

# Warning: “Soften Up!”

Hebrews 3:12-14

*“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest we drift away...” (see Heb 12:25)*

## **NKJV – Hebrews 3:12-14**

6. ...whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

**12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said: “Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”**

### **Hebrews 3:12-14**

12 Take heed <991>, brethren <80>, lest <3379> there be in any of you an evil <4190> heart <2588> of unbelief <570>, in departing <868> from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily <2596> <1538> <2250>, while it is called “Today” lest <3363> any of you be hardened <4645> through the deceitfulness <539> of sin <266>.

14 For we are made partakers <3353> of Christ, if <1437> <4007> we hold <2722> the beginning of our confidence <5287> steadfast <949> unto the end;

## **Introduction**

7 Seven Exhortations (correction) *then...*

7 Seven Encouragements (comfort)

## **Perseverance of the Saints**

Daily = daily <2596> <1538> <2250> through, each and every, day

Sandwich:

v 6 confidence firm to the end

v 14 confidence steadfast to the end.

### **Parables of Perseverance**

- Wheat & Tares - (Mt 13:24-30,36-43)
- Sheep & Goats - (Matthew 25:31-46)
- Sower & Seed – (Matthew 13) lack of soil, fade away, word never took hold
- I John 2:19 – they were not of us...if they were they would have remained...
- Revelation 2-3 – Warnings to the church, overcome, 2:5, 2:11, 2:25, 3:5, 3:16
- John 8:31, 32 - "If ye continue in my word, then are ye truly my disciples, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"
- Hebrews 10:29 – stern warnings (all seven of them)

Hebrews 6:9 “But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner.”

# Exposition of the Passage

## 1. Identification – verse 1 – believers

**Holy brethren** – vs 1 (used 8x)

**Partakers** of heavenly calling – vs 1 (used 6x)

Children - Hebrews 12:5

Saints – vs 12 – Hebrews 13:24

Heirs of Promise – Heb 1:14, 6:17

We are persuaded better things of you... we are not...Heb 6:9

## 2. Exhortation – verse 12a – true believers

**Beware** – 991 *blepo* – behold, perceive, beware, take heed

Hold fast - 2722 *katecho* – Heb 3:6, 4:14, 10:23 catch, hold onto

**Confidence** – 3954 *parrhesia* – boasting, bold, cheerful courage

**Rejoicing** – 2745 *kauchema* – glorying, bragging, boasting, smiling

**Hope** – 1680 *elpis* – hope, faith Heb 10:23 expectant confidence

Firm to the end – 949 *bebaios* – stable, firm, solid, **sure-footed**

## 3. Accusation – verse 12b – to unbelievers

If – is used 24x – conditional – **IF INDEED, IF IN FACT**

If - 1437 *ean* = however much, very much, altogether, indeed

If - 4007 *per* = accusative case, over, beyond, other side

Lest – 3379 *mepote* used 10x

Hardened heart – 4645 *skleruno* vs 7-8 – to make hard, obstinate

Evil heart of unbelief - 4190 *poneros kardia*, 570 *apistia* (non-faith)

Departing – 868 *aphistemi* - vs 10 *go astray in their heart*

Deceitfulness of sin - 539 *apate*, idea of cheat, beguile

### Falling Away Synonymns

slip – 3901 *pararrhueso*, flow away, slip away, let slide, drift

depart – 868 *aphistemi*, stand off, move away, stand aloof, withdraw oneself

going astray – 4105 *planao* Heb 5:2 wandering, a straying about

fall away – 3895 *parapipto* (*pipto* is to fall) fall away from

falling away – 646 *apostasia* (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

(ie) John MacArthur and Andrew Murray on Perseverance

(ie) Derek Prince quote page 20 – Hebrews Foundations for Faith

(ie) Wife next to husband in car complaining not like used to be

(ie) Hold fast – hold onto, catch the ball, don't fumble it.

## Conclusion:

No one departs from Christ suddenly and without warning. It is a gradual drift, a slow migration away from nearness to him. There are always the telltale signs of drifting, departing, cooling off, and becoming lukewarm. It always follows the same pattern described here:

1. Hardening of heart (ears) H-**ear**-T
2. Unbelief (an evil heart of, unresolved doubts, cheated heart)
3. Departing (moving away from, straying)
4. Deceitful sins (little foxes spoil the vines)

It always begins innocently enough, a little shortcut here, a little more there. Jesus described it in the parable of the sower:

Lack of soul care – Matt 13, Mark 4, Luke 8

- Cares of this life
- Deceitfulness of riches
- Love of other things

Matthew 13:22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that hears the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

Mark 4:19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, **choke the word**, and it becomes unfruitful.

It is neglect of the WORD – hardened ears lead to hardened hearts.

**(ie) Derek Prince - Hebrews commentary, Foundations for Faith**

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*“Keeping of God’s Word is the supreme distinguishing feature which should mark you out from the world as a disciple of Christ.”*

*“Your attitude toward God’s Word is your attitude toward God himself. You do not love God more than you love His Word. You do not obey God more than you obey His Word. You do not honor God more than you honor His Word. You do not have more room in your heart and life for God than you have for His Word.”*

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Hebrews 3:14 confidence steadfast to the end.

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# Per-sever-ance of the Saints

**Perseverance of the Saints** is the name that is used to summarize what the Bible teaches about the eternal security of the believer. It answers the question: Once a person is saved, can they lose their salvation?

Perseverance of the saints is the P in the acronym TULIP, which is commonly used to enumerate what are known as the five points of Calvinism. Because the name perseverance of the saints can cause people to have the wrong idea about what is meant, some people prefer to use terms like: "Preservation of the Saints,"

**Perseverance of the Saints** states that all who are chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and given faith by the Spirit are eternally saved. They are kept in faith by the power of Almighty God and thus persevere to the end.

**Perseverance of the Saints** first needs to be properly understood. This doctrine does not mean that all those who merely appear to have faith (i.e., said a certain prayer, walked down the church aisle, joined a church, were baptized, etc.) will be kept by God and will therefore persevere to the end.

There are many people who profess to be believers but then later fall away. Instead, Perseverance of the Saints means that all those who have a genuine faith in Christ will be kept by God forever and will persevere to the end. There are many professing Christians who trust in their own works, goodness, merits for their salvation. These people are trusting in their own "righteousness, instead of Jesus' blood, and do not have true faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, later on they may get discouraged and decide to leave the faith and no longer be a Christian. **This does not prove that they were saved and then lost their salvation, but simply that they deserted the Christianity because they had only a said faith rather than a genuine one.**

The Apostle John clearly described such people in **1 John 2:19**. Speaking of some who had renounced the Christian religion and had become anti-Christ, he said, "They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us." It is clear from this passage that those who profess faith in Christ and appear to be true believers, and yet later fall away, were never really a part of God's people in the first place.

**Andrew Murray**, noting this trend nearly forty years ago, defended the expression "perseverance of the saints":

“It is not in the best interests of the doctrine involved to substitute the designation, "The Security of the Believer," not because the latter is wrong in itself but because the other formula is much more carefully and inclusively framed. . . . It is not true that the believer is secure however much he may fall into sin and unfaithfulness. Why is this not true? It is not true because it sets up an impossible combination. It is true that a believer sins; he may fall into grievous sin and backslide for lengthy periods. But it is also true that a believer cannot abandon himself to sin; he cannot come under the dominion of sin; he cannot be guilty of certain kinds of unfaithfulness.

The truth is that the faith of Jesus Christ is always respective of the life of holiness and fidelity. And so it is never proper to think of a believer irrespective of the fruits in faith and holiness. To say that a believer is secure whatever may be the extent of his addiction to sin in his subsequent life is to abstract faith in Christ from its very definition and it ministers to that abuse which turns the grace of God into lasciviousness.

The doctrine of perseverance is the doctrine that believers persevere. . . . It is not at all that they will be saved irrespective of the their perseverance or their continuance, but that they will assuredly persevere. Consequently the security that is theirs is inseparable from their perseverance. Is this not what Jesus said? "He than endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

Let us not then take refuge in our sloth or encouragement in our lust from the abused doctrine of the security of the believer. But let us appreciate the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints and recognize that we may entertain the faith of our security in Christ only as we persevere in faith and holiness to the end.”

### **John F. MacArthur**

“It is crucial to understand what the biblical doctrine of perseverance does not mean. It does not mean that people who "accept Christ" can then live any way they please without fear of hell. The expression "eternal security" is often used in this sense, as is "once saved, always saved. Any doctrine of eternal security that leaves out perseverance distorts the doctrine of salvation itself.”

# Perseverance Quotes

The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is that one comes from a strong will, and the other from a strong won't. ~Henry Ward Beecher

The road to success is dotted with many tempting parking places. ~Author Unknown

When the world says, "Give up,"  
Hope whispers, "Try it one more time."  
~Author Unknown

Don't be afraid to give your best to what seemingly are small jobs. Every time you conquer one it makes you that much stronger. If you do the little jobs well, the big ones will tend to take care of themselves.  
~Dale Carnegie

Nobody trips over mountains. It is the small pebble that causes you to stumble. Pass all the pebbles in your path and you will find you have crossed the mountain. ~Author Unknown

When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on. ~Franklin D. Roosevelt

Consider the postage stamp: its usefulness consists in the ability to stick to one thing till it gets there.  
~Josh Billings

The greatest oak was once a little nut who held its ground. ~Author Unknown

Fall seven times, stand up eight. ~Japanese Proverb

Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did. ~Newt Gingrich

If one dream should fall and break into a thousand pieces, never be afraid to pick one of those pieces up and begin again. ~Flavia Weedn, *Flavia and the Dream Maker*, © Flavia.com

He conquers who endures. ~Persius

The race is not always to the swift, but to those who keep on running. ~Author unknown, in reference to Ecclesiastes 9:11, "I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all."

You can't go through life quitting everything. If you're going to achieve anything, you've got to stick with something. ~From the television show *Family Matters*

It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer. ~Albert Einstein

Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races one after another. ~Walter Elliott, *The Spiritual Life*

People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them. ~G.B. Shaw, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, 1893

There is no telling how many miles you will have to run while chasing a dream. ~Author Unknown

Perseverance... keeps honor bright: to have done, is to hang quite out of fashion, like a rusty nail in monumental mockery. ~William Shakespeare

The drops of rain make a hole in the stone not by violence but by oft falling. ~Lucretius

But the moment you turn a corner you see another straight stretch ahead and there comes some further challenge to your ambition. ~Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

Don't be discouraged. It's often the last key in the bunch that opens the lock. ~Author Unknown

The great majority of men are bundles of beginnings. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Saints are sinners who kept on going. ~Robert Louis Stevenson

If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep on walking. ~Buddhist Saying

I may not be there yet, but I'm closer than I was yesterday. ~Author Unknown

Keep on going, and the chances are that you will stumble on something, perhaps when you are least expecting it. I never heard of anyone ever stumbling on something sitting down. ~Charles F. Kettering

One may go a long way after one is tired. ~French Proverb

Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Problems are not stop signs, they are guidelines. ~Robert Schuller

Vitality shows in not only the ability to persist but the ability to start over. ~F. Scott Fitzgerald

With ordinary talent and extraordinary perseverance, all things are attainable. ~Thomas Foxwell Buxton

When your dreams turn to dust, vacuum. ~Author Unknown

Most people never run far enough on their first wind to find out they've got a second. ~William James

...I want to know if you can live with failure  
yours and mine  
and still stand at the edge of the lake  
and shout to the silver of the full moon,  
"Yes."...

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Difficult things take a long time, impossible things a little longer. ~Author Unknown

Don't let the fear of the time it will take to accomplish something stand in the way of your doing it. The time will pass anyway; we might just as well put that passing time to the best possible use. ~Earl Nightingale

A door opens to me. I go in and am faced with a hundred closed doors. ~Antonio Porchia, Voces, 1943, translated from Spanish by W.S. Merwin

Success seems to be largely a matter of hanging on after others have let go. ~William Feather

Big shots are only little shots who keep shooting. ~Christopher Morley

Look at a stone cutter hammering away at his rock, perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred-and-first blow it will split in two, and I know it was not the last blow that did it, but all that had gone before. ~Jacob A. Riis