

John Calvin and Calvinism – No. 6

Dub McClish

The final point of Calvinistic theology relates to “Perseverance of the saints,” and reads as follows from the Doctrines of the Synod of Dort:

God ... does not wholly take away his Holy Spirit from his own, even in lamentable falls nor does he so permit them to glide down that they should fall from the grace of adoption and the state of justification...they neither **totally fall** from faith and grace, nor **finally continue** in their falls and perish.

This doctrine, commonly termed, “One saved, always saved,” is based upon one of John Calvin’s prior erroneous assumptions. If, as Calvin assumed, God predestined before creation the exact number and names of those who could be saved and lost, and these numbers cannot be altered, it must therefore follow that if a person is saved there is nothing he can do to be lost, even if he wants to!

The Bible gives no support either to the doctrine of Calvinistic predestination or perseverance. Since predestination has already received notice in a previous article on *The Scripture Cache*, consider some of the Scriptures that conflict with the doctrine of perseverance:

1. Paul did not believe he was beyond being lost, for he said he had to exercise strict self-discipline lest he be rejected of God (1 Cor. 9:27).
2. Simon the sorcerer was saved, but shortly afterward Peter told him he was in the bond of iniquity, needed to repent of his wickedness and was in danger of perishing (Acts 8:20–23).
3. Paul warned, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12).
4. Perhaps the most explicit rebuke of the perseverance doctrine in the New Testament is Paul’s charge to the Galatian churches: “Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; **ye are fallen away from grace**” (emphasis mine, DM) (Gal. 5:4).

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