

Preserving Grace (Part 2)

The example of Judas Iscariot sometimes causes us to scratch our head. How could someone so close to Jesus possibly betray Him and receive the label “son of perdition”? Wouldn’t the acts, words, and nature of Jesus instill in Him a true sense of worship, awe, and adoration? Simply put, the answer is “no.” As the rich man discovered in the parable of Lazarus, even the miraculous nature and works of Jesus cannot convince a sinner dead in his transgressions about His Messianic role without divine intervention in the heart. This lesson demonstrates that this decision rests in the sovereign will of God alone. Yet, when God determines to pluck someone from his depraved state, He will not be thwarted and His work will never be undone. On the contrary, the recipients of God’s mercy will persevere in grace throughout eternity, eventually arrayed around the throne of their magnificent, glorified Savior, Jesus.

I. Persevering Grace

a. Never lost

i. John 6:39: Jesus will lose none of those given to Him by the Father.

1. This promise issues from before the foundation of the world.
2. It aims at resurrecting the dead on the last day, and Christians will worship Him in glory for eternity.

ii. John 6:44, 54: These verses reaffirm the eternal security granted by the sovereignty election of God.

b. Forever secure

i. John 10:27–29: No one will snatch the sheep from the hand of Jesus.

1. Jesus may have had in mind both the religious leaders of Israel as well as demonic powers, particularly Satan.
2. Their attempts are futile.

ii. John 10:28–29: The power of the divine Lord of creation assures the veracity of this promise.

c. Never die

i. John 11:25–26: No believer will suffer eternal death.

1. Jesus uses definite articles to demonstrate that belief in Him alone offers eternal life.
 2. Even if physical death occurs, a believer can be confident he will never suffer eternal death, physical or spiritual.
- ii. Unbelievers will experience the “second death”: the eternal condemnation and banishment to hell.

d. Never abandoned

i. John 14:16–17: Jesus provides the Holy Spirit to dwell within Christians forever.

1. This act ensures the eternal perseverance of believers.
2. In conjunction with this, the Holy Spirit continues to clean and sanctify believers more and more in the image of Christ.

e. Never unguarded

i. John 17:12 Jesus explains that He has been guarding the disciples, by which they have persisted in Him.

1. Jesus kept them from apostatizing and falling away.
2. Judas, despite His proximity to Jesus and His teaching, was never saved. On the contrary, as the son of perdition, God ordained Judas to betray Jesus and receive condemnation.

ii. John 17:24: Jesus intercedes for His flock that they might witness His in His full glory forever. His prayers do not go unanswered

SCRIPTURE READINGS: John 3:15–18, 36; 4:13–14; 5:24; 6:39, 44, 54; 10:27–29; 11:25–26; 14; 16–17; 17:12, 24; Romans 1:18; 8:1, 23; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Peter 3.