

The Order of Salvation – Preservation and Glorification

Introduction

- Redemption applied: the 'Order of Salvation' = *calling, regeneration, conversion, justification, adoption, sanctification, **preservation & glorification.***

1. God Preserves His People

"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."

—WCF 17.1

i) Can a Christian fall away?

The warning passages

'For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.'

(2 Peter 2:20 [cf. 1 Corinthians 10; Hebrews 6:4-6])

"Paul believes that his apostolic warnings are themselves a means by which the Corinthians will be preserved by God for future glory."

—Andrew Wilson

The comfort passages

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 1:6)

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... 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 [Cf. Romans 8:31-38])

ii) How does God preserve his people?

God's plan cannot be changed; God's promise cannot fail; the calling according to God's purpose cannot be revoked; the merit of Christ as well as his interceding and preserving cannot be nullified; and the sealing of the Holy Spirit can neither be invalidated nor wiped out.

(Canons of Dort 5.8)

The Father Gives

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

(John 6:37)

The Son Protects

I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep... I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

(John 10:14-15, 28)

The Spirit is a Seal

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, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

(Ephesians 1:13-14)

“it belongs in truth to the Church of God to endure blows and not to inflict them. But it will also please your Majesty to remember that she is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.”

—Theodore Beza (writing to the King of Navarre in France)

iii) What are we to do?

“The crucial test for true faith is endurance to the end, abiding in Christ, and continuance in his word.”

—Murray, p.152

Abide in His word

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

(John 15:4)

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples”

(John 8:31)

Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

(Jude 21)

Persevere by His grace

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence

(2 Peter 1:3 [Cf. James 1:25; Hebrews 3:14])

2. God Glorifies His People

“Not only regenerated, forgiven, justified, justified, adopted, and sanctified, God’s elect will one day be raised bodily to inherit the everlasting kingdom won for them by their head. As Jesus is now, we will also be together with him: head and members joined in unending joy. This future hope is what theology identifies as glorification.”

—Horton, p.688

i) When will it happen?

A certain event

And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

(Romans 8:30)

At Christ’s return

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

(1 Corinthians 15:51-52)

ii) What will it be like?

A total renewal of the body

We await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself

(Philippians 3:20-21)

A total removal of all sin

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

(1 John 3:2)

Crowned and Reigning

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

(Romans 8:16-17)

And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

(1 Peter 5:4)

If we endure, we will also reign with him

(2 Timothy 2:12)

iii) How should we be in the meantime?

View the present in light of the glory to come

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

(Romans 8:18 [2 Corinthians 4:17])

Strive for godliness

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practise these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

(2 Peter 1:10-11)

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ

(Titus 2:11-13)

Wait patiently

But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

(Romans 8:25)

Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.

(James 5:7)