



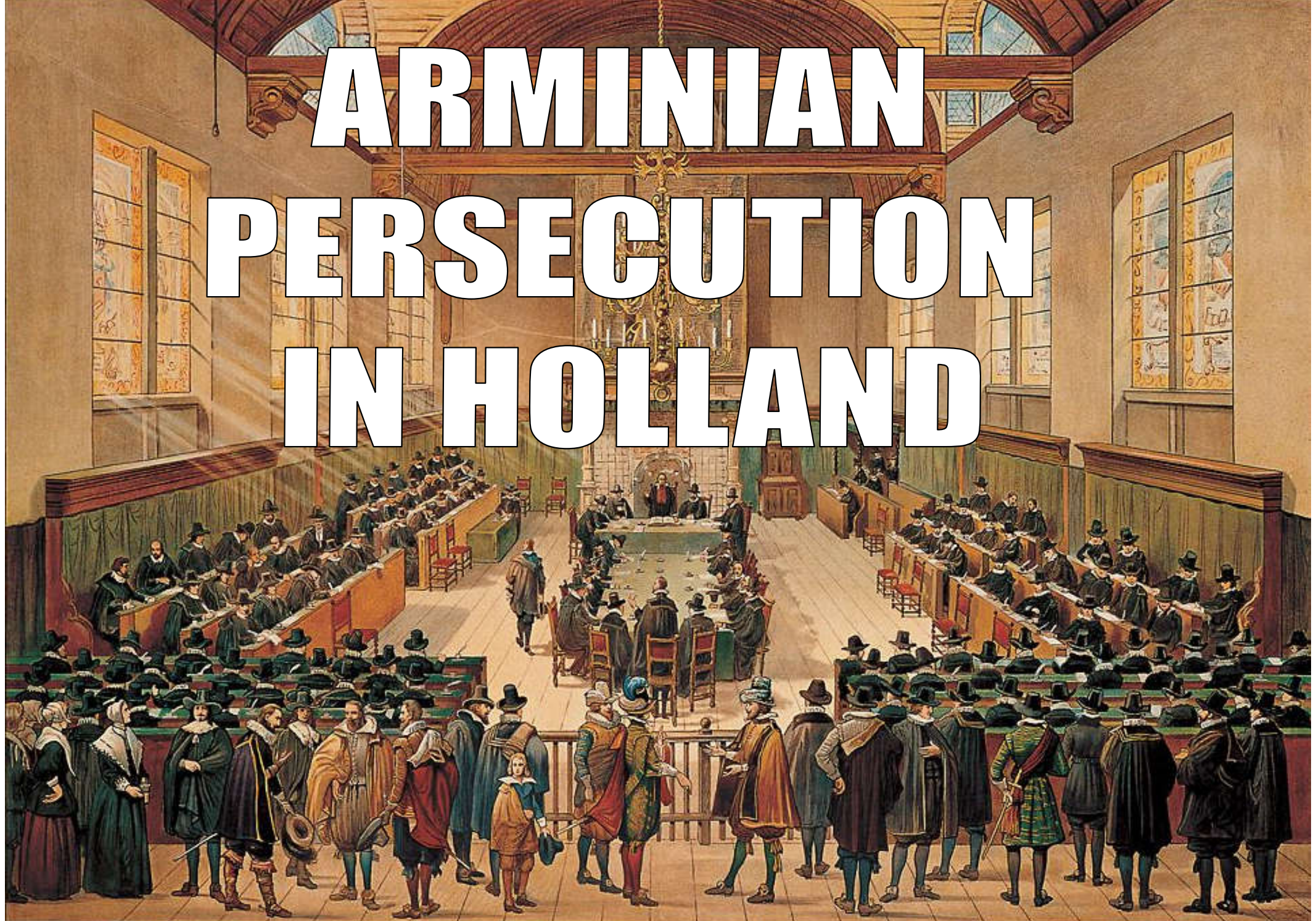
# ARMINIANISM & CALVINISM



*PART 7a*



# ARMINIAN PERSECUTION IN HOLLAND



The Synod of Dort. The Arminians are seated at the table in the middle.



# SYNOD OF DORT

- ❑ We already noted saw how the followers of Arminius (called Remonstrants), headed by Simon Episcopius, were summoned as defendants at the Synod of Dort (Nov 1618 to May 1619), where they were condemned as heretics.
- ❑ The Calvinists were heavy handed in their dealings with the Arminians. For refusing to subscribe to the Canon of Dort, some 200 ministers were deprived of their positions and 80 were banished.
- ❑ Those who continued to minister were sentenced to life in prison. Episcopius was deprived of his office and expelled from the country.



**Simon Episcopius**  
**(1583-1643)**

# ARMINIAN PERSECUTION

- ❑ When the Calvinist-Arminian controversy arose within Dutch Protestantism, the Arminian lawyer and statesman Hugo de Groot (aka Hugo Grotius) had joined the debate by writing a pamphlet in 1613 containing a commentary on the Five Articles of Remonstrance (i.e. the theological views of Arminius).
- ❑ The statesman Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt was also the political protector of the Arminians, but the Calvinists managed to curry favour with Prince Maurice of Orange.

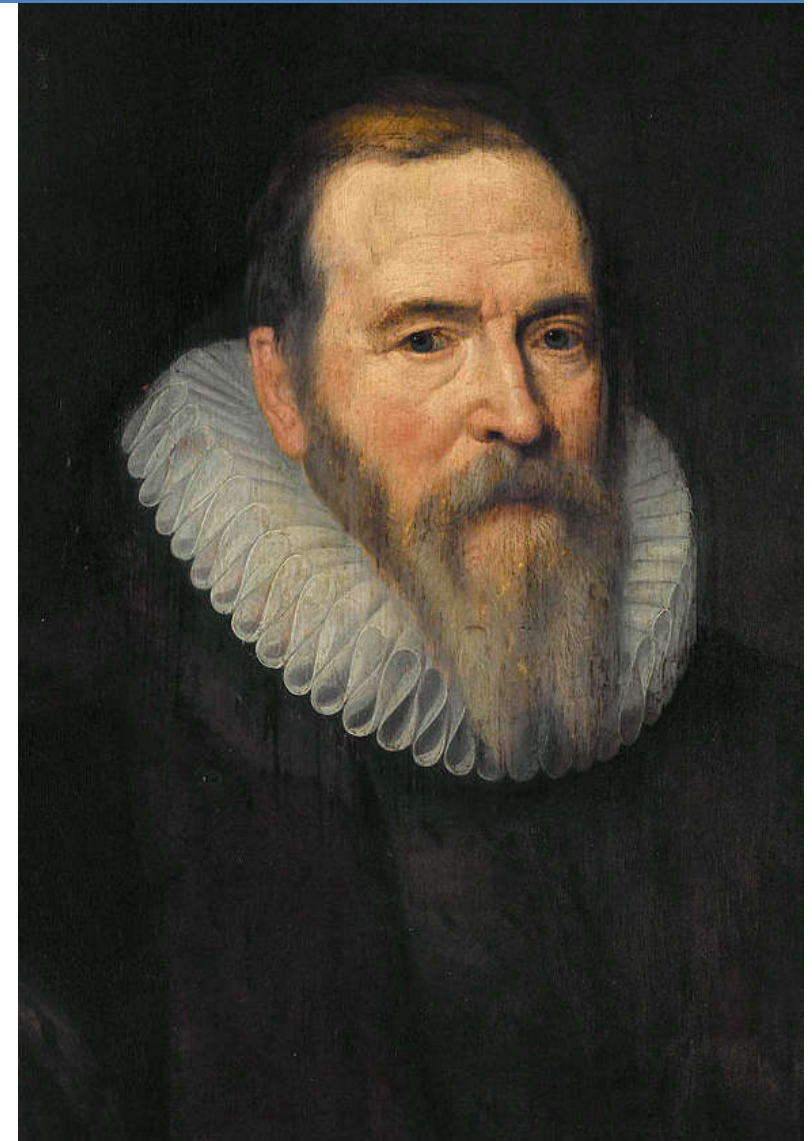


**Portrait of Hugo Grotius  
(1583-1645)**

# ARMINIAN PERSECUTION

- ❑ On August 29, 1618, Hugo Grotius arrived at the Hague to attend a meeting. The doorkeeper directed him to the rooms of Prince Maurice of Orange. He added, "Barnevelt is already there." Grotius went up. Fellow Arminian statesman, Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, was there all right - as a prisoner. The captain of the guard seized Grotius also. In a stunning coup, the Netherlands' Calvinists had captured the Arminian political leaders.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1601-1700/hugo-grotius-11630067.html>



**Portrait of Johan van  
Oldenbarnevelt  
(1547-1619)**



# ARMINIAN PERSECUTION

- ❑ Van Oldenbarnevelt was tried before a special court of 24 members, nearly all of whom were personal enemies. He was beheaded on trumped up charges of treason.
- ❑ Grotius prepared for his own head to roll, refusing to request a pardon which would be an admission of guilt. He wrote his wife of his trust in God... At the trial his accusers produced no written charges, permitted him no counsel and allowed him but one sheet of paper to prepare his defence. At age 36 he was declared guilty, given a life sentence and locked in Loevestein castle. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid



**Loevestein castle**

# ARMINIAN PERSECUTION

- ❑ Grotius' books were brought in a wooden chest 4 feet long. This came and went and the guards became careless, no longer examining it. His wife Marie noticed. Grotius found that by doubling over he could squeeze into the box. Its keyhole admitted a little air. A plan was made and a maid sworn to secrecy was enlisted to assist. Grotius prayed on his knees an hour, then, in only his underwear, crept into the box. Marie asked the guards to carry it down. Her husband was ruining his health on studies, she said; his books must go. <sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Ibid

**Grotius fled prison in this chest**



# ARMINIAN PERSECUTION

- ❑ The guards saw Grotius' clothes on a chair and his bed curtains pulled. Supposing him in bed, they heaved up the chest. "What makes it so heavy?" they asked. "The Arminian must be in it."  
"Only heavy Arminian books," replied quick-witted Marie. All the same the guards checked the box for air holes and asked the commandant's wife if they should open it. "Marie says it is books," replied the woman - so the box was not opened.<sup>1</sup>



**Marie Grotius**

<sup>1</sup> Ibid

# GOVERNMENTAL THEORY

- ❑ The maid brought it to Gorcum by boat. One of the men who lugged the chest ashore cried out that there was something alive in it. "Oh, yes, Arminian books are full of life and spirit," answered the maid, and the bearers said no more.
- ❑ Disguised as a bricklayer, Grotius fled. Some weeks later Marie joined her husband in Paris.<sup>1</sup>
- ❑ In 1625 Grotius composed the 3 books titled "On the Law of War and Peace", a cry for international justice. History has given this great Christian scholar a title: Father of International Law.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid





# THE ATONEMENT

## DEFINITION:

The English word **atonement** is one of the few theological terms of English origin. It was coined by William Tyndale and originally meant **at---one---ment** i.e. being “to make one”, in harmony, with someone.

# DIFFERENT VIEWS

- ❑ There are different models or Atonement theories. Some of these views are not necessarily mutually exclusive and are simply equally valid images of the same event.
- ❑ One reason for the various views is that the Bible reveals many truths about the atonement and it is hard, if not impossible, to find any single "theory" that fully encapsulates or explains the richness of Christ's work of redemption. The Scriptures present a rich and multifaceted picture of our redemption, putting forth many interrelated truths concerning the atonement.

**But any view that ignores man's sinfulness, the substitutionary nature of the atonement, or the centrality and significance of the cross - is deficient at best and heretical at worst.**



# VIEWS ON ATONEMENT

Theories	Champion	Date	Proponents
Recapitulation	Irenaeus? / Athanasius	2 <sup>nd</sup> C / 4 <sup>th</sup> C	Early church, Eastern Orthodox
Ransom	Origen / Gregory of Nyssa	3 <sup>rd</sup> C / 4 <sup>th</sup> C	Early church
Satisfaction	Anselm	11 <sup>th</sup> C	Catholics
Moral influence	Peter Abelard	12 <sup>th</sup> C	Modern liberals
Penal substitution	Reformers	15 <sup>th</sup> C	Lutheran, Calvinist & Arminian Protestants
Governmental	Hugo Grotius	17 <sup>th</sup> C	Some Arminian Protestants
Christus Victor	Gustaf Aulén	20 <sup>th</sup> C	Early church?
Ransom (modified)	Kenyon, Hagin (Snr), Copeland	20 <sup>th</sup> C	Word-Faith

# GOVERNMENTAL THEORY

- ❑ Hugo Grotius developed a view of the atonement of Christ known as the "Governmental" or "Moral government" theory.<sup>1</sup> It is not a view we consider complete though - we hold that Penal Substitution is by far the most accurate and comprehensive single picture of the atonement.
- ❑ This view is very similar to the satisfaction view and the penal substitution view, in that all three views see Christ as satisfying God's requirement for the punishment of sin. However, the governmental view disagrees with the other two in that it **does not affirm that Christ endured the precise punishment that sin deserves or paid its sacrificial equivalent.** Instead, Christ's suffering was simply an **alternative to that punishment.**<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugo\\_Grotius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugo_Grotius)

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governmental\\_theory\\_of\\_atonement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governmental_theory_of_atonement)



# ATONEMENT

- ❑ While Arminians and 5-point Calvinists disagree on the extent of the Atonement, they generally agree that the Penal Substitution model of Atonement is the best.
- ❑ Even the Governmental theory (of Hugo Grotius) held by some Arminians is just a derivative of the Penal Substitution theory. And that in turn was derived from Anselm's Satisfaction theory.
- ❑ All of these views hold that a debt was owed to God, not Satan and that Jesus was a substitute for man, either by satisfying his lost honour or by repaying the debt owed.

# CALVINIST BELIEFS

❑ 5-point Calvinism holds to the following tenets:

1. **Total depravity:** as a result of his fallen nature man is unable to choose to follow God.
2. **Unconditional election:** double predestination - God has decided from eternity to extend mercy to those he has chosen and to condemn those he has not chosen.
3. **Limited atonement:** Jesus died only for the sins of the elect.
4. **Irresistible grace:** when God decides to save someone, they certainly will be saved and the Holy Spirit cannot be resisted.
5. **Perseverance of the saints:** Eternal security - those whom God has called can never lose their salvation.

# ARMINIAN BELIEFS

❑ Arminianism holds to the following tenets:

1. **Prevenient Grace:** Humans are naturally unable to make any effort towards salvation. Salvation is possible by grace alone and works of human effort cannot cause or contribute to salvation. But though born a sinner, mankind is given prevenient grace that enables him to respond positively to God with free will.
2. **Conditional election:** God's election is conditional on faith in Jesus. God does not arbitrarily consign some people to eternal damnation; their wilful rejection of God's salvation makes them responsible.



# ARMINIAN BELIEFS

3. **Unlimited atonement:** Christ died for every person, even though some refuse to accept the provision for their salvation.
4. **Resistible Grace:** No person is forced against their will to become a Christian. God allows his grace to be resisted by those unwilling to believe.
5. **Falling from grace:** Salvation can be lost, as continued salvation is conditional upon continued faith. One's salvation can be lost through wilful disobedience. Rather than the unconditional predestination of Calvinism, Arminianism teaches conditional predestination. We are predestined to eternal life if we accept God's provision of salvation.

# PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS



- ❑ This time we will look at the Calvinist doctrine of the Perseverance of the saints.
- ❑ It is more commonly called "Eternal Security" or "Once saved, Always Saved".

Calvinism	Arminianism
Total Depravity	Prevenient Grace
Unconditional Election	Conditional Election
Limited Atonement	Unlimited Atonement
Irresistible Grace	Resistible Grace
Perseverance of the Saints	Falling from grace

# PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

## DEFINITION:

**Calvinists believe in “eternal security” and teach that you can never lose your salvation.**



**Arminians believe that salvation is conditional on remaining in Christ and can be lost through apostasy.**



# 4-POINTERS

- ❑ **4-point Calvinists:** We noted in an earlier study that not all Calvinists are 5-point Calvinists and many (including John Calvin) **reject the idea of Limited Atonement**. This is the single point of TULIP theology that professing Calvinists are most likely to reject - or to redefine or soften.
- ❑ **4-point Arminians:** Likewise many (notably Southern Baptists) of those who subscribe to Arminian theology (either openly or in practice <sup>1</sup>) **accept the idea of Eternal Security**. This is the single point of TULIP theology that professing or practicing Arminians are most likely to accept.

<sup>1</sup> I note this because many claim to be neither Calvinist or Arminian, while clearly accepting the tenets of Arminianism - possibly due to the stigma attached to the term by those who incorrectly equate it with Pelagianism, in order to provide a more convenient Arminian straw-man (an intentionally misrepresented proposition that is set up because it is easier to defeat than an opponent's real argument.).

# PERSEVERANCE

- ❑ Calvinists believe in the doctrine of the Perseverance of the saints, which says that those whom God has called can never fall away. Because God chose some to be saved, he keeps them from apostasy and those who do apostatize were never truly born again.
- ❑ Some non-Calvinists advocate a similar doctrine of eternal security that teaches once a person is saved, his or her salvation can never be lost.
- ❑ Arminians generally believe that salvation is secure in Christ and protected from all external forces, but it is conditional on us remaining in Christ and it can be lost through apostasy. Salvation is conditioned on faith, therefore perseverance is also conditional. Apostasy can be committed through a deliberate, wilful rejection of Jesus and renouncement of previous faith.

# WESLEYAN ARMINIANISM

- ❑ John Wesley (1703-1791) would later champion the Arminian beliefs, traveling more than 400,000 kilometres and preaching 40,000 sermons.
- ❑ Possibility of apostasy
  - Wesley fully accepted the Arminian view that genuine Christians could apostatize and lose their salvation, as his famous sermon "A Call to Backsliders" clearly demonstrates. Harper summarizes as follows: "the act of committing sin is not in itself ground for the loss of salvation... the loss of salvation is much more related to experiences that are profound and prolonged."<sup>1</sup>

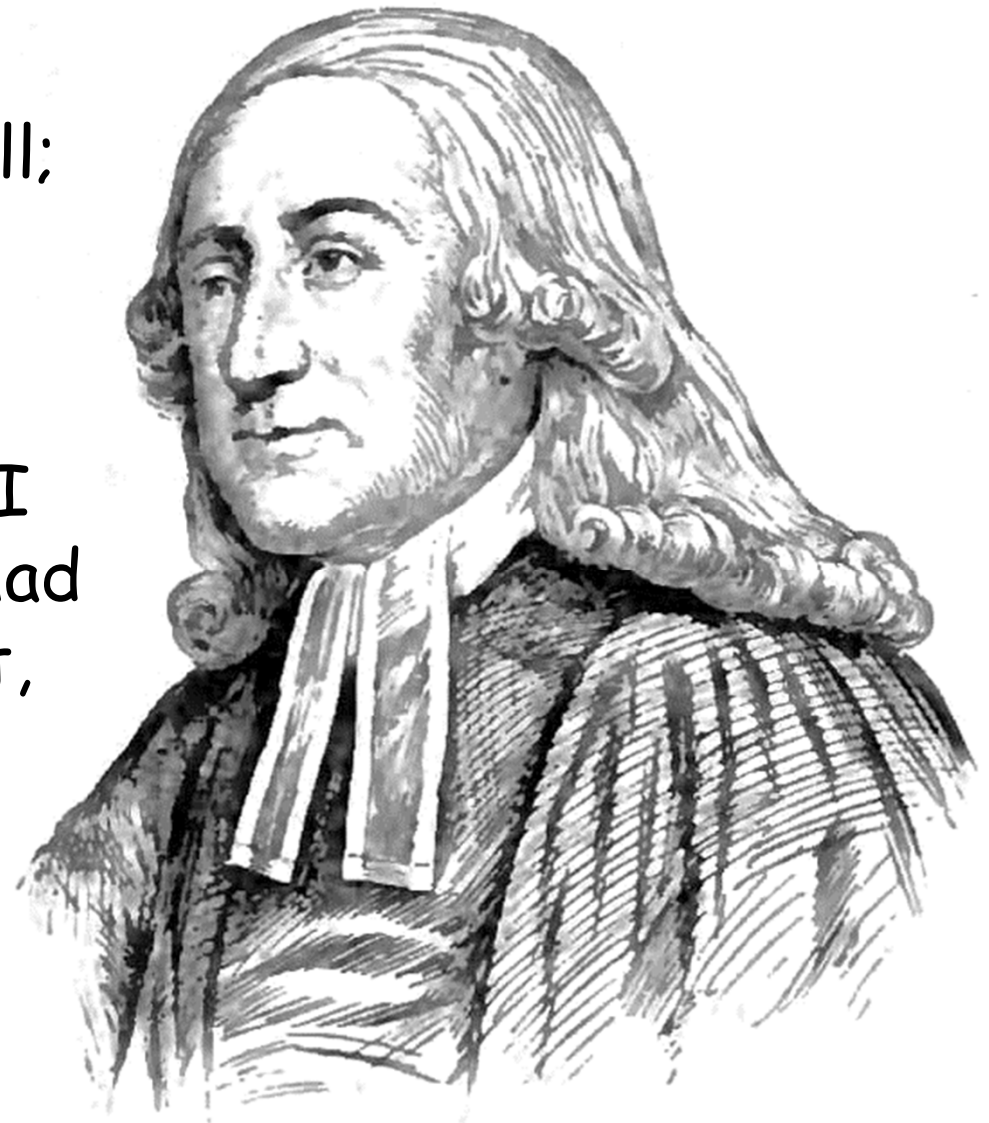
<sup>1</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arminianism>



# WESLEYAN ARMINIANISM

□ Wesley writes of his change of view:

- Formerly we thought, one saved from sin could not fall; now we know the contrary. We are surrounded with instances of those who lately experienced all that I mean by perfection. They had both the fruit of the Spirit, and the witness; but they have now lost both ... There is no such height or strength of holiness as it is impossible to fall from.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> The Doctrine of Christian Perfection, Section 25, Question 30

# TYPES OF APOSTASY

- ❑ Wesley saw two primary things that could result in a permanent fall from grace:
  1. The actual expression of apostasy i.e. a complete renunciation of the Christian faith.
  2. Repeated unconfessed sin - those in this category may still outwardly profess to be Christians.
    - Titus 1:16 They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him...
- ❑ Others add to the list:
  3. A falling away from key doctrines of Christianity (like the Atonement or nature of Christ) into heretical teachings, citing Arius as an example; he denied a key Christian truth - the divinity of Christ.

# ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

- ❑ The Assemblies of God has taken a strong stand against the teaching that God's sovereign will completely overrides man's free will to accept and serve Him. In view of this we believe it is possible for a person once saved to turn from God and be lost again. However, we do not go to the other extreme of teaching that mankind's choice of receiving or rejecting Christ makes a person totally responsible for his own salvation apart from Christ's atonement.<sup>1</sup>
- ❑ In our Fellowship we believe carelessness can lead to apathy, apathy to neglect, and neglect to a conscious decision to sin. We often refer to this spiritual decline as backsliding. We believe one who backslides is in danger of losing his salvation if the individual persists in rejecting the Spirit's call to repentance and restoration.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/topics/gendoct\\_09\\_security.cfm](http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/topics/gendoct_09_security.cfm)



# CAN SALVATION BE LOST?

- ❑ David gave this advice to Solomon:
  - “And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but **if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.**”  
(1 Chron 28:9)
- ❑ Moved by the Spirit of God, Azariah said the following to King Asa:
  - “Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but **if you forsake him, he will forsake you.**” (2 Chron 15:2)

# CAN SALVATION BE LOST?

- ❑ Jesus warns the church in Ephesus:
  - “Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. **If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.**” (Rev 2:4-5)
- ❑ He also warns the Laodicean church:
  - “**So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.**” (Rev 3:16)
- ❑ A disciple can stop following Jesus.
  - John 6:66 From this time many of his **disciples** turned back and **no longer followed him.**

# CAN SALVATION BE LOST?

- ❑ But when we are born again don't we become God's children? Yes - but a child through repeated disobedience can be disowned and disinherited. What of the child who disowns their parents?
- ❑ To disown is to shun someone that you have a relationship with. The Bible tells us that we can disown Jesus. What is Christ's response to those who disown him?
  - Matt 10:32-33 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But **whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him** before my Father in heaven."
  - 2 Tim 2:12 if we endure, we will also reign with him. **If we disown him, he will also disown us...**

# CAN SALVATION BE LOST?

- 2 Pet 2:1 ... there will be **false teachers** among you. They will secretly introduce destructive **heresies**, even **denying the sovereign Lord who bought them**--bringing swift **destruction** on themselves.
- ❑ The above verse actually poses 2 problems for the 5-point Calvinist.
  1. **denying the sovereign Lord** - According to the doctrine of Eternal Security what is being cautioned against here is actually an impossibility.
  2. **who bought them** - Christ even "bought" those who are ultimately not among the elect (they are destroyed), including the false teachers of "destructive heresies" alluded to here.



# CAN SALVATION BE LOST?

- 2 Pet 2:20-22 If they have **escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ** and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. **It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness**, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud."
- ❑ Peter is clearly speaking of former believers here. They "have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord". They "have known the way of righteousness" but have subsequently turned their backs on it.

# CAN SALVATION BE LOST?

- ❑ It is possible for that someone “for whom Christ died” to be destroyed:
  - Rom 14:15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. **Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.**
  - 1 Cor 8:11 So this weak brother or sister, **for whom Christ died, is destroyed** by your knowledge.
- ❑ Yet a typical argument by Calvinists is as follows:
  - True Christians do not apostatize. Those who fall away into apostasy demonstrate that **their faith was never real to begin with** (1 John 2:19). <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gty.org/library/questions/QA78/what-is-an-apostate>

# SAUL

❑ Can a true believer fall away? Just take the example of King Saul. He initially prophesied under the power of the Spirit of God.

➤ 1 Sam 10:9-10 As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul's heart... When they arrived at Gibeah, a procession of prophets met him; **the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he joined in their prophesying.**

❑ Then when the Ammonites besieged Jabesh Gilead, "the Spirit of God came upon him (Saul) in power" (1 Sam 11:6).





# SAUL

- ❑ But later we see that “the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul” (1 Sam 16:14). Ultimately Saul would try to kill David and Jonathan, successfully kill the priests of God (1 Sam 22:17) and consult a necromancer (1 Sam 28).



See





# SAUL

- ❑ He finally commits suicide (1 Sam 31) because God is refusing to speak to him.
- ❑ Calvinists argue either that:
  1. Saul was saved and never lost his salvation, despite his sin.



See

This means you can murder, consult witches, be troubled by evil spirits and commit suicide - while still being saved.

# SAUL

2. Others argue that Saul was never saved in the first place - in this case we have an unsaved man full of the Holy Spirit and prophesying. Furthermore the Bible makes it clear that Saul initially followed God, but subsequently turned back.
  - 1 Sam 15:11 (NASB) "I regret that I have made Saul king, for **he has turned back from following Me** and has not carried out My commands". And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night.
- ❑ And likewise God had departed from Saul:
  - 1 Sam 18:12 (ESV) Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul.
  - 2 Sam 7:15 (NASB) but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

# CALVINIST FALLING AWAY

- ❑ Can you imagine the following conversation taking place with a sane person?

Did you hear? John  
fell off the roof.

Oh dear, Was  
he hurt?



# CALVINIST FALLING AWAY

Not really – he never was truly on the roof.

But I thought you said he fell off the roof?





# CALVINIST FALLING AWAY

Yes, but the fact that he fell off the roof proves that he was never really on the roof in the first place.



If this line of reasoning sounds stupid to you, chances are you're an Arminian.



# FALLING AWAY

- ❑ If I say that someone fell off the roof, the implication is that they were on the roof. Calvinists effectively argue that if you fell off the roof, you never were on the roof in the first place.
- ❑ They repeatedly resort to arguments that are logically absurd like, "If a person falls away, they were never saved". What exactly are they falling away from then? You must hold a particular position in order to "fall away" from it.



# FALLING AWAY

- ❑ You cannot fall away from a position you never once held.
- ❑ Jesus says that it is possible to fall away when you are tested or undergo persecution.
- Matt 13:20-21 "The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once **receives it with joy**. But since he has no root, **he lasts only a short time**. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly **falls away**."
- Luke 8:13 "Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. **They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.**"

# FALLING AWAY

- ❑ Paul predicted a great end time apostasy because of spiritual deception.
  - 1 Tim 4:1 (NASB) But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will **fall away from the faith**, paying attention to **deceitful spirits** and doctrines of demons...
  - 2 Thess 2:3 (NASB) Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the **apostasy** (Gk: apostasia) comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction...
- ❑ This was also foretold by Jesus.
  - Matt 24:10 (NASB) "At that time **many will fall away** and will betray one another and hate one another."



# FALLING AWAY

- ❑ We can fall from grace because of legalism.
  - Gal 5:4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been **alienated from Christ**; you have **fallen away from grace**.
- ❑ Likewise unbelief can cause you to fall away from God.
  - Heb 3:12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, **unbelieving heart** that falls away from the living God.



# FALLING AWAY

- ❑ We can turn away from Christ by continually succumbing to sensual desires.
  - Paul cautions Timothy about younger widows who had **"dedication to Christ"** being overcome by "sensual desires". He writes that "Some have in fact already **turned away to follow Satan**" (1 Tim 5:11-15).
- ❑ Peter warns us not to fall from our secure position, implying that this is a possibility
  - 2 Pet 3:17 ... be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and **fall from your secure position**.
- ❑ I do not believe the Bible is full of meaningless warnings. If we are cautioned about something - there is a real danger (or else the warning is meaningless).

# FALLING AWAY

- ❑ The following warning is given to Christians about apostatizing (i.e. falling away):
  - Heb 10:25-31 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. **If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. →**

# FALLING AWAY

← How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has **treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him**, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- ❑ Again Calvinists try argue that this is talking about people who were never saved in the first place. But it is referring to those who have been "sanctified" by "the blood of the covenant". Even by their own argument - that Jesus' blood was limited to the elect - this then must be a reference to the elect.



# FALLING AWAY

- ❑ The writer of Hebrews warns against apostatizing:
  - Heb 6:4-6 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, **if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance**, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.
- ❑ In our next study we will look at the issue of apostasy versus backsliding and whether it is possible to recover from these states.

# DIVORCE OR ANNULMENT

- ❑ When Israel continued to backslide without repenting, God “divorced” them. If you are divorced, it means you were in a marriage covenant, but the covenant is now revoked.
- ❑ There is initially a call to repentance, which is refused.
  - Jer 3:7 (NKJV) “...And I said, after she had done all these things, ‘Return to Me.’ But she did not return.”
- ❑ So God “divorces” Israel for spiritual adultery.
  - Jer 3:8 (NKJV) “Then I saw that for all the causes for which **backsliding** Israel had committed **adultery**, I had put her away and **given her a certificate of divorce**...”
- ❑ Using Calvinist logic, we’d have to say that because Israel was divorced from God, that she was never married in the first place – but that is annulment, not divorce.

# NAMES BLOTTED OUT

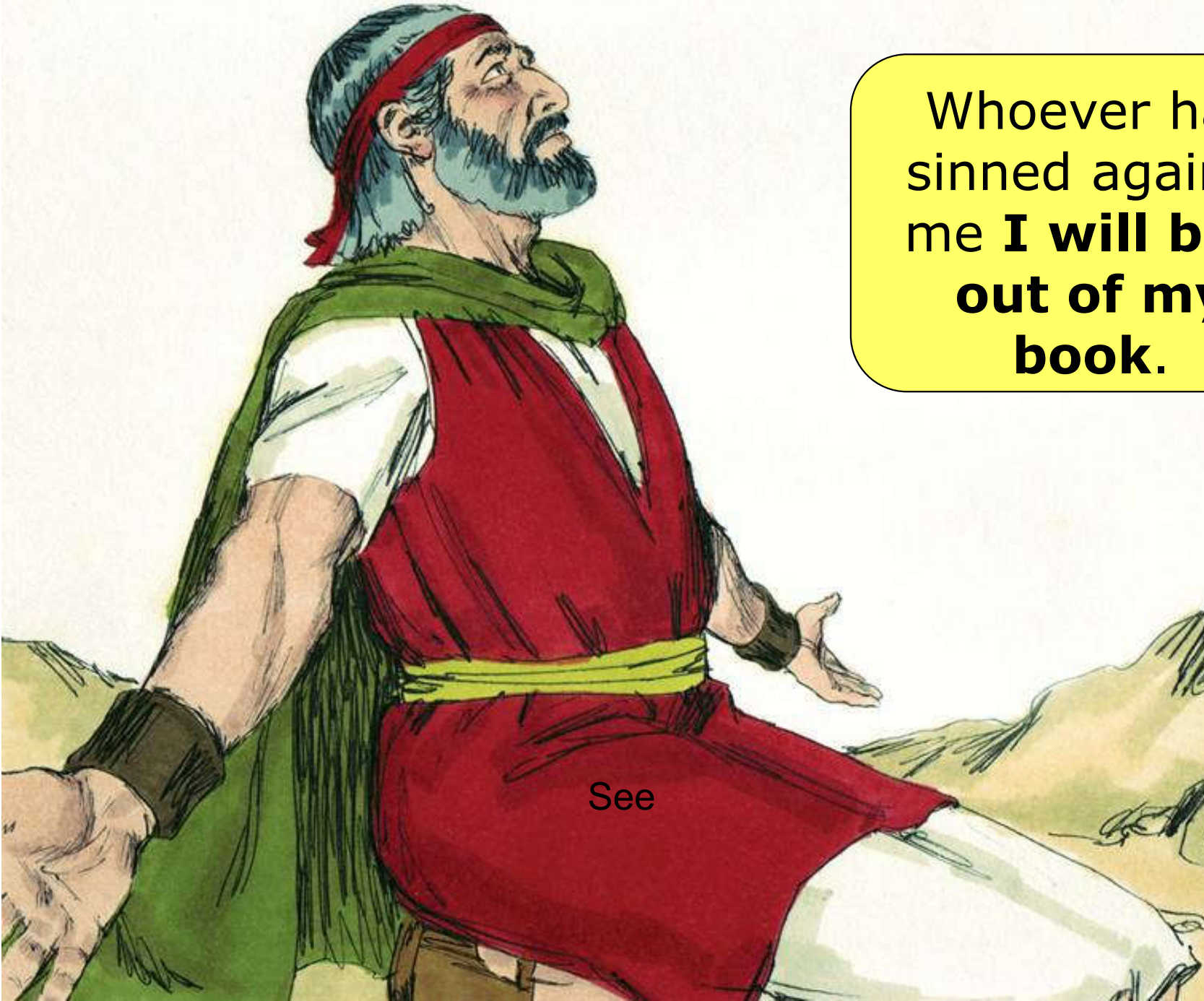
Moses requests that his name be removed from the book of life if Israel is not forgiven (Ex 32:32).

But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then **blot me out of the book you have written.**

See



- ❑ But God tells Moses that he only removes the names of those who sin against him from his book (Ex 32:33)



Whoever has  
sinned against  
me **I will blot  
out of my  
book.**

See



# NAMES BLOTTED OUT

- ❑ Again Calvinists try make these hypothetical warnings - but if there were no possibility of our names being removed from the Book of Life, why bother to warn us?
- ❑ Does anyone suggest that the following verse means we never sinned? No, rather we sinned - and they were removed.
  - Acts 3:19 (ESV) Repent therefore, and turn back, that **your sins may be blotted out...**
- ❑ Likewise to be blotted out of the Book of Life, your name must have been there in the first place and subsequently removed.
  - Ps 69:28 May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous.

# NAMES BLOTTED OUT

- ❑ But if we remain faithful to God and are overcomers, Jesus has promised overcomers, "He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life..." (Rev 3:5)
- ❑ Those who teach Eternal Security battle with these verses and their take on Revelation 3:5 is that since all who are truly saved are overcomers, this is actually a promise that no name can be blotted out. Charles Stanley writes, "The good news is, God's pencil has no eraser". <sup>1</sup>
- ❑ But for Jesus to make such a promise implies that the possibility exists of having your name blotted. J. William Fuller comments, "A command that everyone keeps is superfluous and a reward that everyone receives for a virtue that everyone has is nonsense". <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eternal Security: Can You Be Sure?

<sup>2</sup> "I Will Not Erase His Name" p. 299

# NAMES BLOTTED OUT

- ❑ Robert L. Thomas writes, "The promise to the overcomer is an empty one unless the possibility exists that such blotting out could occur. What incentive is furnished by being promised deliverance from something that could not happen?" <sup>1</sup>
- ❑ And Howard Marshall writes, "The possibility of failure to endure is mentioned. Christians who fail to persevere will come under judgment and their names will be blotted out of the book of life. **There is no reason to suppose that these warnings are purely hypothetical, directed against non-existent dangers;** the reverse is the case. Moreover, the reference to the book of life indicates that John is addressing his warning to believers". <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 1-7 (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1992), 261, p. 182

<sup>2</sup> Kept by the Power of God, p. 175

# MEANINGLESS WARNINGS?



ARE BIBLE WARNINGS  
LIKE THIS...



# MEANINGFUL WARNINGS?



... OR THIS?

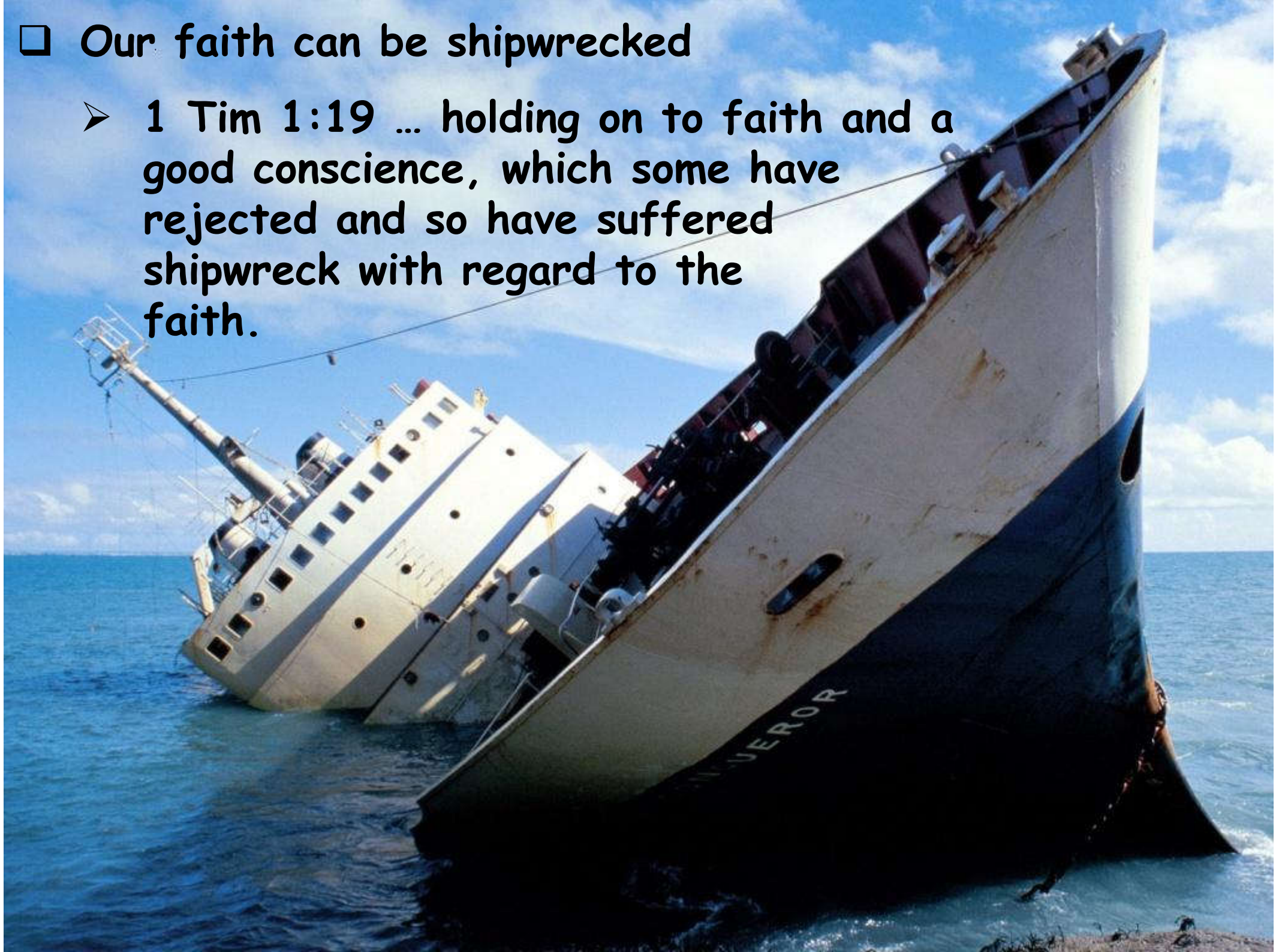
# MEANINGLESS WARNINGS?

- ❑ To those who distort the word of God it is said:
  - Rev 22:19 (NKJV) and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life...
- ❑ The KJV and NKJV use the Textus Receptus rendering of "book of life" (based here on the Vulgate) - most Greek manuscripts render it "tree of life". Either rendering (Tree of Life or Book of Life) indicates a former position of salvation being lost - only those who are saved have their names in the Book of Life and will eat of the Tree of Life.
- ❑ And so John Wesley taught that "if any who are saved make shipwreck of the faith, God will blot them out of his book, although they were written therein from before the foundation of the world "



❑ Our faith can be shipwrecked

- 1 Tim 1:19 ... holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith.



# CHEAP GRACE

- ❑ The US A/G website lists some concerns regarding those who teach unconditional security in salvation:
  - Although the Assemblies of God adheres basically to the Arminian position on the spiritual security of the believer, there are extremes and potential abuses which must be avoided. The Christian life is not a roller coaster of Sunday salvation and Monday through Saturday backsliding. On the other hand, no Christian, no matter how spiritual, can claim perfection and sinlessness (1 John 1:8-10; 2:1). Therefore as Christians we must continually come to God sincerely asking His forgiveness for living below the potential He makes possible through the gift of His Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/topics/gendoct\\_09\\_security.cfm](http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/topics/gendoct_09_security.cfm)



# CHEAP GRACE

- ❑ They further note the link between the belief in Eternal Security and what is called “cheap grace”.
- The truth of God’s marvellous and free grace has sadly led some to imagine and indulge in a **cheap grace**, a grace that covers all sins with no need to live a holy life. Such an attitude is an insult to the great price Christ paid to purchase our salvation. Though we may fail and fall, and sometimes sin, the heart of the true believer always regrets, repents, asks forgiveness, and seeks never to sin that way again. To carelessly participate in sin, expecting to gain forgiveness later, is itself an act of backsliding that **will lead ultimately to losing one’s salvation**. We therefore reject any “once saved, always saved” doctrine that excuses sinful lifestyles. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid

# CAN SALVATION BE LOST?

- ❑ Ezekiel issues a clear warning that a righteous man can lose his position of security.
- Ezek 18:24 ESV But when a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice and does the same abominations that the wicked person does, shall he live? None of the righteous deeds that he has done shall be remembered; for the treachery of which he is guilty and the sin he has committed, for them he shall die.
- Ezek 33:12 "...If someone who is righteous disobeys, that person's former righteousness will count for nothing...The righteous person who sins will not be allowed to live even though they were formerly righteous."

# CAN SALVATION BE LOST?

- ❑ Paul warns us not to be over-confident of our position before the Lord.
  - 1 Cor 10:12 (ESV) Therefore let anyone who **thinks that he stands** take heed **lest he fall**.
- ❑ Jeremiah issued a similar warning.
  - Jer 17:5 ESV Thus says the Lord: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, **whose heart turns away from the Lord.**"
- ❑ Paul mentions that even he could be disqualified, if he were no longer vigilant.
  - 1 Cor 9:27 ESV But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

# ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

- ❑ The Bible teaches that we can have assurance of salvation through the Holy Spirit:
  - 1 John 3:24 ... And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.
- ❑ Just like an owner of animals puts a brand or seal on the animal to show that it belongs to him, so God has used his Holy Spirit as a seal of ownership on us:
  - Eph 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.





# ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

- Gal 3:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."
- Rom 8:15-16 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.



# ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

- ❑ When you put down a deposit it shows that you are committed to seeing the deal through.
- Eph 1:13-14 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.



# ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

- ❑ If Satan tells you that you are not saved, you can contradict him on the authority of God's Word:
  - Rom 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, **YOU WILL BE SAVED.**
  - Rom 10:13 for, "EVERYONE who calls on the name of the Lord **WILL BE SAVED.**"
  - John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him **SHALL NOT PERISH** but have eternal life.
- ❑ The promises were made by someone who cannot lie:
  - Titus 1:2 a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised...

# ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

❑ What can keep separate us from God's love?

➤ Rom 8:38-39 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any

powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.





# ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

- ❑ Dr. Robert A. J. Gagnon writes, "The oft-cited Rom 8:35-39 listing all the things that 'will not separate us from the love of Christ' or 'the love of God in Christ' **speaks only of things external to ourselves**: persecution, a deprivation of material goods, angels and other spiritual powers, death. The remark 'nor any other creation [or: created thing]' (8:39) appears to refer primarily to the material structures of non-human creation or at least created things external to one's own self (compare 8:18-23, which distinguishes 'creation' from the sons or children of God). The lists do not include 'a life lived under the control of sin operating in human members' and for good reason: Paul has already stated clearly that such a life leads to death (6:16, 21; 8:12-14)." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://evangelicalarminians.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Gagnon.-Homosexual-Practice-and-Salvation.pdf>

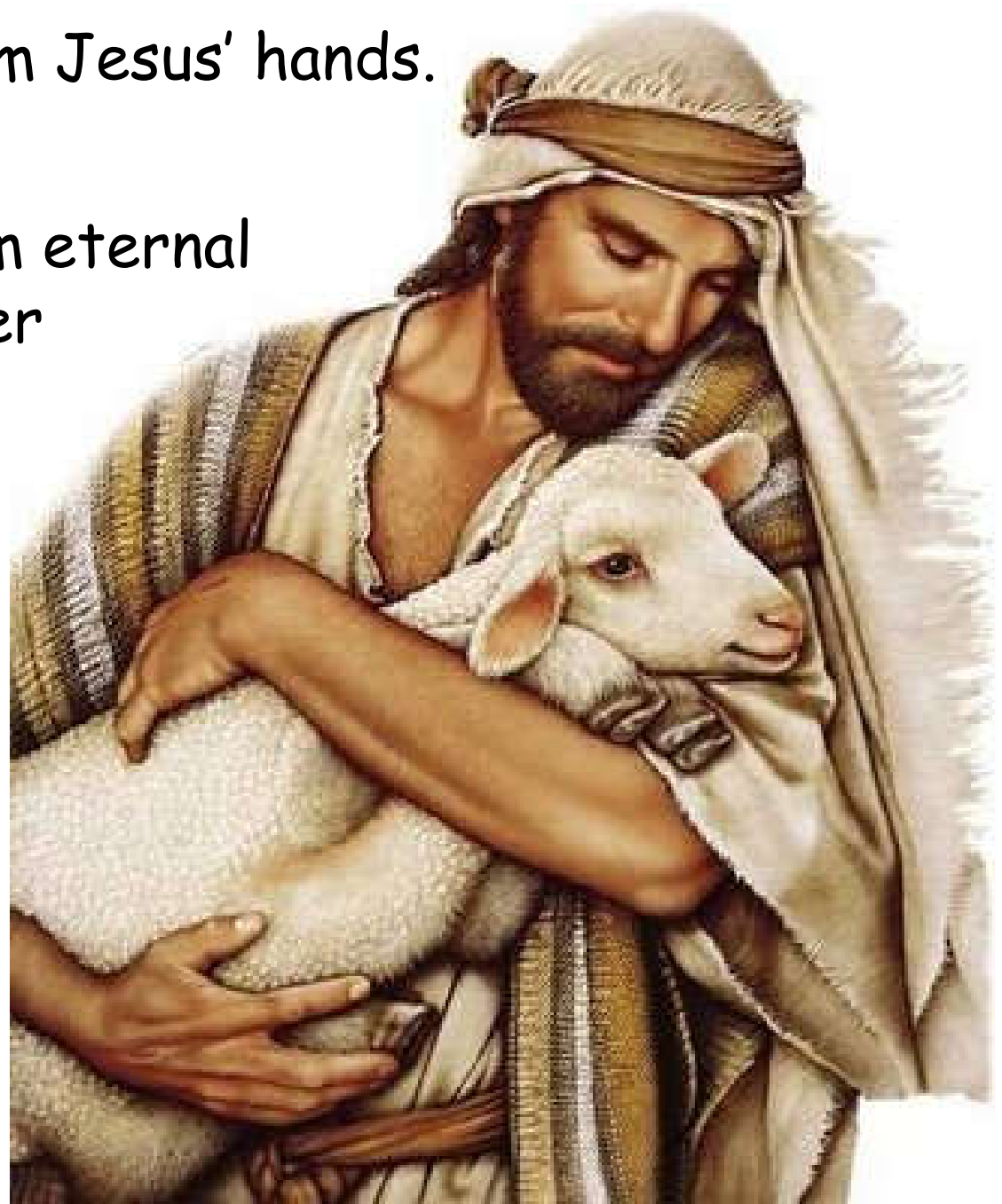
# ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

❑ No one can snatch you from Jesus' hands.  
Jesus said of his sheep:

➤ John 10:28 "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand."

❑ The only one who can take you away from Jesus is you - through your own free will.

❑ We can be secure in our salvation, if we remain safe in Jesus' hands.



# HOW TO BE SECURE

- ❑ We need to remain in Jesus:
  - “I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in Him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. **If anyone does not remain in Me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.**”(John 15:5-6)
- ❑ But note that the branch that is thrown away was originally in the vine.



# HOW TO BE SECURE

- ❑ Some claim that Jesus is referring to the Pharisees or Judas. But in context Jesus is addressing his disciples. In v5 when he says "If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing" everyone believes that he is addressing believers.
- ❑ Therefore v6 is addressing believers as well "If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned".
- ❑ To say this teaches anything else than that believers can be cut off if they do not remain in Christ is to ignore the context. Jesus is speaking to believers and not Judas either as he had already left the Last Supper in John 13:31.



# HOW TO BE SECURE

- ❑ We need to maintain our faith until the end.
  - Heb 10:39 (ESV) But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.
  - Heb 3:14 We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.
  - 1 Cor 15:1-2 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.
  - Heb 3:6 But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.

# HOW TO BE SECURE

- ❑ Peter tells us how to make our calling and election sure (i.e. it is conditional)
- 2 Pet 1:5-11 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ ... Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to **make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

# HOW TO BE SECURE

- ❑ Jude tells us how to keep ourselves in God's love.
  - Jude 20-21 But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.
- ❑ He assures us that God is able to keep the faithful from falling.
  - Jude 24-25 To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord...

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