE because we have PRESERVATION, and not the reverse.

**5. A saint must be faithful, but God gives the faithfulness.** The Lord's Word has commanded you to "be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). Also, "be not faithless, but believing" (John

20:27). But here again our faithfulness is not ours but by His grace. Said He to Peter, “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:32). And Christ has prayed for all His people, for He said in His priestly prayer found in John chapter 17: “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost ... I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth ... Neither pray I for these along, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (John 17:11-12, 14-17, 20).

Comprehending it fully is the word of the Apostle Paul, “I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful” (1 Cor. 7:25). Faithfulness will be a certain characteristic of the elect, but the elect are faithful because the God of election makes it so. You never even desire to have a faithful mind and heart before God, except He works in you “to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

**6. A saint must endure, but God gives the endurance.** “For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off” (Psalm 37:28). Speaking of the king, and prophetic of Christ David’s greater Son, we look again at the precious promise we quoted earlier, “His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven” (Psalm 89:29).

Saints of God, the way is strait and the road is narrow. There are many hardships to be endured, but press on! Yes, PRESS ON in the blood-sprinkled and narrow way. What is more important to you than the salvation of your soul and fellowship with the Living God? Let’s take up a set of scales, as it were, and view the comparison. On one side of the balance put all the afflictions, trials and sorrows, the distresses and pains of body, poverty, all the contempt that men may heap upon you, all the assaults that Satan may throw at you, all the afflictions that you may have to endure, all the persecutions that may come your way. Then on the other side put your saved, redeemed, blood-washed soul, prepared and ready to meet the Lord when He comes for you. Would you exchange SALVATION in CHRIST for freedom from these trials? No, indeed! It would be better, as an old saint of God in the midst of fiery persecutions exclaimed, “I would wade through Hell to get to Christ.” If Christ is ALL, then why not gladly forsake ALL else for Him? “It is better *not to be*, than to be without Jesus Christ” (John Owen).

And so, **in conclusion:** We see that the salvation of God’s elect people is ALL OF GRACE, ALL OF GOD! No works can be added to God’s grace to help accomplish salvation. “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace” (Rom. 11:5-6). God will have all the glory in your salvation; he won’t allow a saved soul to glory in himself but in God alone. “To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:6). And now, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:5-6). Are you willing to be saved on His terms, letting Him have all the glory, while you seek with all your might to “endure unto the end” in giving Him praise and glory? AMEN!

— Study notes by W. W. F.