

"Confirmed to the End"  
(1 Corinthians 1:8-9)

Introduction: The Christian lives in a world that is corrupted by sin and has within himself, or herself, the remnants, the leftovers of that sin in which he used to live. Last week we saw the struggle that is going on daily in the life of the believer as the grace in his soul rises up against the sin which is there, so that the Christian, if he is not diligent to walk in the strength which the Spirit supplies, will be held at a stalemate in his Christian walk, and will not be able to do the things that the new nature within him is urging him to do.

But now we want to deal with the question: if this is the case with all Christians, then what is the guarantee that you and I will not finally fall away in the end? How do we know that we will finish the race? How can we be sure that we will cross the finish line? We have a saying in our society that we often need to remember which states, "Finish what you've started." That is, whenever you begin to work on a project, whether it is something that needs to be fixed around the house, like a broken appliance or car repair, something that needs to be done for school, like a term paper or studying for a test, or something that you need to do for your health, like going on a diet or beginning an exercise program, if you're going to start, it won't do you any good in the long run unless you finish. Well, if we start running the Christian race and don't make it to the finish line, then it would have been better for us not to run. What is the guarantee that we are going to persevere until the end and receive the crown? That guarantee is not found in us, but it is found in the faithfulness of the Lord. He finishes what He starts. He does not have any projects which are left standing around half-completed, but He always sees all things through to their conclusion. So it is with His work of salvation. Paul told the Philippians, "FOR I AM CONFIDENT OF THIS VERY THING, THAT HE WHO BEGAN A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL PERFECT IT UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST JESUS" (1:6). When God started a work in you, when He chose you in eternity, when He created you, when He called you in time and put within you a new heart, His intention was to complete that salvation which He began. And this is what our text tells us this evening, namely,

*God will keep you from the beginning of your salvation to its end, because He is faithful.*

*First, I want you to see that God is a faithful covenant keeping God, and second, that because He is, He will give you the strength to make it to the end.*

**I. The Basis of Our Hope that We Will Be Kept Safe in Christ is Founded On the Faithfulness of God.**

**A. First, Our Guarantee that We Will One Day Be In Heaven Is not Rooted in Us, But in the Faithfulness of God.**

**1. Within ourselves we could never persevere to the end and make it safely to heaven.**

**a. We don't have the strength. I think we can all testify to the fact that the more we see the holy requirements**

of God, the less adequate we feel to the task.

- (i) Our faithfulness is like a snow-cone in July, it melts away with the heat of a trial.
- (ii) Do any of you believe that you have within yourselves the power to stay true to God? How many times have we failed Him?

- b. But when God says here is the way, walk in it, He never expects us to walk it alone.
- c. We don't come to Christ through His grace and then try to live apart from it. Paul says to such who would try, "ARE YOU SO FOOLISH? HAVING BEGUN BY THE SPIRIT, ARE YOU NOW BEING PERFECTED BY THE FLESH?" (Gal. 3:3).

2. We must not look to ourselves for that strength, but to God's faithfulness.

- a. We know that we are prone to sin; we are prone to fall away from our obedience to God.
- b. But God is faithful; He is absolutely trustworthy; and in Him we can place our full confidence. What He has promised, He is faithful to bring about.

B. God Is Faithful Because He Never Changes.

1. People of God, isn't this the reason why it is important to know what God reveals about Himself? He tells us that He never changes, and so we must believe that and trust in Him.

- a. Everything in life is constantly changing around us.
  - (i) We think of the oceans as never changing, or of the stars in the sky, or the great mountains.
  - (ii) To our eyes they seem not to change because they change so slowly. But they are changing constantly, they are never the same.
- b. But God is the only thing there is that never changes.
  - (i) The years do not affect Him, the events of history do not change Him.
  - (ii) He does not learn more through experience, He does not become any wiser as though He could be taken advantage of, as we sometimes are, causing Him to be more careful in the future.
  - (iii) He does not grow stronger or weaker through the use of His almighty power.
  - (iv) God will always remain as He was in the beginning, and continue that way even to the end.

2. And since God never changes, what He has purposed in His faithfulness will come to pass.

- a. Since He does not change, then how could His love for us ever change? God says to His people, "I HAVE LOVED YOU WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE; THEREFORE I HAVE DRAWN YOU WITH LOVING KINDNESS" (Jer. 31:3).
- b. Since God does not change, then how could His

gracious covenant ever change? In the benediction at the end of Hebrews, the author writes, "NOW THE GOD OF PEACE, WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD THE GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE ETERNAL COVENANT . . ." (13:20). God's covenant of Grace is eternal, and it will never change.

- c. Since God does not change, then how could He ever separate us from our union with Christ?
  - (i) Our text tells us that God called us into communion with His Son. He drew us into sweet fellowship with Christ and Himself in such a way that we came most willingly.
  - (ii) And when we came to Him through His grace, He joined us to Christ, and told us that this union would never end.
- d. Since God does not change, then why would He ever stop listening to the Advocate that He has given to us? God forever listens to our Great High Priest who ever lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25).
- e. And lastly, since God does not change, then why would He ever take back His gracious Holy Spirit with whom we were sealed as an engagement ring looking forward to the time when we would be wed with the Lamb?
- f. He obviously will never take back anything He has promised, and that is why Jesus says in John 10:27-29, "MY SHEEP HEAR MY VOICE, AND I KNOW THEM, AND THEY FOLLOW ME; AND I GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO THEM, AND THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH; AND NO ONE SHALL 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."
- g. Because God never changes, neither will His faithfulness to His promises ever change.

II. What God Has Purposed to Do, He Is Faithful to Fulfill, and What He Has Promised to Do Is to Establish You As Blameless in His Sight until the Day of Christ.

- A. God Is Not Only Faithful to Give You His Unchanging Love and Covenant Promises, But He Is Also Faithful to Give You Gracious Help to Confirm and Strengthen You.
  1. This means two things: first it means that He will confirm you in Christ.
    - a. God's grace places you firmly in Christ.
    - b. He is the Ark of refuge from storm; He is the rock which cannot be moved.
    - c. When you are united to Christ, you are set in Him with the spiritual cement of the Holy Spirit. from which you can never be loosed.
  2. And secondly, it means that in this life He will confirm to you that you are in Christ by fulfilling His promises in you.
    - a. You cannot know by looking, that is, through your eyes, whether or not you are in Christ.
      - (i) The Holy Spirit is invisible. You cannot see Him in you or around you.

- (ii) You also can't see Christ, though you are in union with Him, because He is in heaven.
  - b. You can only know that you are in a state of grace by the fact that God is fulfilling His promises in you.
  - c. If you are in Christ, you will have the love of Christ firmly planted in your hearts, and you will long for the things of God. And this will bring you great confidence and hope.
- B. And Because the Father Will Establish You in Christ and Christ in You, He will Keep You Blameless until the Day of Christ.
1. The Bible over and over again confirms the fact that true believers will never fully nor finally fall away from their Lord.
    - a. They may fall into sin for a time, even gross sin.
    - b. But they will never give themselves to it permanently, nor completely.
      - (i) A Christian is capable of doing just about anything that an unbeliever can do.
      - (ii) David fell into adultery with Bathsheba, and he had her husband, Uriah the Hittite, put to death to cover his sin.
      - (iii) Peter, who had only moments earlier declared that he would follow Jesus even unto death, denied, when confronted by a servant girl, that he even knew Him.
      - (iv) The difference between the Christian and the non-Christian at this point is not the sin committed, but the depth of that sin and how long they continue in it.
      - (v) The Christian never gives his heart fully to sin, because of the grace of God in his heart.
      - (vi) While he is in it, he struggles to overcome it.
        - (a) David struggled with his sin, and when confronted by Nathan, he repented.
        - (b) Peter later repented of his sin, and became one of the most outspoken witnesses to the resurrection of Christ.
      - (vii) Speaking of the blessings of the New Covenant, the Lord declares in Jeremiah 32:40, "AND I WILL MAKE AN EVERLASTING WITH THEM THAT I WILL NOT TURN AWAY FROM THEM, TO DO THEM GOOD; AND I WILL PUT THE FEAR OF ME IN THEIR HEARTS SO THAT THEY WILL NOT TURN AWAY FROM ME."
      - (viii) And because this fear is in the heart of the Christian, as well as the knowledge of God's tremendous love and mercy in Christ, he will finally repent of his sin and forsake it.
      - (ix) The unbeliever, on the other hand, will not be able to break with his love for that sin and so will continue in it and do all he can to cover his guilt.
  2. But it is by God's power that the believer is enabled to

persevere, and by that power he will be kept blameless until the day of Christ.

a. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 1:3-5, "BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO ACCORDING TO HIS GREAT MERCY HAS CAUSED US TO BE BORN AGAIN TO A LIVING HOPE THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, TO OBTAIN AN INHERITANCE WHICH IS IMPERISHABLE AND UNDEFILED AND WILL NOT FADE AWAY, RESERVED IN HEAVEN FOR YOU, WHO ARE PROTECTED BY THE POWER OF GOD THROUGH FAITH FOR A SALVATION READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME."

(i) Notice that Peter tells us that this salvation is for those who are "PROTECTED BY THE POWER OF GOD." They are not protecting themselves, but God is watching over them.

(iii) And notice too that it is "THROUGH FAITH." Paul says in Romans 1:17, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." It is from first to last through saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ so that it might be from first to last through the power of God.

b. And so at the end of the age, at the judgment seat of Christ, God will declare His people to be absolutely blameless in Christ.

(i) You who are protected by this power will be kept holy and blameless even unto the end.

(ii) The end here is the end of the age when Christ returns to set up His Kingdom.

(iii) And on the day of His judgment, you will stand before Him in an absolutely impeccable righteousness, and you will be counted as one who has done nothing wrong and everything right.

(iv) And Christ will own you as His peculiar people.

III. Uses. In closing, I would like to further apply this text in two ways:

A. First, This Text Teaches Us that Our Security Is Not Based Upon Our Own Work But God's.

1. God does not save you by His Spirit and then leave it up to you to complete your salvation.

a. Do you sometimes feel that it is up to you to work out your own salvation? Do you look at your own weakness and lack of zeal and wonder how you can ever make it?

b. God has not called you to strive alone. He has made provision for you in His faithfulness.

2. It is because of God's faithfulness, that you will never perish.

a. Since you are the object of His eternal love, you will never be lost.

(i) You have been in the mind of God from all eternity, and He has loved you with an

- everlasting love.
- (ii) *He will never leave you nor forsake you.*
- b. *Since you are the chosen of God, and His decree is unchanging, you will never fall from His grace.*
    - (i) *It was not because of who or what you are that God chose you, but because of His sovereign grace.*
    - (ii) *And because God never changes His mind, He will never cast you away.*
  - c. *Because you are united with Christ, you can never fall from the Father's love.*
    - (i) *God's call places you in the greatest object of His love.*
    - (ii) *And when you are in the Beloved, you are also loved by God as He is.*
  - d. *Since Christ is continually pleading His worthiness before God on your behalf, you will never be condemned.*
    - (i) *You do things everyday that are displeasing in the sight of God.*
    - (ii) *But because you have Christ as your Advocate, He will keep you in the grace of God by pleading His own infinite worthiness.*
  - e. *And lastly, since the Spirit of God abides in you, you will remain forever the temple of God.*
    - (i) *The Spirit does not take up residence in His people only to forsake them.*
    - (ii) *But He will forever dwell in you, giving you the power to be holy in God's sight.*
    - (iii) *You are secure because of God's faithfulness, not your own.*
- B. *But This Text Also Teaches Us that If We Are the Objects of God's Faithfulness, Then We Will Persevere in Faithfulness.*
- 1. *How can you know whether or not you are being kept by the power of God unto salvation?*
  - 2. *It will be revealed in your life by a desire to be holy and by a life of continuing holiness.*
    - a. *God's gracious promises are never extended to those who continue in sin.*
      - (i) *If you practice any known sin, if your heart is hardened against any command of God, if your life is not being conformed to the image of Christ, if your communion with Christ does not include a sharing in His sufferings, then you cannot embrace these promises in your bosom.*
      - (ii) *You must first repent of your sins and turn unto the Lord Jesus Christ in faith, in order to receive His salvation.*
  - b. *These promises of God are only given to those who meet the qualifications of Scripture.*

- (i) *If you have turned to Christ in faith and repentance, if you have taken seriously His commands to obedience, if you have trembled at His threatenings, if you have believed and embraced His teachings, then you may lay hold of what He has promised.*
- (ii) *You cannot take the blessings without the responsibilities, you will not inherit the kingdom except by way of the cross.*
- (iii) *Yes, God is faithful, and salvation depends alone on His faithfulness. But if you are the receiver of that blessed hope, He will also cause you to be faithful, and in that you will find your hope.*
- (iv) *People of God, rest in God, but only as you see the marks of His grace resting on you. Amen.*