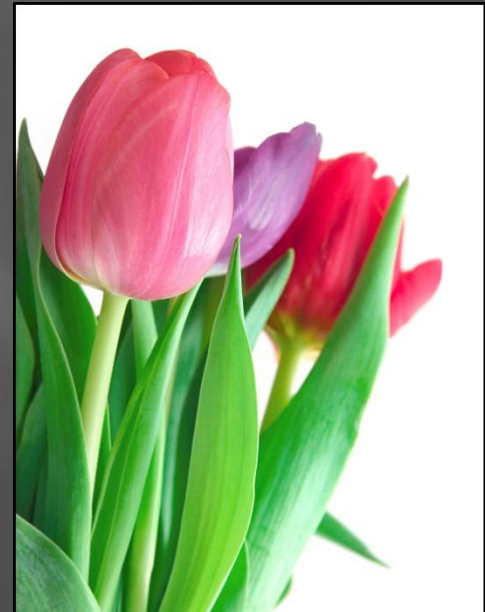


PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- ▣ Total Depravity
- ▣ Unconditional Election
- ▣ Limited Atonement
- ▣ Irresistible Grace
- ▣ **Perseverance of the Saints**



PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- ▣ Perseverance can be misleading because one might think we must persevere in our own strength to maintain our salvation.
- ▣ To be sure, the elect *will* persevere to the end. But they don't persevere because they're so diligent and careful in their own strength.
- ▣ **We persevere because we are preserved by God. If left to our own strength, no one will persevere.**

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- ▣ What God begins in you, He will see it through to completion.
- ▣ “If we have it, we never lose it. If we lose it, we never had it.”
- ▣ 1 John 2:19 says, “They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.”
- ▣ Jesus said of some, “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- ▣ Enduring is not of our own strength. Even after regeneration, Christians still get caught up in very serious sin.
- ▣ We backslide and are capable of a multitude of sins.
- ▣ Think of King David who committed adultery and murder.
- ▣ Think of the Apostle Peter who publicly, even after being forewarned, rejected Jesus Christ.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- ▣ But what did Jesus say to Peter?
- ▣ In Luke 22:31-32, Jesus says “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”
- ▣ He fell, but he was returned and restored. His fall was for a season. Why? Because Jesus prayed for him.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- ❑ Christians can have radical and serious falls, but will never have **total and final** falls from grace.
- ❑ Semi-Pelagian view makes it possible to truly have saving faith at one point and then lose it later.
- ❑ The Reformed view takes God's sovereign decree of saving His elect as immutable. His purpose is not frustrated by our weaknesses.
- ❑ Our salvation depends on *His* hand-tight grip, not ours.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Chapter 17 of the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646):

- ▣ 17.1 They, whom God has accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.
- ▣ 17.2 This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ, the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace: from all which arises also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- ▣ 17.3 Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins; and, for a time, continue therein: whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve His Holy Spirit, come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded; hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- ▣ 1) Come up with questions in your group and share thoughts on those questions.
- ▣ 2) Be sure to have one person write those questions down for next week's conclusion and Q&A time.
- ▣ 3) Fill out an evaluation.
- ▣ 4) Enter your name for the raffling of *Desiring God* by John Piper.
- ▣ 5) Next week the raffle will be for a brand new The Reformation Study Bible (ESV)