

Not Cast Away

by Thomas Bradbury

The sermon emphasizes God's unwavering commitment to His elect and the assurance of their eternal security in Christ.

Scripture: Psalm 84:7, Proverbs 4:2, Proverbs 15:24, John 10:27, John 17:21, Romans 8:1, Romans 11:2, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Hebrews 7:25, Hebrews 12:14

Topics: "Eternal Security", "Sovereign Grace"

Description

Thomas Bradbury preaches about the unshakeable truth of God's eternal preservation of His people, emphasizing the doctrines of grace and the sovereignty of God. He highlights the spiritual education of God's elect, redeemed, and regenerate individuals, and the questioning of these doctrines by the unregenerate. Bradbury delves into the four key doctrines of grace: God's sovereign election, eternal redemption, effectual call, and eternal glorification of His elect. He focuses on the doctrine of the saints' preservation to eternal glory, drawing from Romans 8 to illustrate the unbreakable bond between believers and Christ, emphasizing the security and permanence found in being in Christ.

Transcript

"God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew." (Romans 11:2)

There are certain doctrines peculiar to the spiritual education of all God's eternally loved, elect, redeemed, and regenerate people. These doctrines are questioned all the world over, and frequently exercise and perplex the minds of those whom God is bringing in His own way which He has prepared for them, and which is now possessed and secured by Christ for every member of the election of grace. The sovereignty of God is called into question everywhere, not only by the so-called free-willer, but by every unregenerate heart not brought into subjection to God's most holy Word by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. Every sinner in this state, be he a fool or a philosopher, a play-actor or a preacher, a booby or a bishop, it is all of a piece, if he be not under the anointing and teaching of the Holy Ghost; calls in question the doctrines to which I have alluded, and especially that of the glorious sovereignty of JEHOVAH, His absolute right to do as He will with His creatures.

These same doctrines are those of the Gospel of Grace. I will not call them dogmas, though dogmas they certainly are, being right, fitting, and true. There is nothing arrogant or dictatorial in them to the Spirit-taught children of God. I will speak of them, according to the Scriptures, as THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE. And here we may ask, What is doctrine? It is teaching. The doctrines of grace are nothing less,

nothing more, than Divine teaching, teaching from above, teaching by the power of the Holy Ghost, at the feet of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is the reception of lessons from God alone. It is God Himself drawing out that which He Himself has graciously communicated. The doctrines of grace we assuredly love. They are the doctrines of grace because they are the lessons of grace by the God of all grace to all His children. They are the doctrines of God. See how the wise man speaks of them in Prov. 4:2, "I give you good doctrine." This is teaching free from uncertainty and contradiction. It is ever consistent with itself. It is sound doctrine, free from error and corruption. God's teaching makes plain the way of grace to glory before the taught one's face. It opens up the Way of Life which is above to the wise (Prov. 15:24). It sets forth the Way of holiness to those who mourn their vileness, the Way of salvation to sin-burdened sinners, the Way of glory to those who are treated as, "the off-scouring of all things."

Let us look at these doctrines according to the following order, in which they have been frequently formulated:

1. God's sovereign election of His people in Christ Jesus.
2. The eternal redemption of this elected people.
3. The effectual call of the elect and redeemed.
4. The eternal glorification of God's elect.

But it is with the truth of the saints' preservation to eternal glory that we have to do to-night. Did you not see it in that glorious chapter, (Rom. 8), which I read for our instruction? It was well worth coming to Grove Chapel for, you may depend upon it. I felt it, and I thank God for the feeling, for I could not command it. He alone can melt so hard a heart as mine; and blessed be His Holy Name for melting it with that love, the proclamation of which rouses the enmity and hostility of the carnal mind against all who belong to the living and loving Christ of God. Listen! "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are IN CHRIST JESUS." In Christ Jesus safer and surer than the member is in the human body, for the member may be severed, and the whole body must die, decay, and, however elegant we may consider ourselves to be, must go putrefaction and rottenness. There the metaphor fails. In Christ more permanent and enduring than the stones are in the building. Where are the beautiful stones prepared by Solomon for his magnificent temple, the glory of Israel and the admiration of all lands? Gone to ruin, crumbled to dust, as all earthly buildings must. Again the metaphor fails. In Christ more abiding than the branch is in the tree; for branches are severed, wither, die, and the tree eventually perishes. Again the metaphor fails.

But, when we read the precious prayer of Jesus in the 17th of John, we find the description of covenant oneness complete, without flaw, or possibility of failure. The Infallible Mediator speaks in the ears of Infinite Wisdom. With authority He demands and commands His people's enjoyment of spiritual and eternal oneness with Himself. "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me," (vers. 21-23). Here we see that the members are loved by the Father even as He loves the Head. The bride, the church, is loved by the Father equally with the Bridegroom. The love of the Father's heart is the very same to all those whom He gave to His Son as members of His spiritual body, as it ever was, or ever will be, to the Son Himself.

Come with me to that precious portion of my creed, which at times fills my heart with confidence, and moves my spirit with vitality and vigour, I refer to 1 Cor. 1:30m "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus." In Christ solely by the Father's sovereign act of election. "Who of God," that is Christ Jesus the Anointed Head of His people, "is made," by God the Holy Ghost, "unto us," intelligently and experimentally, "Wisdom." And we greatly need it. Under the teaching of the Blessed Spirit we know we are fools indeed, and it may be that others think so too. But what need we care for their judgment when God has made ours His Christ and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are in Him. He has also made Him unto us, "Righteousness." What a mercy! Jesus Christ made to me, a poor vile sinner, "the Righteousness of God." That is the primary truth of God's gospel. And, still further, He has made Him unto me, "Sanctification." Blessed truth! That is my qualification for the enjoyment of my God and Father and all that He has made Himself to me in the Son of His love. Christ Jesus is all the holiness I am after. After? Yes, the command is, "Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," (Heb. 12:14). And as I am a follower of Jesus, I acknowledge Him as the only Holiness worth having. At times I revel in the fact that the Blessed Spirit gives me the enjoyment of Christ my Sanctification, my Redemption, my Glory. In Christ I am saved, safe, secure.

The glorious truth of final perseverance, or, eternal preservation, is sure to be called into question. The world, the flesh, and the devil will not have it. The carnal mind is enmity against it, and this is all the carnal mind can be in respect to the revealed will of God concerning His people. The world's religion will never influence any one to stop finding fault with God, and with those lessons which are too hard for speculative minds and natural intellects to grasp.

"He takes the fool and makes him know

The mysteries of His grace,

To lay aspiring wisdom low,

And all his pride abase."

When He takes in hand one of, "the foolish things of this world," He causes the tongue of that stammerer to speak plainly, elegantly (Isa. 32:4, margin). There is nothing refines so effectually as the teaching of the Spirit, and sovereign grace in experimental possession. May the Guide into all truth teach us increasingly how from the Sacred Scriptures this glorious truth of the church's preservation is clearly inculcated. And then show us the way in which God has revealed this precious doctrine in His Blessed Book, and with it how sweetly He comforts and encourages the hearts of His tried and tempted children.

It is well to notice the design of the apostle in writing this Epistle to the Romans. He states clearly the truth he has in hand, when an objector springs up and calls in question the God-given statement. Whatever the apostle states under the anointing of the Holy Ghost the carnal objector will criticise. Every son and daughter of Adam carries this wretched objector about with him wherever he goes. Mark! "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," (Rom. 8:7). Read also 1 Cor. 2:14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Do you notice that it is an utter impossibility for the natural man to know, or, to think of receiving the things which the Spirit of God delights to reveal to the elect of God, and to none other. It requires a spiritual mind to receive spiritual truth, and a Spiritual Teacher to lead the spiritual mind into the understanding of the mysteries of the gospel. In looking at this blessed and soul-reviving truth set before us in the words of the text, "God hath not cast away His

people which He foreknew," we have Paul's answer to all objectors. But with objectors we have nothing to do to-night. We have to do with the tried and tempted children of God, who are oft-times harassed by Satan, distressed by the lusts of the flesh, and perplexed by the objections raised against their creed and confidence by the Hagarenes by whom they are surrounded and assailed.

For the spiritual instruction and establishment of the people of God here present I would ask, from what point of view do you consider this glorious doctrine, or the teaching which comes from above, concerning the eternal security of God's church, and the everlasting safety of Christ's flock/ If we are looking at this truth from a human or selfish point of view, we come far short of confirmation or establishment in the present truth. It is our privilege to know and enjoy the truth as it is revealed in Christ Jesus the Son of the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him," (John 1:18). There can be no true understanding of God's mind and will but in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the communications which the Holy Ghost is pleased to make to us through Him. You see this in the Son's own declaration in that remarkable chapter Matt. 11:25, "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight. All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and He to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Christ Himself is the Sum and Substance, the Center and Circumference, the Life and Vitality of all the doctrine, of all the teaching that we receive. Mark you, doctrine may be embraced as the outcome of the deliberations of the Synod of Dort, and "The five points," thereof may be used as five spikes upon which to impale Arminians; but I have something better to do. The Scriptures of truth revealing Christ to my heart are good enough for me: and, as I have said before, so say I now again, that Christ Himself is the Life of all true doctrine. It is He who cheers my heart with every promise spoken hime by the power of His Blessed Spirit. Separate any truth of God's Blessed Book from living oneness with Christ, and, what have we? Simply a dry and barren dogma. Nothing more or less. Not living truth in living experience glorifying the living God, not that which revives, cheers and comforts the heart in communion with Him. How blessed, through the truth and Spirit of God, to enjoy our oneness with Him who is the First and the Last, the All in all of Divine teaching and of all spiritual communications.

What has He Himself to say upon the subject of His people's everlasting preservation and eternal security? This is an interesting point to the heart brought into the enjoyment of the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, which makes free from the law of sin and death. What has Jesus Christ to say on this matter? What are the utterances of His heart? Come with me to John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." All? Yes, every person, every thing. All the possessions of all the persons whose names are in the Book of Life, all the blessings, all the promises, all the teaching, all the words necessary for their instruction, which the Father gave to the Son in covenant, and all the glory attending the same shall come to the Son, in the personal experience of His taught ones, and all by the teaching of His Blessed Spirit. But, where do good works come in? Only to-day one said to me, "If there is a profession of these things, we demand good works." Demand? Those who are exactors of good works would do well to begin their exactions at home. Should we examine our own in the light of God thrown upon them from His Most Holy Word, though our lives had been the most exemplary according to the world's judgment, we should hide our diminished head beneath the refulgent glory shining in every word and work of a Precious Christ for His people here upon earth. Then, can this be true?

"I will in no wise cast out." Suppose a saint in oneness with Him is seized with a fit of unbelief, is tossed about upon a sea of uncertainties, wanders to extreme lengths, to far distances from God, can such an one hope for a place again near unto Him? It is our mercy to know that nearness to God is not attained by the fluctuating thoughts of the saved sinner, but is secured in the eternal thoughts of Immutable Truth, ever, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," (Heb. 13:8). As in the case of Peter, Satan may desire to have us, and have us in his sieve, to shake our faith, darken our hope, and damp our love. All this he did with Peter, but Jesus was there to look repentance and godly sorrow into the very heart of that poor blasphemer. With oaths and curses the weak disciple declared that he knew not the Man; but the Man could never say that of the disciple. His look of loving correction would say to Peter, "I will in no wise cast out." And you, poor, broken-hearted, cast-down sinner, in this place to-night, who may remember words not very fragrant, that you have uttered during the past week to the grief of others, and by which Satan has worried you and torn you to pieces feelingly and experimentally, you look here for your comfort and encouragement, the Christ of God declares to sorrowing sinners like you, "I will in no wise cast out."

Oftentimes have I dwelt with sweet delight upon those precious words of the Holy Ghost concerning Jesus in John 13:1, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." To the end of what? To the end of all their wanderings and waverings, to the end of all their fits of indifference and unbelief, to the end of all enmity and hostility of their carnal mind, to the end of the conflict between the flesh and the spirit, to the end of every sin, to the end of every failure, to the end of every fall, a precious Jesus loves them. He loves according to that beautiful outpouring of the heart of Hezekiah given in Isa. 38:17, marginal rendering, "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but Thou hast loved my soul from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." Oh, what love! Carried, caressed in the arms of everlasting love from corruption to glory. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," (Eph. 2:4,5). When we were determined to be damned, bent upon having nothing to do with Him, when we spurned the riches of His grace, despised and hated His people, and slighted His truth, then, even then, He loved us. His message to each of us who glory in His salvation, is, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." And His love never faileth. It will love to the end of all our failures and follies, and right on to the ages of eternity. His is

"Love that will not let Him rest

Till His chosen all are blest;

Till they all for whom He died

Live rejoicing by His side."

Another portion from the sacred lips of the Eternal Lover confirms the truth of their everlasting security, "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, angel, or devil, "pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and NONE is able to pluck," them or anything belonging to them, "out of My Father's hand, (John 10:27-29). That is conclusive to him that is spiritual.

Now come with me to that precious declaration of the apostle in Heb. 7:25, "Wherefore He is able," Satan questions that, and so do all his religious brood, "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." The persons interested

in His intercession and whom He daily saves thereby are styled, "transgressors," (Isa. 53:12). Paul calls them, "sinners," (Rom. 5:8,19). John writes to them as, "sinful little children," (1 John 2:1). These are the objects He has in His eye and in His heart, as His all-prevailing intercession ascends to the ear and heart of His Father. Here He proves His ability to save to the uttermost all that the Father gave to Him. Is not that a wonderful expression? "to the uttermost." Think of our innumerable sins, transgressions and iniquities. To the uttermost of the past He has saved us, to the uttermost of the present He is saving us, to the uttermost of all that is to come He will save us. But look at this overwhelming truth Christward. He saves to the uttermost of His ability. What is His ability? Omnipotence. And those who know its overpowering preciousness can say, "I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought of Thine can be hindered," (Job 42:2). Not long ago I heard of what I call the blasphemy of blasphemies uttered from a Wesleyan pulpit, that Almighty God Himself could never overcome the human will! With the blasphemy of such an assertion there is the rankest folly. None but a religious imbecile would utter so base a contradiction in terms. Surely a disciple of Jesus Christ could not offend the ears of the Father's children, or insult the Almighty with so infamous an utterance. To the Father's Christ we are delighted to ascribe Almightyness, and say because we feel it, "Almighty God, whose power no creature is able to resist." The Father does all things after the counsel of His own will, (Eph. 1:11). The Son has power over all flesh, (John 17:2). The Spirit is the power by which all creation exists and moves, and by which the whole church exists and is exercised. Oh, what a mercy it is to know that this Omnipotent, Immutable God is ours, and that by His own teaching, according to His good pleasure in Christ Jesus.

But we will look at that truth contained in the word, "perseverance." I know there is such a grace, but my progress in divine realities and my perseverance in the Way of Life, would be slow, indeed, were it not for my preservation in Christ. That is a blessed word to me concerning all true Zionites in Psalm 84:7, "They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." "They go." Why do they go? Because they are in Him, and He is no stand-still God. In His arms He holds them every step of their journey home. What a blessed revelation for the confirmation of the truth in us, and the establishment of our hearts in the faith of His glorious Gospel. Jesus Christ is the Persevering One. "The Path of the just! What is that? Not the just in the Path; but, "The Path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day," (Prov. 4:18). "His goings forth are prepared as the morning," shining clearer and clearer, brighter and brighter, until each and every one of His loved ones shall stand before the Father perfect and complete in the day of eternal glory. He is the Perseverer, for He succeeds in every case He takes in hand. This He promised the Father to do on the behalf of His own elect. From the Father's hands He lovingly took them to take care of them and to preserve them to eternal glory. When lost He saves them, when fallen He raises them up, when accused He clears them, when afar off He brings them nigh, when polluted He purifies them, when naked He clothes them, to Himself, to His Father, to His heavenly home He will bring them. Look at that glorious description given of Him in John 3:35, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand." Dwell upon His own utterance in Matt. 28:18, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." All power belongs to our Most Glorious Christ, and yet we are told impotency is too potent for Omnipotence to overcome. Blessed be God, in the All-powerful we stand, "strengthened with all might according to His glorious power," and in that, "all might," we abide in spite of the weakness of the flesh, the strength of Satan, and the power of the world. In the enjoyment of this, doubt, fear and unbelief fly before the force of eternal truth, and from the consideration of the enlightened child of God.

"What from Christ that soul shall sever

Bound by everlasting bands?

Once in Him, in Him for ever;

Thus th' eternal covenant stands;

None shall pluck thee

From the Strength of Israel's hands."

Let us notice the precious truth concerning the perseverance of the Holy Ghost in the education and spiritual progress of every redeemed sinner whom He brings into the enjoyment of that salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Paul knew something of this, when, under the anointing of the Holy Ghost he threw out that bold challenge recorded in Rom. 8:33, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" He does not direct the mind of the child of God to his fears or his faith, to his failings or his feelings. Not to anything in himself at all; but to all that God had done for him, and all that Christ was to him. Listen! "It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things," these things of life and death, conflicts, dangers, deaths, spiritually killed, experimentally slaughtered, "we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded," we know who persuaded him, "that neith death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is Christ Jesus our Lord."

But, in the face of such blessed utterances from the grace-filled lips of Jesus Christ, such precious statements by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, such glorious teaching from inspired apostles and experienced saints, nature will oppose grace, the flesh will oppose the spirit, error will strenuously oppose truth, the world will hate the Father as He reveals Himself in His children, the devil will show his hostility to Christ as He makes Himself known to His redeemed, the fleshly mind will assert itself against the teaching of the Spirit. The doctrine of eternal preservation is everywhere questioned. The suggestion is made that if this doctrine is preached to the people they may take it as a licence for them to live as they like. Mark well the folly of this objection. Do not the religious and irreligious multitudes live as they like? It is the want of these truths that leaves men in licentiousness and ungodliness. I remember, years ago, one who is now in this congregation went with me to see a tap-room by night in a colliery district. It was a literal pandemonium, a hell upon the earth. Shortly after this I gave great offence in saying, "Do you wish to see acompany of freewillers? Go to yonder tap-room and question each one of that seething mass of debauchery as to believing in God's sovereign election, particular redemption, effectual calling, and eternal preservation, and they will scout the doctrines to a man. They hate the doctrines, and hesitate not to curse the God of the doctrines." And here I would say, Go to the dens of infamy and profanity, and ask for the belief of thse who frequent the same and you will find Arminianism rampant there. And for all that, Arminians have the hardihood to look men in the face and tell them that the doctrines which lead to Christ, God, and glory, only lead to licentiousness and looseness of living. Here let me ask and answer a question. Can a child of God be saved and live in sin? Yes, he can. But he cannot live and die in sin. Let me direct your attention to the lamentable case of David. He looked, lusted, sinned, fell. He lived and wallowed in his sin, and would have sinned himself to hell but for divine interposition. The doctrine of

eternal preservation was good for him. But for this, poor fallen David must have perished in his sin.

Many cases are recorded in the Scriptures giving demonstrative evidence of God's children being left to fall into sin; yet, marvel of marvels, it seems sometimes, that the more a child sins the more the Father's heart leaps towards him. The farther a child wanders from the Father's home, the more concern and care the Father seems to have for him. All His thoughts love and affection are concentrated upon the absent. I say this because I see it in the Scriptures of truth, have felt it in its preciousness and power, and, because I am a living witness to the truth of it, experimentally by the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Yet it may be asked, can the Spirit abide in the heart of a child of God who seems to love and serve sin? Paul answers, "With the flesh I serve the law of sin," (Rom. 7:25). Yet look through Romans 8., and you will see the Spirit of purity leading those who mourn over their impurity into communion and fellowship with the Holy Three-in-One, the spirits of just men made perfect, and with God's living family here upon earth.

I would ask you, can a child of God live as he lists? Well sometimes I wish I could; but if I could I should enjoy nothing of mercy. I would never be miserable. Then mercy would never be mine. I would live a life of constant and unclouded communion with the Father, in the Son, by the Indwelling Spirit. I would live a life of spotless purity if I could; but then I should have no sins to confess, and the sweets of divine forgiveness would not be mine. The struggle of my life is with the accursed unbelief of my heart, which mars my rest in the Lord, who works all things well for me, and brings to a successful issue everything that concerns me. My prayer is, "Forsake not the works of Thine own hands, Perfect that which concerneth me," (Ps. 138:8). "I will cry unto God Most High; unto God that performeth all things for me," (Ps. 57:2).

The time is gone. For the confirmation of the doctrine read again at your homes Paul's glorious challenge in Romans 8:33-39. To which I say, Amen and Amen.

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