

Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC) 2020-2021

Women's Thursday Bible Class #20

Prayer

* Question from last week more fully addressed.

- For review flow, go back to WLC #57-59, invisible church WLC # 65 (sum of 66-90), especially Union with Christ - #69 (sum of 70-81) - communion in grace with Christ now.

Now we are on the doctrines of **assurance , perseverance of the saints** WLC #79-81.

Benefits of communion with Christ in this life, then questions go to at death, and at the final resurrection. So we are still on the benefits that we enjoy in this life!

Q.#79 May not true believers, by reason of their imperfections, and the many temptations and sins they are overtaken with, fall away from the state of grace?

A. True believers ,

- by reason of the **unchangeable love of God**, and

*his decree and covenant to give them perseverance,

*their **inseparable union with Christ**,

*his **continual intercession** for them,and

*the **Spirit and seed of God abiding** in them,

can neither totally **nor** finally fall away from the state of grace, but are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Look at Scriptures backing up these reasons-

Jer. 31:3;

II Tim. 2:19; Heb. 13:20-21

I Cor. 1:4-9

Heb. 7:25; 13:20-21 and 5

I Jn. 3:9-10 and 2:26-27

John 10:28-29

I Pet. 1:3-5

Whole **argument of Rom. 8.** V. 9,35-39

Who is in view in this question?

Can true believers fall away ?

Does our eternal security depend upon our efforts and will power?

Is God's will dependent on man's will , his resolutions or lack thereof?

Grounds of perseverance :

1. God's electing love
2. Christ 's infinite merit and intercession Heb. 9:14-15
3. Indwelling Holy Spirit Eph. 1:13-14
4. Covenant of Grace Jer. 32:38-40, Is. 55:3

Q. #80 Can true believers be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace , and that they shall persevere therein unto salvation?

A. Such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavor to walk in all good conscience before him, may, without extraordinary revelation, by faith

*grounded upon the **Word of God's promises**, and

*by **the Spirit** enabling them to discern in themselves **those graces** to which the promises of life are made, and

***bearing witness** with their spirits that they are the children of God,

Be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace and shall persevere therein unto salvation.

I John 2:3-6

I Cor. 2:12

I John 3:14,18 and 4:13,16 and 5:10,13

According to Scripture and A. #80 What are the **biblical grounds** for assurance of salvation?
Neither of these can be taken alone , just by itself.

What do we mean by each of the following?

1. **Objective** - Word of God
2. **Evidential** -fruits, marks of grace
3. **Subjective** - witness of the Holy Spirit

Word and Spirit – working together

What is assurance of salvation? What about having a false assurance?

What are the 4 groups of people ?

A.A. Hodge quote from commentary on WCF:

Q. #81 Are all true believers at all times assured of their present being in the estate of grace, and that they shall be saved?

A. Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it; and after the enjoyment thereof, may have it weakened and intermitted, through manifold distempers (some things disturbing that upset , shake, etc.), sins,temptations , and desertions ; yet are they never left without such a presence and support of the Spirit of God as keeps them from sinking into utter despair.

What does the catechism mean by saying that assurance is not of the essence of faith?

Eph. 1:11-14

Ps. 88: 1-2,9, 13

Ps. 77:1-12

Ps. 31:22-24

Ps. 22:1-2 Christ did experience complete abandonment

Job. 13:15

Is. 54:7-10

Difficulty of Perseverance:

Actual assurance subject to change for various causes-

providential happenings of God, temptations, the believer's own sins, times of darkness

Should we seek to have a lively assurance of our salvation? Is. 54:7-10

What are objections to the doctrine of perseverance of the saints and assurance of salvation:

1. Reality show of apostasy
2. Clear teaching on human responsibility - Phil. 2:12-13 - same struggle between grasping God's sovereignty and man's responsibility
3. Danger of antinomianism

What are you going to take away from today's lesson?

Next week:

Q. 82 sum, then Q. 83-90 deal with new subject - our communion in glory with Christ.

Deals with death, after death and at the resurrection!

You will find the Scriptures very edifying and reassuring.