

P - Perseverance of the Saints

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[0 : 0 0] So good for me. I hope it has been for you to go through this series asking the question, how does God save us? Why does God save us? What are we being saved from?

And I've got to tell you, I think tonight, I'm not just saying this, I think tonight is probably the most important of all of the sermons that we've had so far. I think it might be the most important sermon that I've ever preached. That's the feeling I get as I come up here to preach this sermon. I've been really affected and I've prayed changed this week as I've looked through this stuff. I really pray that God would change you as a result of hearing this word tonight. So tonight we're going to talk about perseverance.

By that we mean persevering in faith throughout our life. We're asking the question, can someone become a Christian and then walk away from faith? Can Jesus lose a Christian who he saved? Or do all Christians persevere all the way to heaven? So if we can pull up the slide from the last few weeks, I'm going to really quickly pump through what we've done so far. We've looked at salvation through two different lenses. Am I getting echo on this thing? Is it just me?

No? Okay. We've been looking through two different lenses, two different historical ways of thinking theologically about salvation. So one of those is called Arminianism. And we've looked at their five points they've got up there. The other one is called Calvinism. Over the last few weeks, I've been talking about historical theology and going back and looking at how this stuff played out in history.

I'm not going to do that tonight. I've got way too much to do. It's going to be a long sermon as it is, so get comfortable. So it's going to be a difficult one too. So that's cool. So Arminianism, in the first week, we looked at their notion of free will versus Calvinism's notion of total depravity. What this means is the Arminians think that every one of us is given a completely free will to choose God or to reject God. The Calvinists say, no, no, no, no one has free will to choose God.

[2 : 0 7] We're all totally depraved. That means we're totally sinful from the day we're born, that we've inherited Adam's sin. And if given the choice, we're always going to choose sin, death, hell.

So what God needs to do is intervene and save us. From there, we went to election. Arminians, election means that God has chosen a people to save. Arminians think that that is conditional, that God looked forward into the future. He saw the people who would choose him and in response to their choosing him, he chose them. That's the condition. You had to choose him, then he ensured that you'd be saved. The Calvinists say it's not conditional on anything. It's unconditional, that God chose for himself a people and it wasn't based on anything you did or would do.

It was just purely of his own free will. Then we went to the atonement, Jesus' death on the cross. The Arminians say that it's universal. Jesus died for all people in the same way, that he made salvation available for everyone in the same way. Then it's up to them to choose him with their free will. Calvinists say, no, it's not like that. It's limited atonement. Jesus died for the elect, for the people he chose. He died for them and not for other people. I kind of went down a different tack and I said it's limited or I said it's unlimited, limited atonement. I think that's what the Bible teaches. The Bible says that Jesus died for the whole world, but he can't have died for the whole world in the same way. Otherwise, everyone would be saved, right? So Jesus died for the whole world in some sense, but he died in a saving way for the elect, for the people he chose.

We're going to get to this in the Q&A, but I want to say that the scope of Jesus' death is unlimited, right? It was sufficient to save everyone who has ever lived, but God in his wisdom chose to apply that to a certain group of people called the elect. Unlimited in scope and specific or limited in application, all right? We'll get to that later. Then we talked about grace. Arminians say that God's grace is resistible, so he has made grace available for us, but we can resist. We can say, no, don't want any part of that. Calvinists say, if God wants to get you, he will get you.

If God wants to save you, you will not resist him to the end. You might resist him to your deathbed, but in the end he's going to get you. In both cases, everyone gets what they want. Remember that analogy of the prison? Can't go into it now. Get the tapes if you need to. And then tonight, perseverance. Arminians say that there is perseverance of some saints, that there's 100 Christians get saved in the history of the world, for example, and 50 of them get to heaven. The rest walk away.

[4 : 59] Calvinists say, everyone who gets saved makes it to heaven. That's about all I'm going to reference those two in terms of historical theology tonight. I'm just going to get into the Bible, and we've got a bunch of verses. So I've got slides with all of our passages out. They're not very well edited. They look a bit rough, but there it is. I thought it'd be important for you to see what I'm going to be reading. So I want to kick off tonight by saying two things, by making two statements.

They're both equally true. They're both equally biblical. I'm going to say the statement. Then we're going to look at the Bible, how the Bible proves that statement. Then I'm going to try and intercept some of your objections that might be coming, and then we're going to tie it all up in the end and see what happens. As always, I want to be biblical, not necessarily stick to one of these two.

So, first statement. This is absolutely true. If you do not persevere in faith and obedience as a Christian, you will go to hell in judgment.

Second statement.

Every Christian who God has saved will not ever lose their salvation. Every Christian who God has saved will not ever go to hell, will not ever stop persevering in faith in obedience.

[6 : 42] We're going to see how those two fit together. You might be thinking that's a contradiction. It's not a contradiction. We're going to see from the Bible how that goes.

Then we'll go to Q&A.; So, first of all, if you don't persevere in faith, you will go to hell under the judgment of God. We're going to prove that from Scripture. First, we're going to look at why you must persevere in faith.

Then we're going to look at why you must persevere in obedience to God. Okay? So, first of all, faith. We're going to go to 1 Corinthians 15, 1-2. Paul says this.

I really need you to track with me through all of these passages because everyone is essential. Okay? 1 Corinthians 15. He says, What he's saying is, if you don't stay rooted in that truth, if you don't stand in that belief, then you have believed in vain.

It's all for nothing. You've got to stand fast in faith. Living the Christian life is like swimming upstream against a river. As soon as you stop, you don't just coast, you start going backwards.

[8 : 06] He's saying you've got to stand. You've got to stand strong. You've got to progress. Colossians. Same thing. Faith. This is why you need faith. Colossians 1, 21-23. And you, who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, that's Jesus, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in faith without shifting from the hope promised in the gospel that you heard.

It's conditional. It's contingent on you doing something that is continuing to secure, being securely established in that steadfast faith.

Okay? If you want to get to heaven, you need to continue in faith. The Bible clearly says that. What I want to say now, just so you know, I'm not talking about backsliding here and there.

We all have moments probably in our life where we backside a little in faith. We surrender to sin in certain aspects of our lives and God restores us.

There are times when we don't feel the love of Christ like we did at other times in our lives. We do backslide. We do fade at times. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about persevering in unrepentant sin.

[9 : 33] For instance, you know that God says you should not murder and you go around murdering people and still call yourself a Christian, you're not going to be saved.

Similarly with the faith thing. You need to persevere in faith. You can't just put your hand up at a youth concert and say I'm a Christian and then not persevere in that belief.

You need to hold on to that for the rest of your life if you're going to be saved. Let's look at obedience and holiness. This is huge. Look at me.

This is huge. Final salvation conditional on obedience and holiness.

Hebrews 12 14 Pursue peace with everyone and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. without holiness no one will see the Lord.

[10 : 38] No one will go to heaven without that holiness. If you don't live as you ought you're not going to heaven. Romans 8 13 For if you live according to the flesh that is if you live sinfully if your life is marked by continual sin you will die.

But if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live. The death and the life are eternal right there. If you live sinfully you will die eternally.

If you live by the spirit putting to death the sin in your life you will live eternally. it's not mucking around here.

These are clear simple warnings for every one of us. Galatians 5 19 to 21 Now the works of the flesh are obvious.

They are aren't they? Should be. Fornication that's any kind of sex outside of marriage between one man and one woman. That's fornication. It's like a big box kind of term that you can just chuck in all your sexual immorality.

[11 : 57] That's fornication. Impurity licentiousness idolatry sorcery enmity strife jealousy anger quarrels dissensions factions envy drunkenness carousing and things like these I am warning you he says as I warned you before those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

You won't go to heaven. Who's he talking to? The church. It's right for me to stand up here and say you guys me if we do these things if we persevere in these kind of things we're going to hell forever.

You won't inherit the kingdom kingdom if you sleep around and cheat on your wife. You won't inherit the kingdom if you get drunk all the time.

If that marks your life you will not go to heaven. 1 Corinthians 6 9-10 do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Do not be deceived. Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers, none of these will inherit the kingdom of God.

[13 : 25] Notice he doesn't just say homosexuals and pound on them like we tend to do but he marks out the greedy people. drunkards, revilers and he goes on to say that many of you were these kind of people and God saves all of those kind of people.

God saves every kind of sinner. But if you get saved, if you put your hand up and then you go on living this kind of life, you're not going to be saved.

John, 8, 31 to 32, Jesus says to the Jews who had believed in him, if you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free.

It's what Matt said last week, right? Christianity is about freedom, freedom from sin. What does he say?

If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples. If you continue, it's about perseverance. You can't put your hand up one day, you can't fill out a card one day and then go back to living the way you did before.

[14 : 45] You're not saved. Many people have this notion that they are going to go to heaven because they put their hand up once. They went down to the front once.

They went to the Billy Graham crusade once. I'm going to stop here for a second and try to intercept a couple of objections that might be coming to your mind.

Objection number one. You might say, it sounds like you're advocating a salvation by works understanding salvation.

Does it sound like that? Does it sound like I'm saying you've got to do this, this and this in order to be saved? Isn't salvation by faith alone based on what Jesus has done, not on what we've done?

It's a fair question. But it doesn't hold true. Here's why. We need to make a really clear distinction between justification and glorification.

[15 : 56] This has been a big word series. There's a couple more there. What I mean by justification is this is when you get saved. You are made right with God. That's what justification means.

You go from being an enemy of God to being loved by God, saved by God, declared innocent, justified. That is based on faith alone in the work of Jesus alone on the cross.

His merit, nothing you've done. You're justified. Final glorification, glorification is getting to heaven, spending eternity with Jesus.

That's not unconditional. That's conditional. Justification is a result of unconditional election. God has chosen you.

It's not based on anything you've done, not based on who you are, where you're born, and that justification comes from faith alone in Jesus. Glorification, that's conditional.

[16 : 59] Man, it is conditional. It's conditional on faith, it's conditional on obedience, that's what the Bible's telling us. I've spoken to people, and this was me, this was me.

I've spoken to people who are sleeping around, who are cheating on their wives every weekend, and I've said to that person, one in particular, if you keep doing this, you're going to hell.

If you keep sleeping with her, you will go to hell, and he looked so offended. Don't you believe in eternal security?

I'm a Christian. If you think that you will go to heaven simply because you became a Christian one day, and now you can live however you please, you are sorely, sorely mistaken.

It doesn't work like that. Justification is unconditional. It's by faith alone in Jesus, merit and work on the cross.

[18 : 29] Final glorification, salvation, getting to heaven, where we want to be, it's conditional. What about objection number two? It's related to that obviously.

don't you believe in once saved, always saved? Don't you believe that if I become a Christian, I will get to heaven, God won't let me go?

Yes, I do. Absolutely, 100%. If God saves you, he's going to keep you. We're going to see that in a bunch of verses in just a second.

I believe in eternal security when it's defined biblically. Not when it's some kind of mechanical process or a fire insurance policy against hell, I put my hand up, now I'm in, I can do whatever I like.

That's not perseverance, that's not eternal security. That's why we say perseverance. You know what perseverance is? What does that call the mind? For me, it calls the mind fighting every day, holding on.

[19 : 33] You're going to persevere, you're going to hold on to that ledge, you know that if you let go, it's going to be hell, but you're going to hold on for dear life. Every day is a fight. That's why Paul keeps talking about Christians being soldiers.

We've lost all this imagery. Soldiers, athletes, farmers, they keep going, they never give up. They beat their bodies into shape. They don't give in to habitual pornography or fornication, sleeping around, drunkenness.

They don't do that. They are self-controlled. That's the mark of a disciple of Jesus. I don't mean perfection. We're not going to be perfected until we're glorified in heaven.

I don't mean the occasional backslide here and there in the tough week or month or year. I'm talking about every day, starting the day, saying, I will live as Jesus wants me to live today.

That's perseverance. If you think you can live any way you like, the Bible says you'll be condemned.

[20 : 39] If you think it's mechanical eternal security that you get a foot in the door and God can't do anything now, you're in, you're wrong. If you see it as a struggle, fight, daily perseverance, you're spot on.

That's what the Bible says. Right. It's the first statement. If you don't persevere in faith and obedience, you're going to hell.

Second statement. Those whom God has saved, the elect whom he's chosen, will never lose faith. How have I written it here?

For final, the elect will persevere in faith. How does this work? This is how it works. It's working right now.

Right now. God takes those in this room who are elect, who are believers in Jesus, and he takes my words, which are the words of Scripture, he takes those warnings and he applies them to you and he strengthens you.

[21 : 49] Right here, he strengthens you. He uses means to strengthen you, to keep you persevering to the end. Part of the means that he uses are warnings in Scripture.

Part of it's community, living together, keeping each other accountable. Part of it's quiet time, prayer. But he uses these means to strengthen those whom he saves so that they never give up.

that's how it works. Let's take a look at this. These are beautiful truths.

I hope you're encouraged. I'm going to take John chapter 6 verse 37, 39 to 40 and 44. Just put them together. Jesus says, everything that the Father gives me will come to me.

This is the people, the elect, and anyone who comes to me, I will never drive away. Hang on to that promise. If you're here and you're not a Christian, Jesus says, if you come to me, I'll never drive you away, and then I'll never lose you.

[22 : 51] And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my father, that all who see the son and believe in him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.

No one can come to me unless drawn by the father who sent me, and I will raise that person up on the last day. God is a trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Here the father and the son are working together for your eternal security. The father draws you to Jesus and cross.

And at that point you get eternal life. Do you see it? Jesus said it three times. Verse 39 he said those who come to me I will raise them up on the last day.

And then at verse 40 he said all that see the son and believe in him may have eternal life. And then verse 44 he says those who come to me I will raise up that person on the emphasis Jesus will raise you up the day of judgment give you a new body welcome you into the new heavens and new earth are you hoping for that that's evidence that you're saved that's what Jesus saved you for this is the kick of this right now this is the eternal security mother of all verses John chapter 10 it's still Jesus verse 27 to 30 my sheep sheep are God's people it's the imagery the elect they're the sheep my sheep hear my voice I know them and they follow me

[24 : 49] I give them eternal life and they will never perish no one will snatch them out of my hand what my father has given me is greater than all else and no one can snatch it out of the father's hand the father and I are one you think you're more powerful than Jesus you think people are more powerful than Jesus this is where you've got to go with the Arminians you've got to say that there is something more powerful than God and that is our free will you can say that God has allowed himself to be limited which is free will is that important at the end of the day your decisions are more powerful than God Jesus says no one is greater than the father and therefore no one can snatch my people out of my hand let's look at

Romans chapter 5 9 10 Paul says much more surely then now that we have been justified by his blood will we be saved through him from the wrath of God for if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his son much more surely having been reconciled will we be saved by his life he says exactly the same thing in the two verses different words what he's saying is this if God did the harder thing sending Jesus to the cross an innocent man the God man killed him on the cross if he did that he's going to be able to do the easier thing in getting you to heaven he to the

God God did the hard thing he's going to do the easier thing in keeping you secure and safe in the faith God plan we've talked about this a lot so Paul uses five verbs in the past tense to talk about God's plan in salvation he says in verse 29 for those whom he foreknew he foreknew he foreknew he foreknew he foreknew he foreknew he foreknew he foreknew he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son in order that he might be the first born within a large family and those whom he predestined he also called and those whom he called he also justified that's number four and those whom he justified he also glorified past tense glorified glorification is when you get to heaven and

Paul saying it in the past tense it's a done deal it's a done deal you will be glorified okay second argument based on God's power just talked about God's power in John 10 verse 31 what then are we to say about these things if God is for us who is against us he who did not withhold his own son but gave him up for all of us will he not with him also give us everything else if God is for us who can be against us no one how do we know that God is for us verse 32 he who did not spare his own son he who killed his own son will he not give us all things will he not ensure that we get to heaven yes he will argument three this is based on

God's justice okay so you need to know God is the judge God will judge everyone who has ever lived it's going to be a first judgment based on faith everyone who's a Christian is going to pass that because of what Jesus did it's going to be second judgment based on works it's like I was talking about before faith and obedience all Christians are going to pass this one too but there are going to be differing degrees some people the Bible says they're going to get to heaven and they're going to realize that their whole life was wasted because they're chasing after all kinds of things the Bible says they'll be saved but it'll be as if through fire God is going to judge us all so verse 33 says

[30 : 31] I'll ask the question who will bring any charge against God's elect elect in the courtroom with God as judge who's going to bring any charge against God's elect it is God who justifies who is to condemn it is Christ Jesus who died yes who was raised to his right hand of God who indeed intercedes for us this is what he's saying you're going to be in the courtroom and God is going to be the judge Jesus in particular is going to be the judge who died for you who gave up his life is not going to turn around and say I know I died for you I know I gave up that for you but change my mind you can go to hell the judge is also your advocate the judge intercedes for you fourth based on God's love beautiful passage verse 35 who will separate us from the love of

Christ will hardship or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or sword will these things separate us from God's love will these things prevent us from spending eternity with Jesus no in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us for I am convinced that neither death nor life nor angels nor rulers nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord anything in creation everything in creation life and death all creatures are covered who's going to separate us from the love of Christ nobody nothing he's going to get you there and nothing's going to stand in his way a couple more on this one just to ram it home

Ephesians 1 13 to 14 Paul says in him in Jesus you also when you had heard the word of truth the gospel of your salvation and had believed in him so you've heard the gospel you've heard Matt Sheffer preach the gospel and you've believed in Jesus you've accepted Jesus you've made that decision to follow Jesus you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people to the praise of his glory he says when you are saved you are stamped you are marked with a seal an unbreakable seal your inheritance that's heaven what you're going to inherit eternal life it was sealed and it's just waiting for Jesus to return he's going to open it up and you'll walk into heaven can't be broken final one was our

Bible reading for tonight 1st Peter chapter 1 3 to 5 he starts very very appropriately he says blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ by his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that's heaven that is imperishable undefiled and unfading it's not going anywhere kept in heaven for you who are being protected who's protecting your faith is it you in a way it is through obedience but over all of that it's being protected by the power of

God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time faith that's what we need to have persevere in faith who's making it happen who's making sure it happens the power of God okay couple of objections that you might be having you might be sitting there thinking all that sounds okay but in my experience I've known people who have become Christians maybe they got baptized maybe they came to church for a while or for a long time and then they walked away from the faith right we know people who've done that they've given up they've walked away what about them

[36 : 01] Hebrews talks about people who've tasted the things of God who have received its blessings and then they've walked away apostasy it's called what about that and I would say that's a good objection it's pretty solid but I would say that those people I've known these people had a good friend who got saved was baptized the most on fire person for Jesus a year later he was gone he says he doesn't believe in Jesus now what about that guy I think that these people at the end of the day never experienced saving faith in Jesus they were never truly saved a couple of verses a couple of passages which I think prove the point first of all

Jesus in Matthew 13 3 to 9 you're familiar with the parable of the sower right Jesus says listen a sower went out to sow and as he sowed some seeds fell on the path and the birds came and ate them up other seeds fell on rocky ground where they did not have much soil and they sprang up quickly since they had no depths of soil but when the sun rose they were scorched and since they had no root they withered away does that look like a picture of your friend it's exactly what my friend did he shot up saved Christian believer in Jesus and as soon as the sun came out as soon as some trials came along he withered and died Jesus says people will do that people will receive the word they'll shoot up they won't have any perseverance what about in particular the fact that they were never saved to begin with 1st John 2 19 he's speaking about false teachers who are in the church these guys are teachers they're part of the church community they're teaching all intents purposes they're saved he says to his church they went out from us those false teachers but they did not belong to us for if they had belonged to us they would have remained with us but by going out they made it plain that none of them belongs to us that's what

I'm talking about if someone becomes a Christian and they remain with us it's clear they're believers if they go out from us it's clear that they're not now you might have friends and you might know people who are saved and they're going to come back to faith that happens all the time right people on their death bed say I made a decision to follow Jesus I've wrecked my life ever since I know what's coming I need to turn to Christ and they do and they're saved and they're in heaven judgment of faith tick judgment of works not so good but Jesus died for you pal welcome in thief on the cross last few seconds of his life remember when you come into paradise bang you're in similarly you might know people and they're going to come back but there are others who never will and I'm saying they were never saved so then if that's true another objection might come to mind you might say if that's true if someone can appear to be a

Christian and yet they're not saved then what hope do we have what what eternal security do we have how do we know that we're saved right you might be that person feels like you're a Christian but maybe you never were really saved you just wanted some friends or you felt pressured to put your hand up at the youth rally it's a good question what security do we have if that's true it's a great passage that talks about this I need you to listen really carefully to this how do you make your elections sure and certain how do you make sure that you're elect 2nd Peter chapter 1 verse 5 to 11 he says for this very reason you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness that's what I've been saying you got faith now you've got to make every effort to support it with goodness and goodness with knowledge and knowledge with self control and self control with endurance that's perseverance and endurance with godliness that's obedience and godliness with mutual affection that's you actually love the

Christians in this church and mutual affection with love for if these things are yours and are increasing among you they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ for if anyone who lacks these things for anyone who lacks these things is nearsighted and blind and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins they tend to forget what Jesus actually did for them on the cross therefore brothers and sisters be all the more eager to confirm your call and election for if you do this you will never stumble that's exactly what I'm saying you've got faith you've got to be eager to confirm that election with godliness with holy living with obedience for where am I if you do this you will never stumble that's exactly what I'm saying you won't be lost for in this way entry into the eternal kingdom of the Lord and saviour

[42 : 31] Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you how do you confirm your election how can you be sure persevere persevere in faith and obedience keep going don't give up it's the clearest evidence of election because god enables his elect to continue in faith and obedience so community is so important we're going to be talking about community at the crave camp so key if we're going to persevere we need brothers and sisters we need fellow soldiers and athletes and farmers keeping us accountable encouraging us telling us not to give up so key so this is my conclusion those who do not continue in faith and obedience will go to hell why because by persevering in sinfulness rather than godliness they're showing for all to see that they were never saved secondly those who are elect those whom god has saved will never ever be lost they cannot fall from grace why because god will keep them safe enable them to persevere how will he keep them safe part of it is by hearing these warnings and responding right so there's means god uses means it's not mechanics it's relationship it's cause and effect he uses means part of it is these warning scriptures keeps us safe by enabling us to willfully obey him in faith here's the summary this is brilliant so glad for the book of philippians philippians has all of these within a couple of chapters check this out you must persevere to get to heaven philippians 3:12 it's all in the same book same author he says not that i've already obtained this that is final salvation he hasn't already obtained it even paul where i'm already perfect nobody is but i press on i persevere to make it my own because christ jesus has made me his own those who god saves will persevere philippians 1:6 he says and i'm sure of this that he that's jesus who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of jesus christ he will he's sure of it they both come together beautifully philippians 2:12 to 13 this is the last one you've done really well in tracking with me but hear this philippians 2:12 to 13 therefore my beloved as you have always obeyed so now not only as in my presence but now much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling you need to be afraid of hell you need to tremble at the thought of not persevering in faith you've got to work it out day by day that's the fight now the encouragement for it is god who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure both exactly there side by side you've got to endure you've got to persevere and be encouraged because it's god who works in you to will and to work for his good pleasure that's perseverance now i think that that

was a lot to take in so what i'm going to do before we move on to the q a if you knew this week if you haven't been here we've been collating people's questions out of this salvation series a lot of questions obviously that come up over the time i had a bunch of them like a stack of them coming to my inbox and i've distilled them down to a few all of them are very similar got a few i want to attempt to answer a few of them briefly but what i think we need to do is to probably take a minute to just sit in silence to contemplate what i've just said about perseverance if you're like me then this kind of teaching kind of comes as a shock i was kind of a put your hand up and then do whatever you want kind of guy this can be a bit shocking so i want a minute to sit in silence then i'm going to ask during that time that you guys come up and we'll sing a song whatever we've got next and then i'll do the q a and we'll have prayers and we'll finish up okay so just a minute just to sit with this i've got a few questions here i want to answer hopefully these are the kind of questions that have been coming to your mind and pray that i can faithfully answer them i expect that this conversation will be ongoing forever or at least for the rest of your life because these are big issues that we need to discuss but anyway let's dive in first question in your proposed unlimited limited atonement how can people get a bit saved or get some benefit when salvation is still limited it's a good question first i want to just reiterate what i said at the start when i talk about unlimited atonement when i say that jesus died for the whole world i really mean that that's what the bible says listen if you're a calvinist and you disagree because i'm fudging it you got to deal with the bible the bible says jesus died for the world but it's obvious that he didn't die for the world in the same way that he died for the elect otherwise everyone would be saved so i want to say the scope of the atonement is unlimited jesus death on the cross made possible the salvation of everyone you know it's sufficient for everyone to be saved why are some people not saved god doesn't save them god doesn't save them god has allotted for himself a number of people to be saved and at the end of the day i'll tell you what we need to put down the theology books and just admit that and say what's that great verse deuteronomy 31 31 32 32 something easy to remember 29 29 oh come on he's written a commentary on it it's a couple off quote it for us in summary the secret things of the lord you know part of our understanding of god is going to be incomplete god has some secrets god has some mystery everything we need to know he's given to us right here the question of why god doesn't save you know eight billion people instead of seven billion people or four hundred billion people instead of three hundred it comes down to

his choice we need to rest in that knowing that he's good and godly as far as the benefit the general benefit that people get from the cross from christianity just go to a country that's not christian some of you might come from countries like that and you'll see immediately the effect the cross has had generally on all people even the people who aren't saved i'm talking about hospitals i'm talking about schooling i'm talking about uh equal opportunity for men and women i'm talking about land rights ownership stuff like that all that comes from judeo-christian ethics you go to a place like india no one's helping out the poor people no one's helping out the afflicted because i don't want to interfere with their karma a lot of people get sold the myth especially at university that christianity is the worst thing that's ever happened to the world i would say the exact opposite so there's a couple of um general benefits of of christ's death on the cross okay let's move along uh i know that flipping the why doesn't everyone get saved question into why does anyone get saved which is what i did uh makes sense but it still doesn't really answer the injustice that seems to result from the question from the first question uh so if someone says to me or someone said to paul in romans chapter nine isn't there injustice if god doesn't save people i flipped it around and said actually the unjust thing is that jesus died on the cross and that some people get saved that's the injustice and i stand by that i think that's what the bible says and i think the trajectory of the bible or the the the uh main point that the gospel makes is that all of us are heading to hell it's not the other way around it's not like we're all heading to heaven and god just flicks off a few we're all going to hell and if you're saved here tonight it's pure grace there's no injustice in god letting people go to hell absolutely none the injustice is that he saves some people the injustice is that his innocent son died on the cross we've got to reorientate ourselves i know it's hard i know that we're man-centered i know that we think that we're at the center of the universe but we've got to get rid of that it's not the way the bible thinks all right uh related to that i guess um week two how is it fair for god to condemn people if they have no say in whether or not he chooses them so we talked about unconditional election god saves whoever he chooses how is it fair that he condemns the people he doesn't choose who don't have a chance it seems to respond to him and it's related to that answer obviously that everyone's going to hell and you know what everyone wants to go to hell remember the prison analogy i'll go into it briefly on the calvinist understanding ten people are in jail jesus comes in breaks into the jail opens the gates unlocks the shackles but he knows that every one of those ten men will want to stay in prison that's their desire by nature and so he enables some to come out now everyone gets what they want the people who have changed get what they want as they follow him and it's all grace the people who stay get what they want as well george mcdonald said that the the kind of truth flying over hell is i am my own

people want to be their own they want to be their own god and that's what they get those who are chosen chosen undeservedly those who are not chosen are not chosen deservedly everyone gets what they want everyone gets what they deserve this is a big one i'll try and hit this but we might need to do some further work after this okay so the question is this doesn't make sense number one god desires that none should perish but that all should turn to christ and live you find that in uh is it first peter and second timothy maybe it's second peter and first timothy look it up god desires that none should perish that's his desire that's inconsistent this person says with god chose some for salvation before the foundation of the world am i missing something no you're not missing anything you've hit the nail on the head it's a good question if god desires that none should perish why does he only choose some we need to understand that we need to have an understanding of the fact that there are two wills in god in throughout history they've been described as the uh the will of command and the will of decree or the secret will of god and the revealed will of god and this has to be true if we believe the bible because there are passages like that god desires that none should perish but god chooses some i'm going to talk about the revealed will of god and the secret will of god you see this in the case of jesus death right god says you shall not murder god's desire is that innocent blood not be shed and yet it was god who killed jesus see that in osar 53 it was the will of him god to crush him uh also in acts chapter 2 luke says that everything that happened to jesus including judas betrayal including the roman soldiers including the jews all that happened was according to god's predestined plan so god desires that innocent blood not be shed and yet he wills that jesus die on a cross the revealed will of god is the commandment you shall not shed innocent blood the secret will of god the bigger picture will if you like is that jesus be killed for the sins of the world and you see this in election right god desires it's his desire that none should perish but his secret will is that some would be saved maybe there's a a tenuous link to an analogy here it is my desire okay when we had chesterton as a little puppy it's cute little puppy like the cutest thing in the world it is my desire not to hit him not to give him a smack parents will relate to this with real children all right it's my desire not to smack him but i know the dogs that run out on the road get hit by cars and get squashed so though it's my desire not to smack him i belt him every time he goes near the road and now three years later he won't step foot on the road not if there's a 50 kilo hunk of beef on the road he won't go right now i've contradicted my desire

according to a bigger plan and i think that's a continuous link to god's revealed will and his secret will god commands things in the bible that we need to obey and yet he himself in his wisdom contradicts that for the sake of a bigger plan contradict is a is a is a not the right word not when it comes to god but we need to understand that there are two wills in god maybe i'll put more about this on the blog more needs to be said but we need to know at the end of the day god will act according to his big picture plan what is his big picture plan why does god do what he does he does it for his glory that's a priority the proper the priority of god is to glorify himself is to make himself look glorious that's not egomaniacal not when you're god not when you're ultimately glorious we'll get to this in a sec we'll do one or two more i know that you've been really patient i thank you for that okay this is a link to that if humans are made for the glory of god why would he bother to make a whole bunch of people who are never even maybe going to be saved great question what is the glory of god in those who aren't elect it's a really good question why would god create people if he knows they're not going to turn to him he hasn't chosen them here's where it can get difficult guys here's where it can be tough for us we've been taught one thing about god and it's not necessarily the biblical thing i would say that god does that for the same reason that he does everything and that is to show his glory show his glory show his justice his purity his holiness romans 9 17 we'll start off at 17 no one preaches romans 9 these days probably except holy trinity and a few other elect churches all right romans 9 is tough but it's a great passage a great chapter he says for the scripture says to pharaoh i have god says to pharaoh i have raised you up for these very purpose for this very purpose of showing my power in you so that my name may be proclaimed throughout the earth so he has mercy on whom he chooses and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses remember that the story of israel god raised up pharaoh and he hardened his heart so that he wouldn't do what god told him to do and the reason was so that he could use pharaoh to show how much more powerful he was goes on verse 22 to 24 this gets at the heart of the question what if god desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power has endured with much patience the objects of his wrath that are made for destruction and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy which he has prepared beforehand for glory saying this the potter god makes some vessels for destruction some vessels for glory the ones for destruction

[62 : 39] are to show his justice his wrath his anger his power the ones for mercy to show his mercy his love his kindness and that's god's choice and it's god's prerogative and it's god's right he does everything for his own glory if i was gonna if i stood up here and said everything i do i do for my own glory you would say you're an idiot and you'd be right you'd be right when god says it it's absolutely perfectly right and true and just because god himself is perfect and all of his purposes are perfect and if you want to push back against that you're gonna have to push back against the word of god and it doesn't get pushed around we need to repent we need to come under this and we need to say surrender ourselves and say god is sovereign god is over all and he has the right to do what he pleases and i tell you what we're better off that way if you had a god who did everything you wanted to happen we'd be in a lot of trouble over all of that the bible maintains no matter what god's choice is the bible maintains that sinners who go to hell are culpable for the decision they've made they're responsible let's do one more um oh it's a toss up uh all right i'll take the quicker one um god loves all people or so we're taught but if those not in the elect don't even have a chance to ever be saved does that mean he loves some the elect more than others what's true god does love all people bible says john 3 16 god so loved the world god loves the world god loves all people and there is the love of god for all people the general grace of god to all people remember in acts chapter 17 paul says god shows his love for you his general grace to you in providing rain and sun and food and crops provides the love of families he provides a creation for us to live in which is beautiful and enjoyable god loves us he enables us to take every breath that we take but there is a particular love that god has for the elect remember we said those whom he foreknew foreknew carries with it the connotation of love those whom god foreloved he predestined he called he justified he glorified there is a special love of god for the elect that he doesn't have for other people i'll leave it there i've talked a whole bunch and i've blown my voice out but um i really would like the opportunity to pray for us i know there's a lot to take in so why don't we bow our heads together we're going to bow and we're going to pray to the god who is worthy of our prayers and able to answer them father in heaven there is so much here that is hard for us to digest hard for us to hear hard for us even to accept but i pray that you'd give us grace we know that you have given us grace in sending jesus to the cross to die for us in enabling us to respond to that with faith in keeping us

safe and secure in that faith and in holiness and obedience the days of our life please give us more grace now to accept and not only accept but to glory and delight in your word to delight in the fact that you are sovereign you are powerful you are wise and we are not father help us to trust your word so much of this depends on us trusting in your word we know that these are your very words to us please encourage us with that fact father that for those of us here who aren't christians i pray that we would hear loud and clear jesus saying all who come to me i will never turn away and i will raise them up at the last day that if we confess with our mouth and believe in our heart that jesus is lord god raised him from the dead then we will be saved god bless us strengthen us in faith and enable us to persevere and fight to the day when you return or to the day when our days on earth are up give us grace lord amen