

Voice of Baptists

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"The Voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." *Isaiah 40:3*

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THE SIN OF DESPAIR

by Stephen M. Skinner
Springfield, MO

Beyond the fallen tower of self-confidence, Satan has the swamp of despair and self-pity waiting for the unwary saint. To sink into despair the saint must disbelieve the many sweet promises of his Master's care and disregard the abiding Spirit of God in his soul. To despair, or to utterly lose hope, is to have little faith. Despair is sin.

Examples of despair are found in the scriptures, it is not a new twentieth century device of Satan. David, the man chosen by God to be king of the hosts of Israel, found himself in despair: I Samuel 27:1, "And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand." This hopelessness came from the heart of the man who wrote Psalm 32:7; "Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.", and who had gone onto the field of battle against the champion of Satan's camp in the name of Israel's God. Such despair was inconsistent with David's earlier strength. Despair is inconsistent for any saint. All saints have at their salvation, if at no other time, fully and faithfully depended upon the strength of God. Such inconsistency weakens the effect of their testimony. If the saints trust Jesus Christ in the salvation of their souls, and urge sinners to trust Him, then certainly they are bound to continually trust in Him and thus Satan cannot cast them into a state of despair.

One might first think there was little

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ARE YOU READY

by Harold Carver
Buena Vista, TN

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

The Bible plainly teaches the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Many prophecies of the scriptures regarding this outstanding event have already been fulfilled, and others are being fulfilled almost daily. The exhortation to prepare immediately for the coming of the Lord is indeed a timely message.

The following words of Jesus were spoken just before his departure: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3.

As the disciples assembled on the mount called Olivet to witness the ascension of the Lord he sent back the following message to them: "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:10-11. The mind of Man in every age has been anxious and inquisitive as to when the end of time will occur. Certainly the disciples were very much interested in this subject as we learn from the following scriptures: "And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3. Then in the same chapter

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PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

by Kenneth W. Massey

INTRODUCTION

It is indeed my pleasure to welcome you to this consideration of why I believe the holy scriptures embrace and teach the Doctrine of Perseverance of the Saints. The following words of instruction are open for your interrogation under the magnification of the light of the inspired word. May we together gain a better understanding of this doctrine because of our efforts to sincerely apply ourselves to the teachings of God.

Definition of Perseverance of Saints - Daniel Webster defines persevering as the action, condition or instance of persisting in a definite state in spite of counter influences, opposition, or discouragement.

SCRIPTURAL DEFINITION: "The righteous (obtaining help from God) shall hold on his way." Job 17:9

The following article from the New Hampshire Confession of Faith has been adopted by most of our missionary Baptist churches:

XI. OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare; and that

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SINGING SCHOOL

Bro. Donnie Hines will teach a six-night Singing School to be held with Independent Missionary Baptist Church of Huntingdon, Tennessee.

The days and dates are as follows: Fridays - Nov. 6th and 13th, Saturdays - Nov. 7th and 14th, and Sundays - Nov. 8th and 15th. These services will begin at 7 p.m. each evening.

Every church and individual is cordially invited to come and learn how to better lift our voices in praise to God.

WISEMAN

BAPTIST ASSOC.

Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Rose and Burbanks Streets, Nashville, Tennessee will host the 1981 Wiseman Baptist Association.

This 91st annual session will convene Friday, October 23, 1981 at 10:00 a.m.

Sermons will be delivered by Elder Guthrie Thompson - Introductory, Friday morning; Elder Edgar Copeland - Memorial, Friday evening; Elder J.W. Briley - Doctrinal, Saturday morning.

REVIVALS

McFERRIN BAPTIST CHURCH
Nashville, Tenn.

Sunday, Oct. 4, a series of revival services will be held with preaching by Pastor Howard G. Taylor and Evangelist W.T. Russell. ALL ARE INVITED!

JET SETTERS

The Sunday School teacher told her children to draw a picture illustrating a Biblical text. One little girl returned with a drawing of an airplane containing a man, woman, baby and pilot.

"What's this?" asked the teacher.

"The flight into Egypt," replied the tot.
"That's Mary, Joseph, the infant Jesus, and Pontius the Pilot."

-Quote

A MOTHER'S LOVE

There is a story that I heard told when I was younger about a Mother's love. It's a story that's very dear to me because it's about a Christian Mother, **my** Mother. Now this is a story of agony and pain, of selfishness and pride, or is it? Maybe if this story is told in the right way, maybe for the first time since these events took place - the real light of this delicate situation can be seen.

Now this Christian Mother brought forth a son, and no one except a Mother herself can know the love that abides in the heart of a Mother for her child. And as the Bible commanded, the child was raised in the way that it should go, taught about the Lord, and about His great love for mankind. But most importantly, he was taught the way of salvation, the only way by which man can be reunited with God - the only way Jesus ever taught to get to Heaven.

And as this child grew, there developed in his heart a certain tenderness and gentleness that was not seen in any of the other children. The child had an unselfish desire to please those he loved and in him was often seen great compassion and feelings. The child soon grew into a young man, strong and healthy, and as his body grew, so did his understanding of God. The characteristics that so pleased his Mother seemed to flourish as he grew into a man.

Well, as with any young man, this young man's heart soon turned it's affections to that of a woman. And a fine woman it was too, that the son had chosen. A woman of strength and character, of patience and kindness, all virtues anyone would be proud of. But the desire of the young man and woman to be united in wedlock would stir the hearts of many who loved them, and would cause the Mother of the son to render the most heart-breaking decision of her lifetime! For you see, the young man was still lost as yet - had never come to the Lord and been saved, though he had been dealt with by the Lord many times. And now still in his sinful state he chose to unite himself to a woman who brought to him **another plan of salvation** - one quite different than the plan the Lord Himself had said was the "only plan." To be united would mean not only a physical and material unification, but that also a complete spiritual agreement must be achieved. He could not choose the woman and disagree with her beliefs - she forbid it. Her form of religion forbid it. And so the choice had to be made. The

son in his sinful condition, not yet fully experiencing the Love of God in his heart by a personal salvation experience - chose the woman. But the Mother's consent was also needed if the wedding was to be properly conducted. And so all of these things lay before the Mother's eyes. A son, whom she loved and strived desperately to teach God's plan, now after all of her prayers and tears, departing from the only hope he had for eternal life. Certainly he could still be saved wherever he was or whatever he did, she knew that, the choice was not over this. It would have been the easy thing to do to just consent to the whole matter and hope for the best. But this particular Mother loved her son more than herself. She loved his soul and the souls of his children to come even more than she desired his happiness in this temporary life. No, she desired more than a happy home here for this child. Her heart burned within her to see this son have an eternal home with God. She desired that he have spiritual happiness and contentment in this life, as well as in the one to come. She longed to know that his soul was not bound for Hell, but in death that her son would be safe, and that his soul would live in eternal bliss.

No, the Mother could not compromise God to anyone. She could not disobey the God that so many years ago had reached down and saved her own soul. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is death." Her son had chosen between God and man. He had chosen man's way of salvation and also chose to teach it to his children. For this he is responsible for the Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6.

The Mother, in tears and agony, her heart broken for the love of her son, chose God. Her priorities were placed some 20 years ago, at an altar of prayer.

Author wishes to remain anonymous

PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

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they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

I agree completely with the aforementioned article and hereby wish to present Bible proof for its existence. May we search the scriptures for the truth in answer to an applicable question regarding the subject.

QUESTION - WILL ALL WHO ARE IN A STATE OF ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD CONTINUE THEREIN THROUGH LIFE, AND FINALLY REACH HEAVEN?

EN? YES. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR THE NEW LIFE BEGOTTEN IN REDEMPTION TO PERISH? NO.

Answer in Full Discussion

For the sake of a more perfect understanding, let us discount and reject the antinomian position that, since one is in justification delivered from sin, he is, therefore, made eternally safe, no matter what he may become in character and life. This is a perversion of the truth that becomes about as great a heresy as the one which it denies. The New Testament teaching is not that a justified man is saved irrespective of what he may be in character; it is rather that the justifying and regenerating grace of God so revolutionizes his character that he can never be again what he was before. "Therefore if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." Corinthians 5:17

The sixteenth verse says, "we know Christ no more after the flesh" and Paul connects onto this by saying, therefore, or in view of this, all who are in Christ, since he has resurrected and ascended to enter his new heavenly life, are new creatures (united to him by faith as the branch is in the vine). It is not that the child of God is saved whether he persists in faith or not; it is that he will persist in faith and will, therefore, attain to final salvation.

The New Testament teaches that in one sense the Christian is saved when he believes. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 3:36. In another sense, he is to be saved at the last day - "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:5

Salvation begins with the redemption of the soul and is completed in the resurrection. Salvation includes everything between regeneration and resurrection. "For the earnest expectation of the creature (saved person) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" Romans 8:19. The manifestation of the sons of God refers to the adoption or redemption of our bodies. 1 John 3:2

In the book of Revelation, the emphasis is on the fact that it is the one who overcomes, who is faithful unto death, that shall eat of the tree of life, shall not be hurt of the second death, and shall have a white stone with a new name written thereon. Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26. It is sometimes said that we do not have to hold on to Christ, because he holds on to us. He does hold on to us, but we must also hold on to him. That is, the perseverance of the saints is based on the preservation of the saints. We persevere because he keeps us. But it is not true to say that, because he keeps us, we do not need to persevere.

One mistake that is sometimes made in regards to these matters is that, when one speaks of perseverance as an

integrate part of salvation, people immediately think of perseverance in works. That is, they think perseverance means that after one has been brought into saving relationship with God through faith, he is then put on a system of works and from there on must earn or deserve his salvation. This is absolutely false! It means that one must persevere as he began, namely, in faith. The Bible teaches that we are saved by faith, we walk by faith, we live by faith, we are kept by faith, and we die in faith. Man is not saved by trusting for a moment, but neither is salvation a perpetual process. Salvation is by grace on the part of God, and by faith on the part of man. The saved person lives a life of trust. Perseverance is not something beyond faith as a condition of salvation; it is of the nature of faith to persevere; if it does not persevere, it is not faith.

Let's notice that the divine purpose of God as recorded in Romans 8:30 illustrates that the saints of God will persevere through grace to glory. "MOREOVER, WHOM HE DID PREDESTINATE, THEM HE ALSO CALLED: AND WHOM HE CALLED, THEM HE ALSO JUSTIFIED: AND WHOM HE JUSTIFIED, THEM HE ALSO GLORIFIED."

This scripture may properly be called the golden chain of four links, namely, PREDESTINATION, CALLING, JUSTIFICATION and GLORIFICATION. The predestination is the divine purpose, and the purpose is executed in the calling (another name for regeneration), and in justification. Now, since the purpose by blessed commitment secures the performance of these facets of salvation, will not the same purpose secure glorification? If the answer were "NO", then the purpose of God would have failed before achieving the ultimate victory. The purpose of God could no more be suspended before glorifying than it could before regenerating. "And we know that all things (necessary to perfect the purpose of God in the redemption of man until securing a new body for him and bringing him into the presence of God) work together for good to them that love God." Romans 8:28

In addition to the purpose of God, the believer's personal **union with Christ** is another infinitely precious truth in support of the doctrine of perseverance.

There is one phrase "in Christ" which expresses the intimacy of this union. We are in him, and he dwells in our hearts by faith as the hope of glory. "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." Should it be said that faith is the bond of union, and that if faith fails, the union will be broken, I grant it. But what did Jesus say to Peter? "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Luke 22:32. His faith did not fail. The conflict between faith and unbelief in Peter's heart may have been, and no

doubt was, severe, but there was no total and final failure of his faith. But it would have failed without the prayer of Jesus. As Jesus prayed for Peter on earth, so he **intercedes in heaven** for all who believe in him. Jesus says that, while he was in the world, he kept those that the Father gave him. Then, as he was about to go away, he prayed for the Father to keep them. Today, he's making intercession with the Father in behalf of our faith failing not. Thank God for such an one as Jesus! No wonder Peter wrote, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." 1 Peter 1:5

What evidence do we have that God will keep his children to the end, that he will cause us to persevere?

1) One evidence is that faith is produced in our hearts in pursuance of God's eternal purpose. The work which he began in us he will carry on to completion. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6

2) Another thing pointing in the same direction is the completeness of the **atonement work of Christ**. This offering was made once for all. "For by one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:14

3) Another argument is the doctrine of **justification** based on Christ's atoning work. When the sinner believes in Christ, he is justified once for all. He never comes again under the condemnation of sin. "He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24

4) The life brought to us in Christ is described as "eternal life." Remember, that the doctrine as we maintain it is that **God preserves his children by causing them to persevere in faith**. In 1 John 3:6-9, John points out very vividly the impossibility of the born again subject reverting to a life of sin. He is not teaching that this flesh never will commit an act of sin after being saved. The general course of life is changed in the believer. It is this new life within that is imperishable in its nature that guarantees persistence in the fight on sin until sin is conquered.

5) Paul expresses the thought of the believer's security in a somewhat different way by the idea of the sealing of the Spirit. Upon hearing and believing the gospel we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Ephesians 1:13

In the Holy Spirit we are sealed unto the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30. This is the meaning of the expression that God has given us the earnest of the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:14.

The Spirit not only bears witness to our present acceptance with God, but also bears witness to the fact that we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Romans 8:17

SIN OF DESPAIR

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harm in David expressing "in his heart" his fear of perishing at the hand of Saul, but from the heart "comes the issues of life." Such sinful thought often leads quickly to sinful action as David eventually learned. He did not depend on God as his defense and shield, as he usually did, but rather chose to go to the enemies of Israel, the Philistines. When Satan can get the saints to despair they are easy prey to be drawn into Satan's camp.

David invaded some allies of the Philistines and deceived the Philistines into thinking he had fought against Judah. In despairing weakness the saints of God do not always align themselves with God's cause. The saints cannot align themselves with the world without being deceptive because they are God's, saved unto good works, bought and paid for with the Lamb's blood. As it did for David, such deception will lead them yet deeper into sin.

"And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men." David had been drawn into sin from a moment of despairing thought to the point that he and his men were arrayed for battle with the Philistines. Satan would have the saints of God believe they can be "neutral," but the despairing saints may find themselves arrayed for battle - in Satan's camp. The very strongest of Christians, without the power of God, are not immune to despair. It had been sung that David had slain his ten thousands, but he was here weakened by a moment of despair. He had slain a lion, a bear, and a giant by faith in his God, but despair had taken that faith and therefore his strength.

If God has blessed his servant with a good work in his vineyard, that servant has all the more responsibility to stay close to God and avoid being caught in Satan's snare of despair. David's decisions affected not only himself, but also his family, his followers and their families; and he made those decisions without once consulting God. Despair destroys the saint's trust in his God and separates him from his God.

While David and his men were absent from Ziglax (the city given to David by the Philistines) the Amalekites attacked the city taking all their wives and children captive. David's men, who had not wanted to go with the Philistines to begin with, threatened to stone David

because of their grief. While the saints of God, in despair, are drawn into the camp of Satan, the precious souls of men are held captive in sin.

Despair brings suffering which can bring greater despair. David found himself in an unending, increasing cycle of despair and suffering from which there was no hope of escape, "but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." David sent for the ephod and enquired of God as to what he should do. He and his men recovered their families and the spoil that had been taken from them, and they took spoil from the Amalekites. Today's saints in despair must also encourage themselves in the Lord their God so that they may see the redemption of the souls of men.

Despair is an insult to God and degrades the "truth" ("I am with you always"). Despair demands that the saints doubt their Master's power ("All power is given to me in heaven and in earth"), and His promise ("if ye ask in my name, I will do it"). Despair is a dishonor to God's mercy, and He "delighteth in mercy." With despair the saints of God crown Satan in their beloved Saviour's place. The saints have by faith a sweet communion with their Beloved, but in despair they wrangle against God and His truth. Despair makes the saints vulnerable to other sin and renders all means of grace useless to them. It is impossible for the saints to justify wallowing in despair because despair is sin.

ARE YOU READY

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Jesus began to expound and explain the signs of the age preceding his second coming. But it is interesting to note that in addition to these many signs, He called special attention to two definite periods of history.

These two periods are the days of Noah and the days of Lot. "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark," Matthew 24:37-38. "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:28-30. As we observe the world around us today we see the amazing parallel between this age and the days of Noah and Lot.

The difference between these two men is startling. They were both believers, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Genesis 6:8. "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eight person, a preacher of righteousness," II Peter 2:5. "And delivered just Lot," II Peter 2:7. Noah is a type of the spiritual believer. His mind was upon heavenly things; upon pleasing God through his faithfulness and obedience, and assuring that his family would be safe in the Ark of Safety. When Judgement, death, and destruction came Noah and his family were shut in with God. The family an unbroken circle; an inexpressible joy. Lot was a type of the carnal believer. His mind was upon fleshly things; upon things of the world, and he had overlooked the importance of salvation for his family. We look back to the terrible day of Lot and this is the picture we see: "Judgement, death, and destruction has come. The Lord is raining brimstone and fire upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah. Lot, unlike Noah who willingly and voluntarily entered the Ark, is being dragged by the hand of an angel from the wicked city. Lot and daughters saved so as by fire, but his wife and sons-in-law perished in the Judgement." Even though Lot escaped the destruction of fire his life was filled with shame, misery, and disgrace. Sure, Lot was saved, but how about his family? They were not prepared for the Judgement that came. You may be saved but how about your family? Are they prepared for the death and judgement which is to come?

It would be well for every child of God to pause and ask themselves the following questions. Is my wife prepared? Is my husband prepared? Are my children all prepared? Is my mother prepared? Is my father prepared? Are the other members of my family prepared to meet the Lord? Are my neighbors prepared? Are my friends prepared? YOU may be prepared but if you gave a negative answer to any of the above questions you are not READY for the coming of the Lord.

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As heirs of God we look forward to the time when we shall enter into possession of our full inheritance. This gives us that groaning within ourselves, that dissatisfaction with ourselves as we are, and that eager longing for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies which will consummate our salvation. This makes our salvation a hope salvation.