

Article 5 – The Eternal Security of the Saints

“We believe that the Saints shall be preserved by grace and never finally fall away.”

This fifth Article of Faith affirms the eternal security of the Saints of God. This is sometimes referred to as the biblical doctrine of the “Preservation of the Saints,” which asserts that all of the Elect will be wholly preserved by God’s grace, and they will never lose their eternal salvation. As Jesus said: *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one.”* John 10:27-30.

Our eternal security is not based on our own works or our ability to persevere, but rather, is based fully on the faithfulness of God to preserve us to the end. It is true we are called upon by God to be obedient and to follow Him in faith; but God, and only God, preserves us and ensures we attain heaven and the resurrection. *“For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.* Psalms 37:28.

The doctrine of the Preservation of the Saints is the fifth of the so-called “Doctrines of Grace” or the “TULIP” doctrine. These are the doctrines of Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited (Particular) Atonement, Irresistible Grace (Effectual Calling), and Preservation of the Saints. These doctrines are covered by Articles 3 through 5 of our Articles of Faith, and demonstrate that each member of the Triune Godhead actively works to ensure our eternal security. *“Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called [by the Holy Spirit]”* Jude 1:1.

Election guarantees that the Saints are eternally secure and will never be lost. God promised before the world began that those He chose in Christ would live forever with Him. Because God cannot lie, our eternal salvation is assured. *“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;”* Titus 1:2.

The perfect Atonement (reconciliation) that Jesus made for us on the cross also guarantees that the Saints are eternally secure and will never be lost. Christ’s death was not a general atonement for sin; it was a particular atonement that was completely effective for all His people. We know that God accepted Christ’s offering, and accepted us in Him, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”* Romans 5:8-9. *“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”* Romans 6:5.

In sum, we can be assured of our eternal security because we are preserved by the purpose, power, and promises of God. Perhaps Peter said it best: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”* 1 Peter 1:3-5.