

AUTHOR: PASTOR DARIN POULLARD
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BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

A Study of the Articles of Faith



Fort Washington Baptist Church
Pastor Darin Poullard



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SESSION 55

XI. OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by, the power of God through faith unto salvation.¹

According to Article XI:

1. **Baptists believe** that the Scriptures teach that such only are real believers as endure unto the end.
2. **Baptists believe** that the Scriptures teach that their (real believers) persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors.
3. **Baptists believe** that the Scriptures teach that a special Providence watches over their (real believers) welfare.
4. **Baptists believe** that the Scriptures teach that they (real believers) are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

The Doctrine of Perseverance of the Saints



Introduction:

In our prior lesson, we learned that the Scriptures teach that “real believers,” persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors. “Real believers” persevere in the faith through challenges that come because of one’s faith in Christ Jesus. We learned, in our last study four wonderful truths about perseverance.

- **First: Those with perseverance do not have the Word of God taken away from their heart by the devil (Lk. 8:11-12).**

Jesus said, “And those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and **takes away** the word from their heart, so that they may not believe and be saved” (Lk. 8:11). In Matthew’s account, Jesus explained that when someone hears the Word of God and **does not understand it**, the evil one comes and **snatches away** what was sown in his heart (Matt. 13:19). The devil takes the Word away from the heart of those who do not understand the Word. If someone does not understand the Word, one cannot put faith in that Word and be saved. **Because the devil** does not want people saved, when there is no understanding of the Word, the devil comes and takes away that Word from the heart. Therefore, those who sow the Word **must** study it, **must** comprehend it, **must** believe it, and **then** share it in a manner that the most biblically unlearned listener can comprehend the Word of God giving the devil no opportunity to **take away** the Word from any heart.

¹ [Articles-of-Faith.pdf \(nationalbaptist.com\)](http://Articles-of-Faith.pdf (nationalbaptist.com))

- **Second: Those with perseverance in times of temptation do not fall away (Lk. 8:13; Matt. 13:20-21).**

According to Jesus, some do not persevere and **fall away** from faith in the Word of God because when temptation come, because of the Word of God, those not having a firm root **fall away**. The temptation *that causes some to fall away from faith* come in the form of affliction or persecution because of the Word of God (**Matt. 13:20-21**). When criticism, rejection, acts of evil, and various forms of ill-treatment come because one believes the Word of God, **without deep roots in the faith**, one may fall away to stop the persecution. **New converts**, not having deep roots in the faith, are susceptible to fall away when this temptation come. Therefore, those in the faith **must encourage** new converts to faithfully sit under sound teaching and preaching of the word of God, to read the Word of God, to commune with the Lord in prayer, to maintain fellowship with the Saints, to faithfully attend worship services, and to serve in ministry so their roots in the faith might grow deep...so they do not fall away.

- **Third: Those with perseverance, after hearing and receiving the Word of God, do not waste away (Lk. 8:14).**

Some will hear the Word of God, understand the Word of God, believe the Word of God, and not fall away through temptation, but tragically will **waste away** through deception. Tragically, they'll do very little in Christ - bringing no fruit to maturity - accomplishing little for His glory – making no difference in the Kingdom. The worries, riches, and pleasures of this life consume them, preventing them from being productive for the Kingdom. According to Jesus, this is the deceitfulness of wealth (**Matt. 13:22**) - it consumes the heart of some believers in the Word and causes them to be unproductive for the Kingdom. Having a view of wealth as Christ does can protect one's heart from being consumed by the

deceitfulness of wealth. According to Christ, it does not profit someone to gain the world and lose his soul (**Mk. 8:36**); it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the Kingdom heaven (**Matt. 19:23-24**); and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the Word and it becomes unfruitful in someone's life (**Matt. 13:19**). Through Christlike view of wealth, through attentiveness to the Word of God, through being transformed by the regenerating and renewing power of the Holy Spirit, and through sitting under teaching and preaching of the Word one can protect one's heart from the deceitfulness of wealth so that one does not waste away after having believed the Word of God. The Apostle Paul warns that the love of money causes people to engage in all kinds of evil (**I Tim. 6:6-12**). While Solomon taught that "He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income. This too is vanity" (**Eccl. 5:10**).

- **Fourth: Those with perseverance, after hearing and receiving the Word of God, produce away (**Lk. 8:13**).**

Jesus explained that the *seed* in the good soil, are the ones who have heard the Word with a good and virtuous heart, hold it firmly, and **produce fruit with perseverance**. For these with perseverance, the Word of God is not taken away, nor do they fall away, nor do they waste away. **These with perseverance produce away**. The Word of God is fruitful in their lives causing them to make a difference for the Kingdom of God. **Those with perseverance have in impact for the Kingdom of God!**

Fill in: I know my life is fruitful for the Kingdom of God because

Additional Truths on Perseverance

Introduction:

In this study, participants will observe that “perseverance” is encouraged and expected in both belief and behavior. According to Paul, perseverance yields eternal life when belief and behavior are in accord with the Word of God (**Rom. 2:1-10**).

In chapter 1 of Romans, the Apostle Paul explained that the wrath of God has been revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness (**1:18**). According to Paul, evidence of God’s reality has been made evident to all (**1:19**). God has clearly revealed His reality to all. His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and His divine nature **are clearly seen** in creation (**1:19; Psalm 19:1-6**). Paul argues that the natural creation testifies to the reality of the invisible, all-powerful God...so that no one is able to deny His attributes, His power, or His divine nature...that He has revealed Himself by what has been made. The creation, which can be seen reveals Him Who cannot be seen by the human eye - the invisible God and because this is true, who do not worship Him, but worship something other than Him, are without excuse (**1:19-20**). They cannot say, they don’t know God! They may not know His eternal plans for His creation, but they know His reality!

Paul made it clear that since All know a creation exists, **All know** the Creator exists - yet some have chosen not to honor God the Creator or give Him thanks. Instead because of a darkened foolish heart, some worship **created things** rather than **the Creator** (**1:21-23**). Because these refused to acknowledge God, God judged them, by revealing His wrath from heaven. God gave them over to three things:

1. **God gave them over to the lusts** of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them (**1:24-25**).
2. **God gave them over to degrading passions**; for women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural and men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error (**1:26-27**).
3. **God gave them over to a depraved mind** (*a mind unable to discern right from wrong*) to do things which are not proper;
²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are gossips,* ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;
³² and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them (**Rom. 1:29-32**).

Point: The wrath of God is revealed against those who do not acknowledge Him. God gives them over to lusts, to degrading passions, and to a depraved mind...to practice things which are worthy of death. These ones know the ordinance of God, that people are not to practice such things. However, they not only practice these things, they also give hearty approval to others who engage in practices contrary to the understood ordinance of God (**1:32**). In chapter 2 of Romans, readers observe:

First: **Those who pass judgment on others, won't escape God's judgment when they practice the same things (Rom. 2:1-3).**

Therefore, you have no excuse,
everyone of
you who
passes judgment,
for in that which

you **judge another,**
you **condemn yourself;**
for you **who**
 judge practice the same things (2:1).

Point: Those who judge others/condemn others to for the practices they engage in that are contrary to the ordinance of God, condemn themselves...for they also practice the same things. They have no excuse. They're not qualified to pass judgement on anyone practice things contrary to the ordinance of God when they themselves practice things contrary to the ordinance of God. While condemning others for practicing things contrary to the ordinance of God, they condemn themselves acknowledging that those things should not be done. The person who condemns the liar, the evildoer, the arrogant, the sexually immoral, or the disobedient, condemns him/herself when he/she practices the same things. Thus by passing judgment on others, they pass judgment on themselves! When they judge the behavior of another as against the ordinance of God and practice the same thing, they judge themselves as being one who practice behavior against the ordinance of God.

Point:

Be mindful to not condemn others as practicing things contrary to the ordinance of God because all have sinned - all engage in behavior contrary to the ordinance of God. While condemning others, one condemns him/herself. None are qualified to judge/condemn another. None can say that he/she does not practice things contrary to the ordinance of God.

Question: How does this truth impact you when you think about our current political climate where one party condemns those who practice/support abortion or same gender intimacy and another party who condemns those who pass/support tax laws that benefit one demographic at the expense of others (who practice greed)?

Paul goes on to write:

And we know
that the **judgment**
of God rightly falls
upon those who
practice such things (2:2).

Point: God and God alone is qualified/is just when He passes judgement upon those who practice idolatry (won't acknowledge God), wickedness and evil. God alone is qualified to judge everyone, because He alone, does not practice the very things He condemns. All who judge, practice the very practices they condemn. All have sinned! Sinners are not qualified to pass judgement on sinners...when they do...they judge and condemn themselves. Paul warns that those who pass judgment on those who practice things contrary to the ordinance of God, will come under the same judgment of God as those whom they condemn.

And do you
suppose this, O man,
when you **pass judgment**
on those **who practice such things**
and do the same *yourself*,
that you will escape
the judgment of God? (2:3)

Point: One's perspective that behavior is contrary to the ordinance of God, may be accurate. However, no one is given liberty to pass judgment/to condemn another because the one passing judgment is also guilty of practices contrary to the ordinance of God. None who practice such things will escape the judgment of God.

Major point: Those with perseverance, don't practice things contrary to the ordinance of God. Those with perseverance don't judge/condemn others nor do they fail to acknowledge God and to approve of behavior in accordance with the will of God. They acknowledge that they do not have the right to judge/condemn others, for they also are sinners and merit the judgement of God. **It's possible and necessary to recognize and acknowledge behavior that is contrary to the will of God while also restraining oneself from passing judgment of those who practice such things.**

Question: How do we keep ourselves from practicing the very things God condemns, that while recognizing sin, we restrain ourselves from both practicing the sin and from judging and condemning the one who does? How do we restrain ourselves from engaging in behavior contrary to the ordinance of God?

Second: Those who persevere in doing good receive eternal life (Rom. 2:4-8).

Or do you think lightly
of the riches of His kindness
and of His tolerance
and of His patience,
not knowing that the kindness
of God leads you to repentance? (2:4)

But because of
your stubbornness
and your unrepentant heart you are storing up
wrath for yourself
in the day of wrath
and revelation of the righteous
judgment of God (2:5),
who WILL RENDER

TO EACH PERSON
ACCORDING TO HIS
DEEDS (2:6):

to those **who by perseverance**
in doing good seek for glory
and seek for honor
and seek for immortality,
eternal life (2:7);

but to those who are selfishly ambitious
and *who* do not obey the truth,
but *who* obey unrighteousness, wrath
and indignation (2:8).