

God's Amazing Grace – Part 8

Preservation and Perseverance

I will make an everlasting covenant with them:
 I will never stop doing good to them, and
 I will inspire them to fear me, so that
 they will never turn away from me.
 Jeremiah 32:40

Some Key Concepts

The Purpose of God - We have learned that the Purpose of God is to actually save specific people, not merely to attempt to save every individual. God's purpose stands and He perfectly accomplishes His plan according to His counsel and the good pleasure of His will.

The Promised Gift of God - The promise of God, to those who are called, is the gift of saving faith and sanctifying faithfulness securing eternal life.

The Personal Guarantee of God - God begins the work. God sustains the work. God completes the work. All this He accomplishes by the working of the Holy Spirit put within us as a guarantee.

The Protection and Preservation by the Power of God - We are kept, guarded, secured and assured of our inheritance because it is our faithful God who keeps us in his hand.

The Perseverance of the Saints. - This sounds like we do it, and we must, but not alone. The fact that true believers are transferred from slavery to sin to be slave of righteousness in God and further transformed through the process and progress of sanctification into the image of Christ is a work of grace within us, compelling us, inspiring us, and strengthening us till the end.

In the following we can see these factors revealed over and over again in many verses. As always we have just taken a sampling of the Scriptures because the multitude of texts are overwhelming and those selected should be sufficient to demonstrate the clarity and certainty of this truth.

Some Significant Scriptures

Romans 8:35-39 ³⁵ **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?** ³⁶ *As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."* ³⁷ **No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.** ³⁸ *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,* ³⁹ **nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

John 3:16 ¹⁶ **For God so loved the world,¹ that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.**

John 5:24 ²⁴ **Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but **has passed from death to life.****

2 Timothy 2:19 ¹⁹ **But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."**

John 6:37-65 ³⁷ **All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out...** ³⁹ **And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.** ⁴⁰ **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.** "... ⁴⁴ **No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day...** ⁴⁷ **Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life...** ⁶⁵ **And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."**

John 10:27-30 ²⁷ **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.** ²⁸ **I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.** ²⁹ **My Father, who has given them to me,¹ is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.** ³⁰ **I and the Father are one."**

Matthew 18:12-14 ¹² **What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?** ¹³ **And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray.** ¹⁴ **So it is not the will of my¹ Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.**

Luke 15:4-10 ⁴ **"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it?** ⁵ **And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.** ⁶ **And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.'** ⁷ **Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.** ⁸ **"Or what woman, having ten silver coins,¹ if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it?** ⁹ **And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.'** ¹⁰ **Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.**"

Romans 6:23 ²³ **For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Ephesians 1:13-14 ¹³ **In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,** ¹⁴ **who is the guarantee^{1(or down payment)} of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,^{2(or until God redeems his possession)} to the praise of his glory.**

Ephesians 4:30 ³⁰ **And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.**

1 Corinthians 1:8-9 ⁸ **who will sustain (confirm, establish, make sure) you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.** ⁹ **God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 ²¹ **And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us,** ²² **and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.¹**

NIV 2 Corinthians 1: 21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

2 Corinthians 5:5 ⁵ **He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.** (a pledge, first installment, down payment – a legal commercial technical term, an advanced transaction the guarantees the validity of a contract)

1 Timothy 1:16 ¹⁶ **But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.**

2 Timothy 4:18 ¹⁸ **The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 ²³ **Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.**

1 Peter 1:3-5, 23-25 ³ **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, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time ... ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ²⁴ for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, ²⁵ but the word of the Lord remains forever."** And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

1 John 2:25 ²⁵ **And this is the promise that he made to us¹ - eternal life.**

Jude 1:1 **Jude, a servant¹ of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept (preserved, guarded) for² (or by) Jesus Christ:**

Romans 8:29-30 ²⁹ **For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.**

Hebrews 7:25 ²⁵ **Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost¹(completely, at all times) those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.**

John 17:11 ¹¹ **And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one... ¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one¹(or evil).**

Romans 8:1 **There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

Philippians 1:6 ⁶ **And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.**

Philippians 2:12-13 ¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,** ¹³ **for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

Hebrews 10:14 ¹⁴ For by a single offering **he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.**

1 Peter 5:10-11 ¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little while, the **God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.** ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Some Complicated Concepts

Some "belief" is false, fruitless and futile.

John 8:31, 42-45 ³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, **"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,**... ⁴² Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. ⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.

Such false belief falls short of God's gift of saving faith, it is the best man can offer, but it is spurious and superficial having no root or solid foundation. These people may believe Jesus to be the "Messiah", or a great prophet sent by God, but not the very Son of God with life changing comprehension and conviction.

Others may show both the appearance of belief and the obedience of baptism, but still be lost.

Acts 8:13 ¹³ Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles¹ performed, he was amazed... ²¹ You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that **you are in the gall¹ of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.** ²⁴ And Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

John 8:36 ³⁶ So if the Son sets you **free, you will be free indeed.**(See also Romans 6)

Simon may have believed that the power of God through Christ was greater than his own magic that he had worked through the power of his "gods." He may have believed Christ was better, more desirable and more powerful, without completely repudiating his false gods. Whatever his shortfall to true saving faith, the condition of his heart proved it was never set free, but still enslaved.

Hebrews 3:12-14 ¹² Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. ¹³ But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

The author of Hebrews says "brothers" which acknowledges that these people at least profess or claim to be saved, but he warns them that it is possible that their profession is false. Some of them might still have a

sinful unbelieving heart, which could manifest itself by turning away from God. (Notice: a believing heart is not in danger of turning away, but those who are self deceived).

*2 Timothy 3:13¹³ while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, **deceiving and being deceived.***

Types of soil as example of pseudo-salvation.

Matthew 13:20-22²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy,²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.¹ ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.(also in Mark 4)

2 Peter 2:20-22²⁰ For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.²¹ For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.²² What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire." (a dog or sow returns; an entirely new creation, the sheep, does not. The false-believers may have withdrawn from an immoral world by knowing the moral standards or Christ; but as a slave to sin returned to their true master, following the desires of their unbelieving heart)

*Luke 8:13¹³ And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. **But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away.***

They fall away from their profession or personal decision or commitment. This again is because they have no root. But, all who are brought into Christ by the Spirit have a true root and sure and steadfast foundation.

Some passages look like they make salvation conditional, if we meet the required perseverance.

*Matthew 24:13¹³ But the one who **endures to the end** will be saved.. (Mat. 10:22; Mar. 13:13;)*

*Revelation 2:26²⁶ The one who conquers and who **keeps my works until the end**, to him I will give authority over the nations,*

*Revelation 3:5⁵ The **one who conquers** will be clothed thus in white garments, and **I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.***

When these apparent conditions are taken in the greater context of the Word, they are criterion for confidence of salvation, not conditions for gaining it.

*1 Corinthians 1:8-9⁸ who will sustain you **to the end**, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*1 John 4:4⁴ Little children, you are from God and **have overcome** (conquered) **them**, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*

1 John 5:4-5 ⁴ **For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith.** ⁵ **Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

Romans 8:37 ³⁷ **No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.**

The requirement of perseverance, conquering and overcoming are unquestionable promises to everyone who is born of God.

Often people are confused by Hebrews 6, but bear in mind that every apostate is really a reprobate.

Hebrews 6:4-8 ⁴ **For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they then fall away, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. ⁷ For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. ⁸ But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.**

This verse may look like it is talking about saved people losing their salvation, verses 7-8 should remind you of the soils and verse 9 makes it clear that though these people looked saved, they never were, and you cannot lose what you never have...

Hebrews 6:9 ⁹ **Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things - things that belong to salvation.**

Some Clarifying Considerations

The apostle John gives us the clearest verse to explain beyond any doubt or question those who turn or fall away from faith.

1 John 2:19 ¹⁹ **They went out from us, but **they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.** But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.**

John's clear answer is that they never really belonged to us. They were not truly saved.

They look like true receivers and believers, but they are not.

Matthew 7:21-23 ²¹ **"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' ²³ And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'** (See also Mat. 25:31ff)

2 Timothy 3:13 ¹³ **while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, **deceiving and being deceived.****

2 Peter 2:1-3 **But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing**

upon themselves swift destruction. ² And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. ³ And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Consider this: Since all punctuation and italics were not part of the originals, it is possible that Peter's phrase was not a statement of his beliefs or truth, but the claims of these false teachers. Thus we could consider it as follows: - *will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying “the Master who bought them”, bringing upon themselves swift destruction...exploit you with false words.*

In this case Peter is speaking about the false claims and beliefs of these false teachers and not contradicting all of the verses that we have studied. This is a common language device and we are not trying to "change" the meaning, but to "understand" what is really meant, knowing that it must complement the rest of Scripture. Or, secondarily some commentators maintaining the clear and consistent claim of Scripture regarding the unique purchase of “His own” interpret the term used here for “bought” is [in this tense and mood] together with the term “Master” - δεσπότην as a reference to “ownership” rather than purchase. Either way with punctuation or symantic scope this passage does not teach that some Christ bought are lost but that some who are lost, false mix within the community and even leadership of believers with false claims, practices and teaching.

Matthew 10:33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

In the end we will find that so many passages are so clear that there is no doubt that if a person is truly saved they will persevere because God protects and preserves them.

Passages that might look like salvation is being lost, upon closer examination show otherwise and only serve as a warning to those who "think" that they are saved but are really not. Also, as a reminder of the important truth of the progress of sanctification that must (our responsibility) and always does (God's Spirit working in us) take place throughout the lifetime of these who are true disciples.

These verses serve as a warning to those who think they are saved but live like the world.

They serve as a warning for those who pretend to be saved but have an unbelieving heart.

They serve as judgment to those who thought they were saved but turned away.

They serve as a fact that no man can pronounce another man "saved" or give them "assurance" based on a decision or prayed.

Some Concluding Questions

1. Q. Can a person lose their salvation?
A. No.
2. Q. Why do some people turn away from practicing their faith?
A. They were never saved.
3. Q. Why is it that some people who "decided to follow Jesus", later decide not to follow?
A. They were never saved.

4. Q. What if a professing believer continues in sin?
A. They were never saved.
5. Q. What if they had changed dramatically and then changed back?
A. They were never saved.
6. Q. Can people think they are saved and be wrong?
A. Yes.
7. Q. What if everyone is sure that a person was saved, but they later turned away?
A. They were never truly saved.
8. Q. Can someone who is truly saved backslide or live in sin?
A. Only for a short time before God will call him back with conviction and discipline.
9. Q. Why do some verses seem like they are saying people can lose their salvation?
A. Because some people only "seem" like they are saved, but are not.
10. Q. With all the verses that so clearly teach us that true salvation cannot be lost, why do some people think salvation is conditional.
A. First they misunderstand the few verses that appear conditional while ignoring the multitude of verse that show salvation to be certain. Second, they think salvation is based on man's decision in time rather than God's decision in eternity. Lastly, they think they have seen people who believed and fell away, without realizing that their belief was mere mental ascent and possible emotional response to a personal need and not the God given gift of saving faith by and through his saving grace.
11. Q. Will some people only find out that they are not truly saved at the final judgment?
A. Yes.
12. Q. How can I be sure that I am saved?
A. Examine your heart and life to find the presence of the love of God; the progress of sanctification by this Holy Spirit bearing his fruit; a hunger for God's truth; a passion for God's glory; and a perseverance in faith that lasts till the end.
13. Q. Why is it that no one truly saved loses their salvation?
A. Because salvation is from first to last all of God and He never fails!