

Perserverance of the Saints

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[0 : 0 0] Now as many of you will be aware We are working at the moment In the morning services Through the biblical basis Behind the next section In our church's confession of faith And we reached this morning The subject matter of chapter 17 In the confession Which is of the perseverance Of the saints Of the perseverance of the saints And with regard to that particular topic We take as our text verse 5 In 1 Peter chapter 1 Which we read from this morning Referring to those who are kept By the power of God Through faith unto salvation Ready to be revealed in the last time Kept by the power of God Through faith unto salvation Ready to be revealed in the last time Now this verse has so much in it That just describes the perseverance of the saints But if we think first of all About the subject matter itself

The very fact that the Lord's people Are required to persevere Indicates that all is not And never will be Smooth and easy Proceeding as a follower of Jesus Christ The very fact that there must be perseverance If you're swatting for an exam Or if you're learning a new language Or if you're trying something different And you find it hard going And people would say Well you've got to persevere And it'll be worth it in the end Persevere with your studies Or persevere with this new thing You're learning or whatever Because it's not always easy You get bogged down You struggle Saints of the Lord struggle And when we talk about saints We don't mean the sort of things you see Kind of statues in some churches always With their eyes turned heavenwards And their hands pressed together As though butter wouldn't melt And as though nothing ever goes wrong In their lives The saints of the Lord Are the redeemed of Christ And the reason that they are redeemed Is because they are sinners

Who need to be redeemed And they are sinners Because they are here In this fallen world Born and conceived in sin And committing plenty of their own They need redemption They need salvation But once they have received And accepted that salvation They must also continue in that And that is not easy Because you are swimming upstream You are going against the flow You are plodding through The ploughed field Of the world's difficulties Plus the fact you have all the elements That the prince of this world Can throw against you Bad enough ploughing through A heavy muddy field But if you've got the wind And the sweep And all the snow against you If you've got everything That he can throw at you Trying to stop you And turn you back And get you to take shelter In the more convenient And easier things of this world Then it's harder to keep going The only reason that the Lord's people Are enabled to keep going

Is precisely because They are kept By the power of God Through faith The instrument The means that God uses Their faith in him Unto salvation Ready to be revealed In the last time Now when we say It's ready to be revealed That would suggest That all that we have That's laid up for us Is as yet hidden Which it is of course We haven't set eyes On heaven's glory We don't know The detail of what is there But we do know That this because It's not revealed yet Doesn't mean that it is Unknown to the Lord As we read in the Acts Of the Apostles Chapter 50 And verse 18 As James The leader of the church There said Known unto God Are all his works From the beginning Of the world He knows everything But it's not yet revealed To us It is ready to be revealed In the last time Wherein Ye greatly rejoice Though now for a season

If need be Ye are in heaviness Through manifold temptations Peter of all people Knows what this is like That the trial Of your faith It is a trial It's a test In the hallway How real is your faith How serious Are you about it You see Anytime If somebody Is sitting in church It's easy enough To think Well that person Must be reasonably God fearing He must be Reasonably Christian Here they are in worship At the appointed time Where they jury Isn't that good Isn't that a blessing But what will they be Outside What will they be The rest of the week Won't they be The rest of the Lord's day You see It's not just What we do here Though this is important It's how we are outside It's how we are In all

the days Of our lives Between the staging Posts of each Sabbath And between All the years That pass The trial of your faith Because there will be Times when that faith Is tested sorely There will be times

[5 : 03] When the Lord may For his own Particular reasons Even withdraw For a time To see how we will Hope how our faith Will respond and react To that That sense of darkness The trial of your faith Being much more precious Than a gold That perisheth Though it be tried With fire Might be found Unto praise And honour And glory At the appearing Of Jesus Christ Again Which isn't yet Whom having not seen Ye love In whom though now Ye see Have not yet Believing Through faith Ye rejoice With joy Unspeakable And full of glory Receive in the end The objective The target of your faith Even the salvation Of your souls Who are kept By the power of God Through faith Unto salvation The perseverance Of the saints This which the Lord Does Is that he keeps Protects And enables His people To persevere And we might think Well okay So that's fine

As long as I know I'm one of the Lord's people That means I know I'll be saved But how do I know How do I know If all these trials Are coming against me Then maybe I'm not Really a Christian No These trials And difficulties Come against Every single person In this world Just because You're a worldly Or an unbeliever Does not mean Bad things Will not happen To you Yes some particular Bad things Will come against you If you're a Christian The devil will hate you He will want to attack you He will want to bring you down Which he won't do If you're an unbeliever He'll just lead you To go to hell In your own way But bad things Will still happen to you This is a fallen world This is a world Full of suffering There is difficulty There is pain There is sorrow And it's the cause Of our separation from God If we are reconciled to God Then our eyes Are open to recognise This world is not As it should be This world is not As God created it This world is not How God wants it to be We want it to become

More as God Would want it to be Thy kingdom come Thy will be done In earth As it is in heaven And because That is our objective And because That is how We are called to live There is an additional Layer of difficulty Of suffering Of problems In this world For the believer Yes But there is also An additional help An additional strengthening A preserving And a keeping For those who are in Christ And yes The Christian is inclined To be all well But supposing I'm not Really That means I could fall away That means I could just Let it all go I could be lost At the last minute Yes okay This could be Your last minute How do you respond To your last minute Well I hold fast to Christ I've got him today But I might lose him tomorrow Well tomorrow Will take care of itself Sufficient unto the day Is the evil in all Said the Lord Take the evil thought For the more Nobody lives tomorrow If you think about it

As one of my old professors Used to say Nobody lives tomorrow The present is the only time When duty may be done And grace received Today Is the day In which we must Lay hold upon Christ Today Is the time When we must hold fast And submit our souls To the Lord Awakening And sleeping And then you awake Again tomorrow And you hold on To the Lord For that day And that day Is all you think about And concern yourself With hold fast To the Lord That day And then he would Give you strength If you spare for the morrow To hold fast To him again That he would not Let you go And of course He won't let you go If you're in hell If we are concerned That we do not Fall away Then the way to do it Is day by day Each one As though you feared You rise Out of the Lord's hands That day Hold fast to him In prayer In faith Who are kept By the power of God Through faith Unto salvation

This Paul wrote to Timothy In chapter 2 2 Timothy Chapter 2 Verse 19 You know Nevertheless The foundation of God Standeth sure Having this seal The Lord Knoweth them That are his And that everyone That nameth the name Of Christ Depart From iniquity So this is This is both Encouragement The Lord Knoweth them That are his But also It is incentive To us Let everyone Who names The name Of Christ As their Saviour Depart From iniquity If you are Christ You can't Just carry on In all the Old ways Of sin With the same Priorities With me At the centre Instead of Christ at the centre There's got to be A reordering Of your priorities With Christ At the centre With the Lord As the most Important thing And person Of all And when that Is the case When we know That we are Saved By the Lord And what our Response to that Is we keep Going in that Day by day [10 : 08] And yes we stumble And yes we fall But we are kept By the power Of God Through faith That is the Instrument The means of it Unto salvation Ready to be revealed In the last time Receiving The end of your faith Even the salvation Of your souls Verse 9 The trial of your faith Verse 7 Be much more precious Than a gold And what that means Is that as the Lord Sees and

knows His people Test it His people Going through Difficulty It's not He says Oh well Let's see how They go on with it I'll come back In 10 years And see how They managed No it's like Do you think of Think of like When Daniel Was in the lion's den And the king Who had consigned him To the lion's den And he'd been Almost like cornered If you remember the story In Daniel chapter 6 And made to do that God isn't made to do anything Of course But the king couldn't sleep And he was pacing up and down And he was worrying How Daniel was getting on it First thing in the morning As soon as I thought

He's dashing down there How are you doing Are you still there Daniel Are you alright Did God keep you He says yes Yes yes O king of fire The Lord shut the mouths Of the lions The Lord looked after me But if we can say it reverently The Lord When his children Are going through Such trials It's like He's sort of Watchful and anxious And there When he can't Go through it for them Any more than You know If you If you have Children Or different stages Of their lives Or whatever Whether they've got Affairs in the heart Or whether exams To do Or whether it might be You can't go through These things for them You can't say Oh you stay at home I've done this subject Years ago I'll go and sit In the exam And I'll do the exam For you And put in the paper And then you'll get the money You can't do it for them You can't sort out Their lives for them They have to do it Themselves And the Lord Knows his children If they are to grow up Into grace And relationship With him They have to go Through these things Themselves And so In the midst Of their trials They are kept And underlaced By the power of God Through faith Unto salvation Jesus said This You remember We've quoted this Often My sheep Hear my voice And I know them And they Follow me Those who are Christ Will follow him If we do not Follow Jesus If we do not Accept his call If we don't Respond to him Then we can't say Oh yes I am But it's really I just don't feel The need To follow him Yeah yes I am Say oh yes of course I'm a Christian You don't have to go to church To be a Christian Which is true of course You don't have to You don't have to Say all the things And do all the things That all these church Going people do Which also May be true But if you are Christ You will follow it And if there's a reason Why you can't be in church If there's a reason Why you can't Reprioritise Your lives With these things I'm sure the Lord Knows it

But if we are truly His we will Follow him And that becomes The most important Thing in every aspect Of our life My sheep hear my voice And I know them And they follow me And I give unto them Eternal life And they shall never perish Neither shall any man Pluck them out of my hands My father which gave them Me is greater than all And no man is able To pluck them out Of my father's hand I and my father Are one And they're sitting there Groaning thinking Oh this is what he's Going to say about The lines in the hand Again Yes I am And I make no apology For it Because Jesus saying They won't pluck Out of my hand As I have said So many times before Some things are worth Saying Time after time After time In the hope That they may be Remembered For all times Doesn't matter How many times They are said They will still be true And it is still true

That just as the Lord Says None will pluck them Out of my hand Because they're not Just held in my hand But as the Lord Says in Isaiah 49 At verse 15 Can a woman forget Her sucking child That she should not Have compassion On the son of her womb Yea They may forget Yet will I not Forget thee Behold I have Graven thee Upon the palms Of my hands Thy walls are Continually before me I know I have Said it so many times I know it has Been repeated Often and again But it continues To be true That which you Hold in your hand If you turn your Hand upside down And spread your Fingers It will drop Out of your hand That which is Engraved as the Lines on your hand It doesn't matter How many times You spread your Fingers Turn your hand Upside down Shake it backwards And forwards The lines are not Going to fall off Your hands You're not just Held in the hand Of the father And of the son You become Engraved into it As part of it

[15:12] In such a way That none can Ever prize Such a soul Out of the hand Of the father Or indeed the son As Jesus says I and my father Are one And therefore His sheep That hear his voice That follow him He keeps them None can pluck them Out of his hand The perseverance Of the saints Because they are Back to our verse Kept by the power Of God Through faith Unto salvation Ready to be revealed In the last Now this perseverance It is as we've said It is only Of the Lord It is what he himself Does And what he enables Us to do Now Sometimes of course Sometimes there are Difficulties Sometimes as we Mentioned previously The reason there's This perseverance Is because We have to keep Going in times Of difficulty But the Lord

Says from the Very beginning Jeremiah 31 Verse 3 The Lord Appeared of old Unto me Saying Yea I have Loved thee With an everlasting Love Therefore with Loving kindness Have I drawn thee If

that love Is everlasting That means it is From all eternity And to all eternity You and I We came into this world On a particular date We all will remember Whatever the date Of our birthday Of the year Is And even if you count back Nine months before that For when we were alive In the womb We came into being At the moment of our conception Even before our parents Knew about existence God knew About existence But that too Had a particular date When we came into being We were conceived In the womb But long before that Thousands of years Before that Before the creation Of the world The Lord Had loved those Who were his With an everlasting love And for generations And thousands of years After we leave this world

If the world continues That love He will continue To love his children For all eternity Yea I have loved thee With an everlasting love Therefore with loving kindness So have I drawn thee And that's not in the gospel That's in the Old Testament It's the same God It's the same love It is the same everlasting mercy To those who are kept By the power of God Through faith Unto salvation That is what enables The perseverance of the saints To continue But of course sometimes The saints of the Lord Fall themselves Into grievous sins It's not just That the going is heavy It's not just That it's tough And it's difficult And that they You know They get battered down By the enemy Sometimes because They are sinners And because they are human They themselves Fall into grievous sins We read of how King Solomon Was distracted At the end of his life By all the Restrained wives And concubines He'd taken Of other religions And other nations And they got him To build temples To false gods And they got his heart To be divided From the Lord Of his youth And of his fathers And so he allowed These other gods To be worshipped And he himself Became divided From the Lord Because of these things We think of how David The man after God's own heart Fell in the business Of Bathsheba Now the Lord Overruled that For great good I mean the whole Psalm 51 We just wouldn't have it You know If it hadn't been For that sin By that saint Of the Lord The fact that he is A saint Doesn't mean he isn't A sinner Of course he is And all the evil That David did The Lord forgave him And got him through it And enabled him To come through it But things were Never the same again This is why the Lord Teaches his children To flee from idolatry To avoid sin Not because Oh he wants you All the goody Goody tear shoes But rather that he knows The damage that sin does Think of David As an example There Think of how Nothing and nobody Could stand before him In all the days Of his youth And all the days That he stayed Faithful with the Lord And then he fell In his sin With Bathsheba All his sin In the book Great strong Powerful Nothing he could Possibly want for In this world And he fell In that Which was so Senseless And so needless And yet so common To men in particular And after that And the Lord said Yes the child That's the result Of this union It's going to die You should really die David But the Lord Has had mercy Your child is going to die And after this Because you've caused The enemies of the Lord To blaspheme You've brought dishonor In the name of God As a king Who worships Jehovah Who worships the Lord Of Israel And you've brought dishonor And you've brought dishonor And that So from your own family From your own loins

[20 : 15] Within your own seed And your own blood There's going to rise up Trouble and enmity against you And so it proved And we read that In the later on chapters Of 2 Samuel and so on How amongst his own sons There was murder There was rape There was There was Attacks of One against another There was rebellion From another of his sons And all the bloodshed That followed from that Because Of the sin that got in That undermined His own moral authority That destroyed His own influence In his family God had forgiven him That sin He had put away his sin He cleansed and washed away That sin But the effects of it Continued The damage that it had Done Continued This is the truth About sin It's not just about The event itself You see so often People say Oh well it's just Nobody's business With mine Or if two people Want to go off On some illicit liaison

They'll say Oh it's nothing to do With anybody else It's just us Of course it's not just that The knock on effects The ripples in the pond When you drop in the stone Affect so many others Like David said Affected so many Lives Ended so many lives And sin Spread like a disease God does not Want that For his children Prevention Is better than cure That is why He teaches His children To avoid sin To flee to himself When they sin Get it confessed Get it repented I'll turn from it And that more and more They would seek Not to sin At all But sometimes The Lord Sometimes the Lord Allows them To fall into temptation Sometimes the Lord Allows their hearts To be hardened By Isaiah Going back to him again At chapter 63 Says at verse 17 O Lord Hardened Pharaoh's heart In Egypt As we read there But it's only Some of the time That God was Hardening his heart And all the rest Of the time Pharaoh was Hardening his own heart So God

doesn't Force us to do Things that we're Not inclined to do Ourselves He allows us To go our own way He may at times Cause us to do Certain things But it will only Ever be So that he can Overrule For our good And for the Blessing Of his people And for the glory Of his name Because his purpose Is to cause them To turn to him With ever Greater Need With ever Greater love With ever Greater repentance So that they will Through that faith Be enabled To persevere Being kept By the power Of God Through faith Unto salvation Ready to be revealed In the last time The damage That sin Does God alone

Knows the truth And the wholeness Of it And the way That it disrupts Our lives And our relationship With him He seeks To prevent And to save Us from But of course Man So often Has other ideas But if we are His Then his work His spirit As the bible Puts it His seed His implanting Is already Is already In his children As I've Mentioned In the past On various Occasions 1st John Chapter 3 That verse That can Almost Trouble me A bit Verse 9 Whosoever Is born Of god Doth not Commit Sin For his Seed Remaineth In him And he Cannot Sin Because He is Born Of god In this The children Of god Are manifest And the Children Of the devil Whosoever Doeth Not Righteousness Is not Of god Neither He That loveth Not His Brother This is Distressing If he Can't Sin Because The seed

Of god Is in him Then He should Be fine But he Physically Can't Sin There's Nobody That physically Can't Sin When we Say The seed Of god Is in him His Seed Remaineth In him The lord Has planted That seed Within The heart The spirit The soul Of each One Of his Children It is Of him It is The seed Of their Heavenly Fathers When you Plant the Seed In the Ground For a Long Time There is No Outward Evidence That that Seed Is there At all But it Is If you Need exactly The spot To dig In And you Could Dig That Oh yes Look there It is Right Enough It's in There Nobody Would have Known It was There And all The time It is Germinating And sending Its little Roots Downwards And sprouting Up under The air Still Nobody Sees It It's Only When it Begins To Have Little Green Shoes Begins To Show Evidence Above The Kind And Then it Begins To Get stronger And grow Bigger And bear Fruit And you Can see From the Fruit Exactly What kind

[25 : 46] Of seed It was That was Planted But because The seed Is there It is Never Going to Be Taken Away And because The seed Of god Remaineth In him That which Is of God That Doesn't Sin That Cannot Sin That element That the Lord has Put within Our hearts Within his People Within his Children That doesn't Sin There's plenty Left of the Rest of them That desires To sin Plenty Left of the Flesh Plenty Left of the World Plenty of the Old self It is an Ongoing Struggle It is an Ongoing Warfare Between the Spirit and the Flesh To the Seed of god And the Seed that Is in Our self Is worth Whosoever Is born Of god Thath not Commit Sin For his Seed Remaineth In him God Seed is In him That Doesn't Sin That element Within us Doesn't Sin The old Element That still Sins But as The seed Grows As it Fills up More and More of The soul More and More of The heart It is Less and

Less and Less Of the Old self That desires The sin This is How it Is This is How it Must Be Should Be Because we Should be Growing in Grace That seed of god Within us Should be Taking up More and More and More of Our soul More and More of Our spirit And although The old self Is still There It's power Is weakened More and More and More There are Less resources For it to Draw And less Of ourselves That we Can use Up Because god Is taking Charge Little by Little Imperceptively Under the Soil And the Roots are Working away Taking hold Of our Lives If the Seed is Within us The seed of god Is there That doesn't Sin If the seed Is there Within us And we are His We are Kept By the Power of god Through faith Unto salvation It is Perhaps Deep within But remember What it says About the The city of god In sam 46 You know

Verse 5 God Is in the Midst of Her She shall Not be Moved God Shall help Her And that Right early Deep within Perhaps unseen Perhaps as Yet unknown The seed of god Is there God is in the Midst of her She shall Not be Moved Those Who are Kept By the Power of god Through faith Unto salvation Ready to be Revealed In the last Time This is The perseverance Of the Saints We don't Persevere Because we Are good We don't Persevere Because we Are strong We persevere Because we Are kept By the Power of god We do not Have faith Because we Are good That faith As ephesians Tells us Chapter 2 Verse 8 Is the Gift of god But it Is through This faith That we Are kept By the Power of god You can't Really You can't Really be Saved by a God in whom You do not Believe You know

Christ has Died on the Cross For all who Would trust And believe In his name But if we Will not Believe In that Salvation If we Will not Avail Ourselves Of that Salvation We will Perish It's Those ships Going down There's a Lifeboat There's the Lifebelts And all the Life jackets And so on They

say No I don't want A life jacket No I don't want That stupid Lifeboat I'm just going To tread Water Out here Myself I'm going To save Myself All these Stupid people Getting into Lifeboat It's there To save Lives This ship Is going Down What are You going To do I'm going To tread Water Myself I'm going To stay Here I'm going To be Fine I don't need All these Artificial Things I'm a Strong But it's Just a Crutch For people Who can't Swim Themselves For people Who are Too weak To be Afraid Of a bit Of cold In the Water No I'm Going to Stay Here Myself And to Begin With It may Be Fine And to Begin With You're Strong And to Begin With You're Not Too Cold But eventually The cold Takes Its toll

Eventually Your arms Get tired Eventually You don't Have any Strength Left There's Nothing Now To cling On To The Boat's Gone Life Jackets Have all Disappear Or floated Away On the Waves Now all The things That you Said you Wouldn't Use Now you Wish you Had them But then It's Too late By that Isn't It You can't Be Saved By That In Which You Refuse To Trust It Is There For You It Is There To Be Availed Of The Cross Is There Christ Has Died And All Who Would Trust And Believe In Him Might Be Saved By Him But We Cannot Will Not Be Saved By A God In Whom We Refuse To Believe A Savior In Whom We Refuse To Trust For He That Would Come Unto God Must Believe That He Is And That He Is The Savior Of Those Who Trust On Him And A Warder Of Them That Diligently Sicken Perseverance Of The Saints Means They Will Keep Going Day By Day Whilst This Indian Is Treading

[30 : 48] Water Himself Getting Weaker And Weaker Preparing Himself To Drown Or Freeze To Death Those In The Lifeboat Well I Don't Know It's Not It's Not Fun Games In The Lifeboat On The High Seas But It's Better Than Being Alone In The Water You Got Your Life Jacket You Got Your Lifeboat Such Cover Or Shelter As It May Afford But My You're Being Tossed About On The Waves You're Waiting To Be Rescued You're Still Alive You're Still Afloat Each Day That Passes May Be Untold Misery But You're Still Alive And Whatever Iron Rations Might Be There Until The Rescue Comes Until You're Fanned Whether The Beacon The Maybe On The Lifeboat Whether That Drawers In Rescue Or Whether You're Just Bobbing About In The High Seas Till Somebody Spots You It's Not Fun And Games Being In A Night Boat You're Wet You're Cold You're Shivering You

Do Not Want To Be There But It's Better Than Being Alone In The Water And Being A Christian In This World Having To Persevere It Is Tough Going It Is Hard You Have To Persevere From Day To Day To Day But At At Least You're In The Lifeboat At Least You've Got The Rations That You Need For Days At A Time At Least You've Got Such Shelter As You May Be Being Battered And Tossed Still By The Waves But You're Not Arms With The Guy Who Wouldn't Get In The Boat At Least You're Alive And The Only Reason You're Alive Is Because You're Alive In Christ Because You Have Climbed Into That Boat Because You Have Trusted In The Salvation That He Freely Affords It Is There For Sinners It Is There To Save Them And It Is There Precisely Because From All Eternity The

Lord Knew That Men And Women Were Going To Need To Be Saved Somewhere Along The Line They Were Going To Need To Be Saved And Because He Knew This He Made All Provision That Was Needful They Are Held In The Palm Of His Hand They Are Engraved Upon The Palms Of His Hand None Will Ever Plucked Them Out Of His Hand They Are Those Who Are Kept By The Power Of God There Is No Greater Power If You Remember Jesus Said All Power Is Given Up To Me In Heaven And Earth There Is No Power In All The Universe Greater Than The Power Of God That Is The Power That Keeps You If You Are Trusting In Him Kept By The Power Of God Through To Be Revealed In The Last Time You Are Trusting In A Rescue That Hasn't Yet Been Completed Yes You're Not

In The Water But You Haven't Got Your Saviour Ship Hasn't Come Yet Yes The Salvation Has Not Yet Been Revealed But It Will Be Revealed It Is Ready To Be Revealed In The Last Time The Lord Will Reveal It Because The Trial Of Your Faith Is Much More Precious Than Gold That Perishes Though It Be Tried With Fire That It Might Be Found Unto The Praise And Honor And Glory At The Appearing Of Jesus Christ Whom Having Not Seen He Love Trusting Him Persevering In Him Day By Day By Day This Is The Day That The Lord Has Made We Should Rejoice And Be Glad In It Because As Paul wrote To The Romans Now Is Our Salvation Nearer Than When We Be If We Are Trusting In Christ Then We Are A Day Nearer To Seeing The Lord In Glory Than We Were Yesterday We Are We We Are We This Is Coming On Towards Us It May

Still Be A Rescued Over The Horizon We Can't Physically See The Ship Yet But Whom Having Not Seen He Love In Whom Though Now He See And Not Yet Believing He Rejoiced With Joy

Unspeakable And Full Glory Trusting Going On One Day Each Day Trusting In The Lord Beginning The Day With Jesus Ending The Day With Jesus This Is The Day That The Lord Has Made We Will Rejoice And Be Glad In It If We Are Trusting In Christ Not All Will Be But All Should Be And All Are Invited To Be That They May Be Those Who Are Kept By The Power Of God Through Faith Unto Salvation Ready To Be Revealed In The Last Time That They May Know The Perseverance Of The Saints That Is Great