

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Midweek Activities

6:00-6:25 Supper

6:30-6:50 Prayer Meeting in Fellowship Hall

6:50-7:30 Classes

- **American Gospel:** Fellowship Hall
- **To God's Glory:** Adult Sunday School Room
- **KidsQuest:** Small Parlor (Old Building)

## Presbyterianism 101

ALL THINGS TO GOD'S GLORY:

Perseverance

(WCF 17)

### JSA: Heart of the Christian Life

- **Principal Benefits of Effectual Calling:** Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification
- **Repentance:** integral to the Christian life; there is no saving faith without Repentance
- **Good Works:** flow out of salvation necessarily; the outcome of faith and necessary in salvation
- **Testing ourselves, our salvation:** look for fruit and graces in our lives

## Perseverance & Assurance

- **With testing can come the “paralyzing fear” that we are not a Christian, etc.**
  - How do we know if our repentance, etc. is “good enough”
  - The Doctrine of Perseverance spares us from being lost in labyrinth of naval gazing
- **Perseverance is not “once saved, always saved”**

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## Arminian vs. Calvinist

- **Arminian:** election is conditioned on voluntary cooperation with God; salvation may be enjoyed and then lost
- **Calvinism:** God’s Spirit causes a the elect man to be born again and enables him to persevere in holiness

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## Perseverance Defined (17.1)

*They, whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally, nor finally, fall away from the state of grace: but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.*

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## Perseverance Defined (17.1)

- **It is is not “once saved, always saved”**
  - No “carnal security”
  - Perseverance in what? Salvation? Holiness?
- **Logical Consequence of Salvation**
  - Not *merely* logical consequence
  - New birth, Justification

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## Perseverance Defined (17.1)

- **It is is not “once saved, always saved”**
  - **Logical Consequence of Salvation:**
  - **Looks to our Identity in Christ:** in the beloved
- 1 Peter 1:3–5**, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

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## Ground of Perseverance (17.2)

*This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ; the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them; and the nature of the covenant of grace: from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.*

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## Ground of Perseverance (17.2)

- **Rooted, Grounded Externally:** not based on conditions foreseen in the saint (e.g. free will)
- **Contingent on Actions of the Triune God**
  - Father's unchangeable love
  - Merit and Prayers of Christ
  - Presence of the Holy Spirit

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## Ground of Perseverance (17.2)

- **Contingent on Actions of the Triune God**
  - Father's unchangeable love
  - **Jer. 31:3**, *I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.*

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## Ground of Perseverance (17.2)

- **Rooted, Grounded Externally:** not based on conditions foreseen in the saint (e.g. free will)
- **Contingent on Actions of the Triune God**
  - Merit and Prayers of Christ
  - **Hebrews 7:25**, *Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.*

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**Hebrews 9:12-14**, *he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*

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### Ground of Perseverance (17.2)

- **Rooted, Grounded Externally:** not based on conditions foreseen in the saint (e.g. free will)
- **Contingent on Actions of the Triune God**
  - Presence of the Holy Spirit
  - **Eph 1:13-14**, *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

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### Ground of Perseverance (17.2)

- **Rooted, Grounded Externally:** not based on conditions foreseen in the saint (e.g. free will)
- **Contingent on Actions of the Triune God**
- **By the terms of the Covenant of Grace**
  - **Jeremiah 32:40**, *I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.*

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## Struggle of Perseverance (17.3)

*Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins; and, for a time, continue therein: whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve His Holy Spirit, come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded, hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.*

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## Struggle of Perseverance (17.3)

- **Summary:** “Genuine perseverance is grounded on the unchangeable love of God expressed in walking in the Paths of Righteousness” (John Gerstner)
  - Grace and a Duty
  - Absolute Necessity for the Christian life
- **Universal Christian Experience: SIN**
  - Sin remains, but does not reign
  - Sin brings consequences to other people

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## Struggle of Perseverance (17.3)

- **Threefold Cause of Sin in the Believer**
  - The Devil
  - Remaining Corruption
  - Neglect of the Means of Grace
- **God chastises his children, those whom He loves to bring them to repentance**

**Hebrews 12:7–8,** *It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.*

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