

PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one. — John 10:27-30

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. — Philippians 1:6

Because Christ died to save all whom the Father gave Him, and because, when the Spirit opens our eyes, we find Christ irresistible, we will persevere and trust Christ to the end. We are in Christ's hands, and no one can snatch us out of His hand (or the Father's). He who began a good work of grace in us will perfect until the day Christ returns. We who are in Christ's hands have the privilege of enjoying eternal security.

There are many passages that teach the perseverance or preservation of the saints. The God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you (1 Peter 5:10). Those whom God predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:30-31). Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:3-5). More passages could be added.

Preservation of the saints or eternal security does not mean that Christians will always feel secure. We may be secure, yet not feel secure. Believers may go through periods where they wrestle and feel internally conflicted for various reasons. Those who were once confident of salvation may have their confidence shaken, perhaps by falling into some grievous sin or on account of some hard circumstance in their lives. Yet, Peter encourages us to press on and to make our calling and election sure (1 Peter 1:10). We can be sure of salvation. This certainty is not based on conjecture or a feeling, but on God's promises. "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise Him up on the last day" (John 6:40). "Whoever has the Son has life" (1 John 5:12; John 3:36).

Eternal security also does not mean that believers will never be in spiritual danger. Satan fires flaming darts: we must take up the shield of faith (Ephesians 6:16). Preservation of the saints does not mean that all who claim to be Christians, without actually being born again and putting their faith in Christ, are secure. Nonetheless, ordinary believers can be sure of salvation because they put their trust exclusively and entirely in Jesus Christ. Because they are in His hands, they are eternally secure, and no one can snatch them away from Him.