

**WCF 17. I Will Keep Hanging On To The God Who is Hanging On To Me!**  
[Falls Church – An OPC Family Watch Your Life and Doctrine Course 2020]

Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter Seventeen, Of Perseverance of The Saints

**We stand on the promise that we will keep hanging on, because God is hanging on to us.**

Compare to Westminster Shorter Catechism Question 36: What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification? Answer: The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

17.1 How can we be sure that we will persevere?

Philippians 1:6 God began a work in us and will finish it.

Ephesians 1:14 The Spirit of God lives in us.

2 Peter 1:10 We should make sure by our own actions, too.

17.2 What is the basis for a Christian being sure he will make it to the end?

Election of God. Romans 8:28-30

Belonging to God. 2 Timothy 2:18-19

Prayers of Christ. John 17

Love of God. Jeremiah 31:3

17.3 What about the struggles we have in persevering and walking with God?

*Persevering is like hacking through a dense foggy forest.*

Peter was determined not to, but denied Jesus, and then wept bitterly. Matthew 26:70-75.

Even Barnabas was led astray, and Christ brought him back. Galatians 2:13.

How do we answer the attacks on the teaching of perseverance?

Phil 2:12-13 1 Peter 1:5 John 10:28 Romans 11:29

## **WCF 18. I Am Sure About What God Said About Me. (two pages)**

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Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter Eighteen, Of Assurance of Grace and Salvation

**Our God is so great and gracious that not only does God give us the grace of salvation, but God gives the grace of certainty about our own salvation.**

### **18.1- The Danger of False Assurance (Presumption)**

**Is there such a thing as a falsely based assurance?** Yes.

Deuteronomy 29:18-21 John 8:41 Job 8:13,14 Micah 3:5-12

**Is there a possibility of a certain assurance?** Yes.

A. The Bible tells us we can have assurance. Rom.8:16 1 Jn 2:3 1 Jn 3:14

B. The Bible commands us to be assured. Heb. 6:11 2 Pet 1:10-11

C. There are examples in the Bible of people who were sure of their salvation.

Paul: 2 Timothy 1:12 2 Timothy 4:7,8

John: 1 John 2:3 1 John 4:16-17

**So how can we tell which is which?** (True assurance vs. False assurance)

1. Pride:

a. True assurance makes us truly humble. 1 Corinthians 15:10

b. False assurance makes us prideful. Galatians 6:14

2. Diligence:

a. True assurance makes us work hard. Hebrews 6:11 2 Peter 1:10

b. False assurance leads to sloth. Psalm 51:12,13,19

3. Self-examination:

a. True assurance makes us want to be searched by God. Psalm 139:23, 24

b. False assurance makes us avoid investigation/be satisfied with looks. Gal.6:3

4. Longing for Closeness to God:

a. True assurance makes us long for God. Psalm 42:1-2 1 John 3:2,3

b. False assurance makes us content with distance from God. Jonah.

### **18.2- The Possibility of a Lack of True Assurance**

The basis of true assurance.

1. What source?

a. True assurance rests on what God says about us. Heb. 6:17-18, John 3:36

b. False assurance rests on what man says about himself. Pv 28:16, Ps.118:8

2. What evidence of what graces?

a. True assurance rests on the evidence of the graces. 2 Cor. 1:12,

b. False assurance rests on what looks like graces. Luke 18:9-14

3. Testimony of which spirit?

a. True assurance rests on the testimony of the Spirit. Romans 8:15-16,

1John 3:24 2 Tim. 3:16,17

- b. False assurance rests on the testimony of the spirit of error.  
 2Thess.2:9-12 Eph.1:13,14 Eph. 4:30 2 Cor.1:21-22

**18.3 - The Promise and Realized Blessing of an Infallible Assurance.**

**What makes infallible assurance infallible?** It is infallible because of that upon which it rests.

Acts 16:31, "...believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

Revelation 22:17, "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life."

John 6:37, "All that the Father gives me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never drive away."

I BELIEVE. (a matter of conscious experience about myself that I am confident of the words of Christ) Assurance of Faith (regarding Christ as giver) = strong faith in the truth of Christ. Direct act of trusting in Christ. Hebrews 10:22, "let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water."

I BELIEVE, THEREFORE I AM SAVED – (this is a matter of inference about myself drawn from my own action of trusting in Christ. This is not of the essence of faith, but rather a fruit of that faith.) Assurance of Hope (regarding myself as a recipient) = this is not the essence of faith, but the fruit of faith – a reflex act of faith. This is drawn as an inference from the experience of the graces of the Spirit, when we reflect on our own self. Hebrews 6:11, "We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure."

Saved?	Assured?	Condition
No	No	Non-Christian
No	Yes	Deceived Non-Christian
Yes	No	Weak Christian
Yes	Yes	Mature Christian

**18.4 – The Shaking of True Assurance, But Its Ultimate Safety.**

Mark 9:24, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief."

Matthew 26:22 'Surely not I, Lord?'"

2 Peter 1:4

2 Corinthians 5:5

Romans 5:5, "...hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us."

## **WCF.19. I Love the Law of God**

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Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter Nineteen, Of The Law Of God

The law of God is central to the message of the Bible. How does Jesus relate to the law? In Matthew 5:17, we see that Jesus came not “to destroy...but to fulfill” the law of God.

What is the law of God? A statement about what God requires of us as human beings.

**19.1 Law in Context of Covenantal Relationship.** Was Adam bound to obey the law of God?

Yes. Genesis 1:26-27 2:17 In what way was Adam to keep the commandments? In a personal, entire, exact, and perpetual way. Eph. 4:24 Rom. 5:12,19 10:5 Gal. 3:10

**19.2 Use of Law as a Rule of Righteousness** Matthew 5:19,27-28 Matthew 22:37-40

**19.3 Ceremonial Law Abrogated** How does the “church under age” concept help us to understand the many bloody ceremonial laws? The young church needed to learn by seeing (like a child’s object lesson), because they were so inexperienced. Hebrews 8:4-5; 9:4,6-7,8-10 10:1 Col. 2:14 Eph.2:15,19-22 Acts 10:14; 15:5,10 Gal.6:16 Gen.22:18 Ps. 51:16-17; 40:6-8 Jer. 7:21-23 1 Sam.15:22 Heb. 10:11,12-14

**19.4 Judicial Law Expired** Exodus 21-23 1 Peter 2:13-14 1 Corinthians 9:8-10

**19.5 Moral Law Binding** Romans 6:14-15. (See Romans 6:2,7,14,22 sin does not have dominion) Galatians 5:22-25 Ephesians 5:9 1 Corinthians 9:21 Romans 13:9 Ephesians 6:2

**19.6 Use of Law as Rule of Life** Does God relate to us as in the covenant of works? That is, does God say to Christians, “do this and live”? No. He says, because you live, do this. Matthew 5:17, 19, 21-48 Romans 8:7 Romans 7:7,22 8:7 10:4 James 1:25

Of what value is the law to Christians?

1. The law reveals the will of God and our duty. A rule of life.
2. Through the law we continue to come to the knowledge of our sin.
3. The law serves to restrain our corruption, in that it forbids sins.
4. The law points us to the gracious promises of God, which are fulfilled in the obedient life exclusively.

**19.7 Law and Gospel** How does the grace of the gospel sweetly comply with the law? The things of the law were the things that created man was most comfortable to do. The recreated man, the Christian, comes to do the things of the law naturally, because He is spiritual. Matthew 5:17 Romans 3:19 5:18-19 Titus 2:11-14 1 John 5:2-3