



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Scripture: Various

2000

TULIP Series: Part 5 "Perseverance Of The Saints"

TRANSCRIPT

Time for us to begin our fifth and final lesson on TULIP. And let's do that with a word of prayer. Let's pray.

Father, we do thank You for the evening we have together, an opportunity to study Your Word and consider a great doctrine of the faith. And we pray that, as we do that, You'd bless us. Teach us, guide us in our thinking. We thank You as Your people, as believers in Jesus Christ, that in Him we've been justified; and as we will consider this evening, saved forever.

But we not only await the blessings of heaven, but we have an *earnest*, we have the down payment of the glory to come with the Holy Spirit—who lives within us; who has sealed our hearts, keeps us secure, but also is our teacher, our guide. And so Father, we pray that our hearts would be open to His teaching this evening. We pray for that. We look to You to prepare our hearts and guide us in our thinking.

We pray that, not only for our time together, but for the other classes that meet, the young people as they meet tonight. Bless them. Instruct them. May You be glorified in all that we do: And we pray that not only for our time of study, but also for the time of prayer that follows. Prepare our hearts for that. Bless us in the hour that we have together. We pray in Christ's name, Amen.

(Message) In Matthew 18, Peter asked the Lord a question about forgiveness. He wanted to know, 'How many times his brother could sin against him and still be forgiven?' And then he offers what he considered was a pretty generous number; he said, "Up to seven times?" (vs21). And I think most of us would probably think that's pretty generous. Jesus answered, "I do not say to you up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." (vs22). And the point of that isn't mathematics. The point is, there is no limit on forgiveness for the repentant.

Peter's question, though, expresses the natural idea about forgiveness, and kindness, and mercy. We all agree that, 'We need to be merciful, we need to be kind, we need to be forgiving', but, 'There are limits.' 'No!', Christ says, 'There are no limits with God!' But generally, (and this is my opinion, I think it's a correct opinion), but generally people enter the family of God with the perspective of Peter.

And not just about their relationships with other peoples. That's true; we have that same idea about our relationship with one another. —But also, about God's relationship with us. People think about God as, '*being like we are*'. And it seems only natural that there would be limits to God's kindness; or that He would have a policy of, 'Three strikes and you're out.'

And so, one of the questions that comes up early in the experience of a new Christian is, 'Can I lose my salvation?' Once we are saved and God's possession, can we slip from His hand? Can we become citizens of heaven and then at some later date be kicked out? Can we so offend God at some point in our life that He ceases to consider us His children?

It's a question that is of vital importance to us, practically, because it affects the way that we live the Christian life, it affects our motivation in the Christian life—and it is of vital, practical importance because the answer that we give to that question will shape our understanding of the character of God.

The Arminians answer this question in the Fifth Article of *The Remonstrance*, (which is, you'll remember, their confession of faith), by saying that, '*Grace*, once given,

can be lost.' Often, when we think of the Arminian, that's what we think of. We think of Arminianism in terms of that fifth point that it teaches, 'That one can lose his or her salvation.'

And it would seem to have support from the Bible with such passages as, 2 Peter 2:1, where the apostle writes of false teachers who, 'deny the Master who bought them, and bring swift destruction on themselves.' It would seem to be a person who was saved, and yet goes into destruction. Or Hebrews, chapter 6 of, "Those who have once been enlightened...and then have fallen away."

But, there are other passages that indicate the opposite. Philippians chapter 1, in verse 6 Paul writes, "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."

So, which is it? Is salvation certain, or is it uncertain? This is one of the issues, again, that divides Arminianism from Calvinism. They are two different theologies, two different flowers. [It's often said that the tulip is the fairest flower in God's garden. Well, you've probably heard that the Arminians have a flower of their own. It's the daisy: 'He loves me, He loves me not...' *[Laughter]*] It's an old joke, but it makes the point. So, which flower represents God's relationship with us? Is His love eternal and unshakable, —or is it changeable and conditional?

Many feel that the answer is found in this fifth point of the Five Points, the 'P' of the acrostic TULIP, "Perseverance of the Saints", (which can be stated in the short form of, "Once saved, always saved."

The Canons of Dort, as well as every Reformed Theology and Standards, states that, "The saints are sinners, and could not preserve themselves. But, God is faithful, who having conferred grace, mercifully confirms and powerfully preserves them therein, even to the end."

"Perseverance of the Saints" emphasizes that Christians will persevere in believing in spite of their weakness, in spite of their sin. And Christians will sin, and

Christians will stumble along the way, but in spite of all that, they will continue in that faith to the end. They will continue believing forever, not because the believer generates the faith, generates the power, generates the goodness, anything like that—but because of grace, and grace alone.

And so, perhaps it is a better description of the doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints to call it the doctrine of “The Perseverance of God with the Saints”, because the believer's perseverance in the faith is dependent on God's perseverance in His love toward us.

Edwin Palmer, (whose book I refer to a number of times and commend it to your reading on *The Five Points of Calvinism*), explains this by means of an analogy between ‘Perseverance of God with the saints’ and ‘The providence of God with the universe.’ God not only created the natural universe, but He also upholds it. He didn't create it then leave it. Having created it, He keeps it in existence by preserving it by His power. If He should withdraw His power for a moment, the universe would fall back into chaos and non-existence.

It's the same for the Christian spiritually: He created us; He regenerated us; He made us new creatures in Christ—and He sustains us in that faith and life, from moment to moment. If He should withdraw the Holy Spirit from us for a moment, we would fall back into total depravity and unbelief.

Palmer also compares our situation to a man in an oxygen tent: He's kept alive only by this means that is outside of himself. Take the tent away and the man will die. And so it is the same with us as God's children, as His creatures—He preserves us. We live *in* Him. We live *through* Him. —He keeps us going in the faith.

So a better name for the fifth point is, ‘The Perseverance of God’, or ‘The Preservation of the Saints’. Both clarify that, ‘*The saints persevere because of God alone.*’ This is consistent with all of the doctrines which we've been studying; and can be summarized in Jonah's famous prayer, the statement at the end of his prayer in Jonah 2, verse 9, "Salvation is of the LORD." From beginning to end it's God's work.

Well, this is our subject, the Perseverance of the Saints, and like the other points we have studied we will consider it logically, biblically, and practically; and then look at some of the problem texts and seek to clear up the misconceptions.

Logically, this fifth point follows from the other four. All five points hold together sensibly, rationally, and logically. And the doctrine of the 'Perseverance of the Saints' follows naturally from Unconditional Election: If that doctrine is false, then perseverance cannot be true—but if it is true, then perseverance must be true.

'Election' means that God chose *some* from eternity to be saved. He chose them apart from their works. He chose them apart from foreseen faith. Romans 8, verse 29, They are "foreloved, (*foreknown*), and predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son." Ephesians chapter 1, in verse 4, "He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him in love."

Divine choice, divine ordination implies certainty. How could God *predestinate, choose, and foreordain* people to salvation, and that salvation not happen? How could God do that, and have it not occur as He has planned.

The idea of God choosing based on foreseen faith is no help. That is the answer that our Arminian friends would give. But really it causes more problems than it solves, because if God knew from all eternity that they would fall away when He chose them, why did He choose them? Well, God's omniscient. He knows everything. He knew that beforehand, so why would He choose them if He knew that they would fall away to eternal destruction? And knowing that they would fall away after choosing them, why didn't He take them out of the world in that saved state, if that was His desire for them? Well, that's a real problem for the notion of God choosing on the basis of *foreseen* faith, or *foreknowledge*.

But the main problem with it is that it's just simply not taught in the Bible. Often people will cite Romans 8:29, which I just read, and see that as the evidence that He bases His choice and His predestination of people on foreseen faith, "Whom He foreknew, He also predestined." But that word, *foreknew*, does not mean *foresaw*—it

means *foreloved*. It means He chose them from all eternity. And because He chose them, He predestined them to be conformed to His Son.

And logically, eternal security is the only position that makes sense, if God did in fact, as Paul said He did, *foreloved*, *foreordained* His saints to everlasting life. Well that's the first logical point that we can draw from the Five Points.

Secondly, *Perseverance*, or *eternal security* follows from *Irresistible Grace*. If that doctrine is not true, then there is no security of salvation. If *free will* is true and salvation depends on man's choice of God, rather than God's choice of man, then at some point a person could exercise his or her free will and choose not to believe any longer, and in so doing lose his or her salvation. And that would happen.

If that were the case, that would happen because people are not faithful; they are fickle; they get disturbed emotionally. We have our ups and our downs and we have our moments of weakness—and in those moments of weakness we make foolish decisions. That's true of all of us; we can become very discouraged at times in our lives. And so a person may have faith one day but get out of the wrong side of the bed the next day and lose it all, if we have free will and if it is dependent upon us. If it begins with us, then it must end with us—and that means somewhere in between we can opt out and choose a different path.

So, the 'uncertainty of perseverance' is logical from the Arminian point of view. *Free will* undermines any basis of security. Now the Arminian would agree with that. The Amyraldian would not, but the Amyraldian position is not consistent. At least in this way, the Arminians are consistent.

But again, the problem is that this is not what the Bible teaches. It does not teach *free will*. We don't have time to demonstrate that at this time, (I hope we did that earlier in our studies of these five points). What the Bible clearly does teach is *unconditional election*, and *irresistible grace*. Romans 9, verses 16 through 18, "It does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy...He has mercy on

whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires." And so it follows that, 'He will bring those on whom He has mercy.' —And only He can do that.

John 6:44, "No one can come to Me unless the Father...draws him." And the promise is that He will do just that. If He draws us out of unbelief, is it not reasonable that He will keep us from falling back into unbelief? Is it reasonable to believe that God begins a work that He does not finish? I guess some would say 'Yes'—but Paul says 'Absolutely not!' because in Philippians 1:6, he says, "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." There are no exceptions to that statement. It's an absolute: "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."

Well thirdly, the Perseverance of the Saints follows logically from Limited Atonement or Particular Redemption, because if Christ paid for all the sins of all the elect, then they cannot be punished—for that has already happened in the substitute. Paul says that in Galatians chapter 3, in verse 13. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us."

When did that happen? It happened on the cross. On the cross He underwent the pains of hell for all for whom He died. That means they cannot go to hell and suffer the punishment He has already suffered—which means that they are eternally secure and certainly will persevere to the end.

And fourthly, 'Does this not follow from the very nature of the gift that is given at the moment of faith?' —Which is what? *Eternal Life*. What does this expression mean if it can be lost? Well it means it's, 'Not eternal life. It's temporal life.' But that's not what we're promised. We are promised *eternal life*. We have that throughout the Bible, and throughout the writings of John; in John 3:36 Jesus promised, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life." 1 John chapter 5, in verse 13 the apostle wrote, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life." Both statements are that the believer *presently* has *eternal*

*life*. Jesus and John don't say, 'Will have eternal life.' He does not say, 'Might have eternal life', but actually, 'Has life', through faith in Jesus Christ. And since the life that they have at the moment of faith, (and while he, (John), was writing to them), is *eternal*, it cannot be lost or it's not eternal. So if words mean anything, then that means the life that is given cannot be lost—it's *eternal*—it's *everlasting*.

So *Perseverance* follows logically from the other points. But, as with all the other points that are biblical, so too this Fifth Point of 'Perseverance' or 'Eternal Security' is the clear teaching of Scripture. Let's go through a few Scriptures:

The first one would be John chapter 6, verses 37 through 39. And there Jesus said, verse 37, "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me, I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day."

'The last day' is the last day of this age; it's 'the day of judgment'. So all whom the Father gives—come. All whom the Father elects—believe. And Jesus says, 'He loses none'; every believer will be resurrected to Life. That's the assurance that our Lord gives in chapter 6.

Now we have the same assurance given over in chapter 10, verses 27 through 30. Jesus says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, 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."

Well that seems to close all the loopholes: No one can snatch them out; No tempter can lure you out of the Father's possession, or the Son's possession. The devil can't do that; you can't do that. You cannot cause yourself to be removed from God's love. In fact the passage, if you look at it, speaks of a double security: We are in the hand of the Son, (and no one can take us out of that), and the Son is in the hand of the Father. Can we remove the Son from the hand of the Father? That's a double,



absolute, security that He speaks of here. I don't know that the Lord could make it any clearer than that.

Well, we see it here in chapter 10, and we see it also in John 17, in our Lord's high priestly prayer. This is a prayer among equals: It is the prayer of the eternal Son to the eternal Father. There's no confession of sin in this prayer, because it is the prayer of the impeccable God-man—and so it is a perfect prayer, a flawless prayer, an impeccable prayer.

And here He intercedes for His people; He makes a request for them in verse 24; "Father," He says, "I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world."

This is the Son's request. And because of who He is, it is impossible that it not be granted. The Father and the Son are a perfect union. Throughout the Gospel of John that point is made. Back in chapter 6, in verse 38, the verse we just read, Jesus said, 'That He had not come to do His own will, but to do the will of Him who sent Him.' So all that He does is the will of the Father.

In John 5, in verse 19, He said, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner." Now that applies to His prayer. He cannot pray the prayer that He prays unless it's what 'He sees the Father doing'. And all that He prays is in perfect harmony with the Father's will. It is for, 'Those whom the Father gave to Him, who belong to the Father.' He says that back in verse 9, of John 17.

So it is a prayer for those whom the Father loves, as much as the Son loves, and who has entrusted to the Son's keeping and care, and a prayer in perfect harmony with the Father's will—which therefore must be granted.

But He not only makes a request, He enforces it with an argument of sorts. He says, "For You loved Me before the foundation of the world." (Jn 17:24b). The Love of the Father for the Son is eternal. It has no beginning. It has no end. It has no equal. Nothing can surpass it. It is infinite. It is eternal. And Christ bases His request on that

love and not on any merit in us, (in His people, in His sheep, nor here, at least, on the Father's unconditional love for us), but on His love for His Son. And the argument is this: 'Since You loved me, do this for those whom I love.' And because of the Father's love for His Son, He must do it. He must grant, 'That we be with Him for all eternity.'

Robert Murray McCheyne preached a sermon on this in January 1840. He said to the congregation to whom he was preaching that, "Christ cannot be without you. Christ cannot be without you. You are His jewels, His crown. Heaven would be no heaven to Him if you were not there."

The Father loves the Son, and He will not deprive Him of His eternal joy. And His eternal joy is that His people, those for whom He died, whom He loves with an infinite love, be with Him for all eternity. And so because the Father loves His Son with an eternal love, He must grant His Son's request.

Furthermore, every believer in Jesus Christ is a part of Christ's body. That's how Paul describes us. We're in union with Him. We are *in* Him. And because the Father loves the Son, He must love us because we're a part of His Son. So we must be with Him for all eternity. The Lord will not finish His work and enter into eternity with parts of His body missing; with part of His bride not with Him. We must be with Him for all eternity. And that's what He prays for here. It's a perfect prayer: It's according to the Father's will, and it must be answered for that reason.

It's clear from John's Gospel that the Father and the Son keep us secure. But Paul also makes it clear that the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, keeps us secure. In Ephesians chapter 4, in verse 30 he writes, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

The *seal*, in the ancient world, was a mark of ownership. Businessmen would have commodities that they owned, and they put their seal on them if they're being shipped from one place to another. And their ownership was made evident by that seal. And it was protected as being theirs.

And in the same way, the Holy Spirit is the seal of God upon us, the seal of ownership. And that seal cannot be broken. He keeps us as God's possession. And He will keep us as God's possession, Paul says, "for the day of redemption"; for the final day, the resurrection day. And no one can break that seal.

The idea of a seal was that it wouldn't be broken and violated. Now a human seal could certainly be broken, (no doubt that happened often). But this seal is unique. This is the third Person of the Trinity—'Who could break that seal?' It is really presumptuous to think that we can, or anyone can; 'The Lord God is Almighty.'

But what about those texts that seem to indicate that we can lose our salvation? For example, 2 Peter 2:1, where Peter writes of false prophets and false teachers who, he says, "Secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master *who bought them*, bringing swift destruction upon themselves."

Well, the most probable explanation for that is that Peter is speaking of these false teachers according to the terms of their own profession: They claimed that Jesus was their redeemer—and they were, therefore, considered to be the Lord's people by the church. And that's how they managed to gain a hearing among God's people and have a position of acceptance within the church. They claimed to be saved men.

But their denial of Him proved otherwise. It showed their profession to be false; and heightened their condemnation. The person who denies the Master shows that he or she never was really bought by the Master...they only claimed to be.

Not everyone who professes faith is a genuine believer. Ultimately the false brethren, the false teachers, the false prophets are known by the fruit that they bear—whether it's false teaching; or it is, ultimately, denying Christ.

Judas was a man just like that. He joined himself to Christ. He was one of the twelve, and he was a man who was greatly blessed in those three years. He did amazing things: He went out and preached with the others; he performed miracles with the others; he was one of the twelve; and he was highly regarded by the other disciples.

He carried the purse and showed all the signs of being a genuine man of faith, and yet—he was not.

Jesus, in John chapter 6, in verse 70, called him “a devil”. He was never a genuine disciple. He was never a man of faith. He only appeared to be—he only professed to be. In the parable of the sower, we have an explanation of all of that. In Matthew 13, Jesus speaks of the seed that falls on shallow ground, and quickly springs up, only to be scorched by the sun and die.

People will profess faith, and then they will fall away—not because they lost their salvation, but because they never had their salvation. The root was never really that deep—and time makes that known; circumstances in life make that known. And so, in 2 Peter chapter 1, in verse 10, Peter warns us, “To make our calling and election sure.” (KJV).

That's the force, the meaning, the purpose, of those warning passages that we find throughout to Bible. The Book of Hebrews, for example, we have them more than once, to warn us to do what Peter says, ‘To make our calling and election sure’. Because it is possible for a person to be a member of the church, outwardly, at least, officially—to be baptized, or a deacon, or an elder, or even be a minister of the Gospel, and yet, not be born again.

But those who are, those who've been born again, who believe in Jesus Christ, cannot be lost. That is the testimony of Scripture.

Now that doesn't mean that we can't backslide. Christians stumble.; they fall into sin. Paul speaks of the struggle in Romans chapter 7, verse 14 through 25: Of, ‘doing the very thing he hated.’

And yet: Didn't Peter do that, the night of our Lord's arrest?’ In fact, at one point, you could not tell the difference between Peter and Judas. Peter denied our Lord three times—and denied Him with curses. And yet he was a saved man.

The Lord had warned him about that—told him it would happen, that “Satan has demanded to sift you as wheat.” (Luk 22:31). And Satan did ‘sift him as wheat’. But he

was restored, and then by means of the failure that he'd experienced and the restoration, he went out and restored others when they stumbled and fell.

So, we do that; we stumble; we fall. We're born again; we are new creatures in Jesus Christ—but we still have sin in us, waging war with the law of our minds. And it will be that way to the end.

Spurgeon illustrated it by describing the Christian as being like a man on board a ship. He may be repeatedly knocked down on the deck by the waves, but never washed overboard. And the best of men backslide, temporarily. Peter did. And Paul struggled with sin and describes it in Galatians 5 as a struggle 'between the flesh and the Spirit.' And 'It goes on constantly, so that we cannot do what we want to do.' But, while we backslide, while we fail, while we stumble, we are never completely defeated by sin.

We see this depicted, I think, in *Pilgrim's Progress*, in a well-known scene. After Christian was saved at the cross he was given a new set of clothing; clean clothes, and he's given a scroll—and that scroll is the *assurance* of his salvation. He then sets off with great joy and happiness on his journey to the heavenly city.

But eventually he becomes tired and he comes to what Bunyan calls 'Pleasant Arbor', and he sits down to take a rest. And he rests too long: He falls asleep, and then wakes up in a panic. He was behind schedule now, and he had to rush off because the sun was beginning to set. And then he realized after some time that he didn't have his scroll. He didn't have the *assurance*, so had to go back and find it, back at that Pleasant Arbor, where it had fallen out of his coat.

Well it's a picture of what happens: We become lazy in our walk with the Lord; we drift, we sin, we lose our assurance—and end up "going back", losing ground. It happens to all Christians. It is a loss of progress. It is a loss of joy and peace. It results in the discipline of God, as a Father disciplines his son—but not a loss of salvation. Sin will happen, and God will discipline His children—and that is an evidence of salvation.

Well let me conclude with two texts where we see both the logic of the doctrine and an explicit statement of Scripture in support of it. The first is Romans chapter 5, and verses 8 through 10. Romans 5, verse 8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us,

in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath *of God* through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Rom 5:8-10).

Well that is an argument, 'from the greater to the lesser'; 'If God has saved us while we were His enemies, will He not keep us, now that we are His children? Of course He will! If He'd save you when you were His enemy, what will He do now that you're His child? He'll keep you, and preserve you, and save you to the end.' That's what Paul is saying.

But if that's not clear, it should be clear from the second text, which is again in Romans 8, in verses 38 and 39, where Paul writes, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, not things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Now what did Paul leave out? He piles one idea upon another. I think if someone raised another objection it would have been completely exasperating to the apostle because that says it all. It is the *nature of Unconditional Love* to always be *faithful*. And that's what God's love is. It is unconditional; it does not stop when we fail or become ugly.

Charles Hodge likened God's love to that of a parent. He wrote, "A mother does not love her child because it is lovely. Her love leads her to do all she can to render it attractive—and to keep it so. She doesn't do that because the child commends itself to her, but because the child is her child." Well, God is like that. We will never be more unattractive than when He chose us and redeemed us. But through the Holy Spirit, He is making us attractive. —And He won't stop until the work is finished.

"It is only the lamentable mistake that, 'God loves us for our goodness' ", (Hodge writes), "that can lead anyone to suppose that His love is dependent our self-sustained attractiveness." But people come into the Christian life, or they think about the Christian life, and do so with an idea that God's like us. (That's the way we love; we love those

who are attractive.) But God's not like us. God is the, "Wholly Other." And as we grow in our knowledge of Him, we learn that about Him.

Edwin Palmer said of this doctrine, *Perseverance of the Saints*, that, "It is one of the grandest thoughts in the Bible." It is!—And it is one of the most practical. It is impossible to progress in the faith and to contend for the faith if you're not certain that you're in the faith. And we certainly can't have joy with nagging doubts about God's love for us, or our position in His family.

The Lord bids the believer to *rest* in Him; (and not *worry* in Him.) And we can do that because our security is in Him, and His unchanging character, and His unlimited power; and not in ourselves. And we are absolutely secure.

There's a hymn that I want to close with, (I'm not going to sing it, but I've been singing it all the past couple of days that I've been working on this). It's by Augustus Toplady; and he writes in one of the last parts of the last stanza, "Yes, I to the end shall endure as sure as the earnest is given, more happy, but not more secure, the souls of the blessed in heaven."

Souls in heaven are more happy than we are on earth, but they're not more secure. We are just as secure as they are. And we will, as he said, "endure" to the end by the grace of God. Let's bow in a word of prayer.

Father, we do thank You for Your faithfulness to us, and Your love for us. It's not based upon anything good in us; it's grounded in your love, which is unconditional—the love of the Triune God for the people You chose for Yourself. We thank You for that love. We thank You that because of it we will endure to the end; we will persevere in the faith, we, who have trusted in Jesus Christ. And we will stand before You some day and sing praise to You; and not one of Your redeemed people will take any credit—we will give all the glory to You, because, "Salvation is of the LORD." We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

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