

Morning Sermon July 28, 2019

"The Perseverance of the Saints" Philippians 1:3-6

I. True Christians, true believers persevere; because God enables them to –

being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ; (Philippians 1:6 NKJ)

1. Paul's confidence is in, and our confidence should be in; GOD! God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit!

A. If we are true Christians, our faith was started, ignited, begun by God! As Paul says later it is God Who works in us – for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13 NKJ)

B. It is by God's Spirit, working with God's Word, we are made alive - "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. (John 6:63 NKJ)

C. God's Spirit is our power - ⁶ So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts. (Zechariah 4:6 NKJ)

D. It is Christ Who is both the Author and Finisher of our faith – ² looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrew 12:2 NKJ)

The Author of our salvation - ⁹ And having been perfected, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, (Hebrews 5:9 NKJ)

2. If God is the Author, Starter and Strength of our salvation what should we expect to see?

A. Salvation, victory over sin, even now –

²¹ "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21 NKJ)

B. Love for God –

⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. ⁶ "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. (Deuteronomy 6:4-6 NKJ)

Love for God also means obedience to Him - ¹⁵ "If you love Me, keep My commandments. (John 14:15 NKJ)

If we do not love Christ, we are lost - ²² If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! (1 Corinthians 16:22 NKJ)

C. A hatred for sin, a disdain of the world –

A lover of God, hates sin, does not hold to the things of this world – ⁹ Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. (Romans 12:9 NKJ) (1 John 2:15-17 NKJ)

This is where Demas failed, he once served with Paul, but he did not persevere in the faith – ¹⁰ for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, ...(2 Timothy 4:10 NKJ)

D. A lover of God, someone who is persevering cannot be a lover of money –

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. (Matthew 6:24 NKJ) *Mammon is money, material things!*

3. Perseverance ultimately means "overcoming" even the Devil and Satan –

⁹ So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Revelation 12:9 NKJ)

¹¹ "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. (Revelation 12:11 NKJ)

We are in a battle which we win only through God's strength –

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. -- (see Ephesians 6:10-18 NKJ)

II. How does the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints fit with sin? Do true Christians sin and fail?

1. *In the most important sense; it does NOT –*

⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:7-8 NKJ)

One of the great lies of the devil is salvation, perseverance of the Saints, means professing Christians can sin all they want, without consequence, without need of real repentance. The Devil’s favorite lie about sin is the one he told Eve –

⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. (Genesis 3:4 NKJ)

Now he tells believers, ‘sin, grace will abound’ which is true, yet meaning from the Devil’s point of view we can sin without consequence, implying sin is good, fun, HARMLESS!

2. *Does grace abound to true Christian sinners?*

But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, (Romans 5:20 NKJ)

A. *We see this GRACE abounding toward David –*

^{NKJ} Psalm 32:1 <A Psalm of David. A Contemplation.> Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. ² Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit. (Psalm 32:1-2 NKJ)

B. *Yet, David’s sin was not without consequence –*

¹⁰ Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. Samuel 12:10 NKJ)

C. *Should Christians sin because grace abounds to them?*

^{NKJ} Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? (Romans 6:1-2 NKJ)

D. *Does grace abound even to great sinners?*

¹⁶ For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity. (Proverbs 24:16 NKJ)

E. *Should persevering Christians FEAR?*

• *Yes, we should fear the LORD!*

¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever. (Psalm 111:10 NKJ)

• *We should fear the consequence of sin which can be dire - David’s fear - ¹¹ Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. (Psalm 51:11 NKJ)*

¹⁴ But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him. 1 Samuel 16:14

When we sin, we are not persevering, we should FEAR, even for our salvation - ⁵ **"But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! (Luke 12:5 NKJ)**

“Mercy is not for them that sin and fear not, but for them that fear and sin not.” Thomas Watson

• *Our fear, combined with the Holy Spirit’s help should lead to true, God-enabled repentance -*

¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, (Acts 3:19 NKJ)

“Repentance is to leave, the sins you loved before, and show that you in earnest grieve, by doing so no more.” C.H. Spurgeon

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