

# Westminster Larger Catechism

## *Question 79*

Halifax, 3 May 2009

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

**A.** True believers, by reason of the unchangeable love of God, and His decree and covenant to give them perseverance, their inseparable union with Christ, his continual intercession for them, and the Spirit and seed of God abiding in them, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

### **Introduction:**

What rich blessings we have through Jesus Christ!

- For ten weeks we have been looking at the blessed communion we have with Him in the covenant of grace...
  - We have seen that through Him we have:
    - justification, even the complete forgiveness of our sins and the imputation of His righteousness...
    - adoption, by which we are received into the number of the children of God and have all the benefits of sonship including an everlasting inheritance...
    - sanctification, by which we are given a new heart that produces in us a new life more and more in conformity with God's image—we are being transformed into those who love and live and worship as Jesus did.
- These are all excellent benefits we have in Jesus Christ by grace...
  - We have seen that justification and adoption are acts of God that are already completed rather than works of God that are still underway...
    - But sanctification, while having a definitive starting point, is a work in progress that will not be complete until we die.
  - And because this is so, Q. 79 presents an important question...
    - As we are not yet perfectly holy and have many imperfections remaining, might it not be possible for us to fall away from the state of grace?
    - In other words,
      - Is it possible for us to start out in Christ and in the state of grace, but to fall out of God's favour before we finish our course?

- For our Scripture reading, I have selected a passage that illustrates how the LORD kept Peter from falling completely away when he denied Him...
  - Look with me at Luke 22:28-62.
    - READ> Luke 22:28-62
- Peter was a man who had been saved by grace.
  - He knew himself to be a sinner and he knew that Christ was the only Saviour, and he had trusted in Him.
    - Jesus says that he is one to whom He had bestowed a kingdom who would eat and drink at His table (be provided for by Him).
  - However, on the night of His betrayal, Jesus also told Peter that he was going to deny Him three times.
    - And so it was that Peter did not receive grace to stand in the time of temptation when the servant girl began to ask him if he knew Jesus.
    - And you can see why.
      - Peter had become proud...
      - Jesus urged him to pray for God's grace before this temptation came,
        - but Peter felt more like sleeping—it was “no problem” he thought.
          - “I will never deny the Lord.”
    - God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.
      - So Peter fell.
      - Peter needed to fall because if he had not fallen, his pride and self trust would have continued.
- But Peter's fall was not unto destruction...it was not final or complete...it was only temporary.
  - Jesus told Peter that He had prayed for him—that his faith would not fail, and that prayer was answered.
  - Peter's faith was shaken terribly...his faith definitely wavered, but it did not fail. The seed of faith was still there.
    - At the bottom of everything, Peter remained a man of faith.
      - Faith was the foundation.
      - Though he denied Jesus in that moment of temptation, he still had no other place to go because Jesus had the words of eternal life.
        - Peter was still trusting in Him.
    - His faith did not utterly give way.

- There was an underlying grace that still sustained him and that kept his faith from being totally swallowed up.
  - Even though there was not enough grace to keep him from stumbling.

So you see that in Peter's case,

- he was able to continue in the grace of God (through faith).
- He did not fall **away** into unbelief or apostasy.

This is all well and good for Peter, but the question is:

- **Is this always the case?**
  - Do those who are effectually called **always** continue in God's grace or can they fall away so as to lose their salvation?
- There are other ways to put the question—
  - Can a person who is born again (spiritually) become spiritually dead again?
  - Or, to use the language of the catechism,
    - **May not true believers, by reason of their imperfections, and the many temptations and sins they are overtaken with, fall away from the state of grace?**
    - We have just seen from Peter's example that a believer may **not** receive the grace of God in a particular temptation or trial because of pride.
      - Every Christian can fall into particular sins and even very grievous sins.
        - Understand that that is not what I am asking...
      - The question has to do with whether a person who has been justified can no longer be justified (because they stop believing) and whether a person who is adopted can be kicked out of God's family (or renounce the family).
      - Can a person be saved and headed for heaven on one day and then lost again and headed for hell on the next day?

There are Christians—even evangelical Christians who look to the Bible for their rule of faith—on both sides of this question.

- In fact, there are three views—
  - There is the view called eternal security that is popular with many Baptists and community church evangelicals...
    - It teaches that once saved always saved...
      - but does not teach that we must continue to the end to be saved.

- There is the view called conditional salvation that is popular with Pentecostals and Wesleyans...
  - This view teaches that we must continue to the end or we will not be saved...
    - or more accurately, that we must be found in faith and repentance at the end if we would be saved...
    - but it does not teach that once a person is truly converted, he will continue to the end.
  
- And then there is the view which is called the perseverance of the saints that is taught in Reformed churches...
  - This view incorporates eternal security and the necessity to continue to the end together...
    - It incorporates all that the Bible teaches on this subject and is the one taught in the Larger Catechism.
    - That is, of course, the characteristic of reformed theology...
      - that rather than rationalising away something that the Scripture teaches, it accepts all that the Bible says and seeks to understand it systematically.

TRANS> So today I want us to look at each of these three views...

- at eternal security inasmuch as it is biblical...
- at conditional salvation inasmuch as it is biblical—
- and then at perseverance as it brings eternal security and conditional salvation together.

**I. We will begin with eternal security, the view of many evangelical community churches and Baptist churches, that “once saved always saved.”**

A. A very simple (and sound) argument is often used to defend this.

1. The Bible consistently teaches that when you believe on Christ, you are said to receive eternal life.
  - **John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”**
  - **1 John 5:12: “He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”**
  
2. How can this life be called “eternal” or “everlasting” if it only lasts for a while (until a person falls away?)
  - How can it be called eternal life if you can still die?
  - The opposing viewpoint has its various arguments,

- but they involve very forced interpretations
  - They would say that even though you have eternal life, you only have it as a promise that is confirmed if you continue to the end—like a person who gets a job and is promised a certain pay, but does not receive it until he finishes the week’s work.
  - But this does not take into account the fact that the person who believes is said to already have eternal life.
    - For example, in John 6:54, Jesus says:
      - **John 6:54** “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”
      - Eternal life is something the believer already possesses.

TRANS> A second common argument supportive of “once saved always saved” is this:

B. When we believe, we are placed in the Father’s hand...and the Bible says that no one can snatch us out.

1. This is taught in John 10:27-29:

- **John 10:27-29:** “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father’s hand.”

2. The feeble argument against this is that no one can take us out of His hand, but that we can take ourselves out—we are permitted to walk out.

- This argument crashes to the ground when it is realised that the only way a false teacher can take someone away from Christ is by leading that person away from Christ...
  - the snatching away is not done by physical removal, but by enticing words and deception to lead them away from the truth.
  - In other words, the only way to snatch someone out is by convincing him (persuading him) to leave—
    - and that is what Jesus says will not happen...
    - Since it is by nature impossible to take someone away from Christ without their consent, the promise means absolutely nothing if we can be taken out of His hand by deception or persuasion.

C. And sounder evangelicals will add to these arguments the fact that we are not saved by our own righteousness, but Christ’s...

1. Romans 5:9-10 says:

- **Rom 5:9-10:** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were

**reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**

2. You see here that we are not justified because of what we have done, but because of what Christ has done...
  - Once you have His righteousness credited to you and His payment for sin applied to you, you can no longer be charged with sin...
    - God will not require two payments for sin.
    - That is why it says we shall be saved from wrath through Him.
3. In Philippians 3, Paul said that on the day of judgement, he does not want to be found having his own righteousness by works...
  - but the righteousness which is from God through faith in Christ.
    - This is the only righteousness that can save, and if you have this righteousness, you cannot but have eternal life...
    - It is not yours, it is the righteousness of Christ credited to you...
      - It cannot fail to secure eternal salvation.

Such is the summary of the popular evangelical view “once saved always saved.”

For them the answer is “no” to the question, “Can a person who has been saved later fall away so as to lose his salvation?”

But now let’s see what the other side says...

## **II. The Holiness churches and the Pentecostal churches say “yes, a person can most definitely fall away and lose his salvation.”**

A. First, they would point to the many examples of those who fall away from the faith.

1. There are many Old Testament examples...here are a few...
  - a. First we may look at King Saul...
    - He is anointed as king and seems to serve well at first, but soon falls away.
      - He is said to be given the Spirit and to become another man...
    - But toward the end of his life, he visits a medium and receives this message from the prophet Samuel whom he calls up from the dead to ask advice.
      - In 1 Sam 28:16, it says:
        - **Then Samuel said: “Why then do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy?”**

- You see from this statement that the Lord who was once with Saul has now departed from him,
  - and not only departed, but is now his enemy!
  - He is not one who is reconciled to God!
  
- b. Second, there is the example of David
  - David, of course, fell into the sin of adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah his neighbour...
  - And then to cover up his deed, he ordered the commander of his army to place Uriah in the path of danger in such a way that he would die.
  - David fell into grievous sin, but then he repents and is restored again.
    - There is actually no indication that he ever lost his salvation, but he certainly did turn from God's way for a time...
      - and we find him pleading in Psalm 51 that the Lord would not take His Holy Spirit from him.
      - However, those who teach the conditional view teach that he did lose his salvation.
        - Ordinarily, they teach that a person can lose his salvation but then gain it back again.
  
- c. A third example would be that of Joash.
  - Joash is the young king who was saved by Jehoiada the priest when his wicked grandmother Athaliah sought to destroy the dynasty of David and set herself up as Queen...
  - In 2 Chron 23 we have the wonderful account of how Joash was saved and made king, and how he faithfully served the Lord until the death of Jehoiada the priest...
  - And then in 2 Chron 24 we are told how he devoted himself to idols and was rebuked by Jehoiada's son Zechariah who says (in verse 20,
    - "Because you have forsaken the Lord, He also has forsaken you."
    - But instead of repenting, the wicked Joash orders Zechariah to be stoned to death!
      - Sadly, Joash dies without repentance!

TRANS> These OT examples show persons turning away—but there are also New Testament examples...

2. Lets look at three New Testament examples:

- a. There is Judas who was even a disciple of Christ

- I am sure most of you know about Judas...
  - He was chosen to be a disciple of Christ and walked with him for three years—
  - He served as the treasurer and went about with the other disciples healing and preaching.
    - And then betrayed his master for 30 pieces of silver and killed himself!
  - Though some like to hope that he may have repented,
    - the Lord Jesus calls him the son of perdition and says it would have been better if he had not been born.
      - He is a clear example of one who fell away.
- b. Then there is the example of the incestuous man in 1 Corinthians 5.
  - This man had taken his father's wife and the apostle Paul rebukes the Corinthians for not putting him out of the church.
    - This man was to be treated as an unbeliever and so removed from the number of the saints of which he had once been a part.
  - Happily, in 2 Corinthians, we learn that this man has repented and we are told that he is to be restored to the church...
    - So here is an example, like David's, of a man who falls away and then is restored again.
- c. A third example would that of Simon Magnus of Samaria.
  - In Acts 8, we told that he heard Philip preach and believed (v 13)—and then was baptised...
  - However, when the apostles came to Samaria shortly thereafter, we are told that Simon attempts to purchase the power to bestow the gift of Holy Spirit as the apostles did...
    - and he is immediately cut off from the church by the apostles who say to him:
      - **Acts 8:20 But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! 21 You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. 22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23 For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."**
  - The annals of church history tell us that this man became an arch heretic in the church...he did not repent.



TRANS> So you see that there are many examples of those who fall away.

- This is the first argument that is used by those who teach conditional salvation.
- B. Secondly, in support of this view, warnings are given to believers about falling away.
1. In three of the four gospels, Jesus teaches the Parable of the Sower,
    - And in that parable, Jesus teaches about two sorts of persons who hear the word and receive it with gladness, but do not continue—
      - one because of persecution and trials...
      - the other because they are drawn away by the cares and pleasures of the world.
    - In each case, you have those who start out in the kingdom, but who do not persevere to the end and are lost.
  2. In Luke 21:34, He gives an express warning about falling away. He says:
    - **Lu 21:34: And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.**
  3. Then there are those many passages like Hebrews 3 where warnings are given to brothers in the church about departing from God and falling under his displeasure.
    - **Hebrews 3:10-15: “Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in *their* heart, and they have not known My ways.’ 11 So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ” 12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said: “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”**
- C. Thirdly, there is the argument that the Bible insists that we must continue if we would be saved.
1. First, that we must continue in faith to be saved
    - **Col 1:21-23: And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard...**
    - **Rom 11:19-22: You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.” Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural**

branches, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

- **1 Cor 15:1-2:** Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.
- **John 8:31:** Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.”

2. We must continue in love to be saved

- **Matthew 24:11-13:** “Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”
- **James 1:12:** Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

3. We must continue in obedience to be saved.

- **Mark 13:13,** “And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”
- **Rev 2:10:** “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”
- **Heb 10:35-36:** Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

TRANS> This particular side of the discussion makes it very clear that if a person is to be saved, he must indeed continue in faith, love, and obedience.

- And it makes it clear that if a person does not continue in these, that person will be cut off.
- But this seems to contradict the biblical proof that the popular evangelical side presented which says “once saved always saved.”
  - Are we left to just choose the side we like best?
  - No, as with the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of election,
    - there is a way to bring both sides together.

The biblical doctrine of perseverance of the saints teaches that both “once saved always saved,” is true as well as the idea that only those who continue (or persevere) to the end will be saved.

- How can both be true at the same time?
  - In this—that those who truly are saved will persevere to the end—they will continue in faith, love, and obedience.
  - The others, though they are addressed as brethren, were never truly regenerate, they never had true saving faith, and that is why they fell away.
  - So we see that the popular evangelical view fails in believing that it is possible for a person to believe at some point and then to fall away from Lord, yet still be saved.
    - He is out riding with the hells angels, but he prayed the sinner’s prayer when he was five, so he must be saved because “once saved always saved.”
    - And the Wesleyan and Pentecostal view fails because it teaches that someone who truly believed may lose his salvation.
    - So what the Bible teaches is that a person who is truly born again will persevere to the end—
      - his faith will not fail, but he will continue in the grace of God.
      - Indeed, it is necessary to continue to the end to be saved, but all who truly start will continue.

### III. Let’s look further at the biblical view

A. First of all, the biblical view is based on the fact that the reason we persevere is because God keeps us in the faith.

1. Peter says this in his first epistle...

- **1 Peter 1:3-5: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**
  - Notice that he does not merely say that God has a place reserved for us in heaven...
    - He also says that God *keeps us*...
      - that we are *kept by the power of God through faith*...
      - Our faith does not fail even as Peter’s did not fail because the Lord Himself keeps us by His own power.

2. You can be sure of this because he has promised to do this:

a. This promise is clearly expressed in Jeremiah 32.

- In my opinion, if you were allowed only one proof text for this doctrine of perseverance, this would be the one.
  - Listen to what it says—
    - **Jer 32:38-40: “They shall be My people, and I will be their God; then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.”**
  - God promises here that He will keep us so that we will not depart from Him.
    - The only objection that someone might make is that He is speaking of preserving His people as a people and not of the individual...
      - but this objection fails because He says that He will put His fear in their hearts so they will not depart.
        - The way He keeps the whole is by keeping individual hearts.
3. And when we see what God promises about election, it becomes even more clear...
- Romans 8:29-30 tells us that He has chosen to us—not just to be saved, but to be conformed to the image of His Son...
    - **Rom 8:29-30: For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**
- b. The fact of election is that He has not simply chosen us to be saved for a time, but to obtain eternal salvation.
- **Acts 13:48 Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.**
    - God’s election is unto eternal life, not just a relationship with Him for a time.
  - Jesus also declares this plainly in John 6:37-40:
    - **“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the**

**Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”**

- They will come, and once they come, they will never be rejected.
- c. The apostles rely on the promise of Christ to keep those He has chosen to the end.
- Here are some examples...
    - To the Corinthians:
      - **1 Cor 1:4-8: I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, [that you may be] blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
    - To the Philippians:
      - **Phil 1:6: being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;**
      - He is confident because of God’s promise.
- d. You can be sure then, that when you see people turn away from the Lord and apostatise, when they do not abide in Christ, etc, it is because they were never true believers.
- John wants to make sure that this is understood so that those who belong to Christ will not be shaken. So he stresses that those who apostatised were never truly in the faith.
    - **1 John 2:19: They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.**
    - He goes out of his way to the point of redundancy to make sure it is clear that those who depart were never truly saved.
- B. The biblical view is easier to understand when we recognise the way God’s covenant works.
1. God established His covenant with those who were circumcised in the OT and with those who are baptised in the NT.
    - In this covenant, God promises to be the God of sinners and to make them His people.
    - For this to happen, the individual must meet all the demands of God’s law.

- The only way this can be done is by faith in the promises of God to reconcile us through the blood of Jesus Christ, and to change our hearts to serve Him.
2. There are two kinds of people who are in this covenant of grace (who are baptised or circumcised)...
- Covenant keepers and covenant breakers.
    - The covenant keepers believe the promises and walk in obedient faith...
    - The covenant breakers do not believe the promise about Christ.
    - Both are in the covenant, but the covenant keepers are blessed and covenant breakers are cursed. The covenant keepers continue but the covenant breakers will be cut off.
  - The promises are given to both, but only those with true faith receive them.
    - This is why in Romans 1:25-2:4, it says:
      - **25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God. 2:1 What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged."**
      - They had the word of God—
        - His promises, His law, His care and preservation of His people as a whole—
        - they are part of that society of people who are set apart to Him in the world.
        - But they do not benefit because of their unbelief.
3. When you understand this, then you can understand why people apostatise.
- a. They do not apostatise from true faith, from the new birth, from election to salvation;
    - but they apostatise from the covenant.

- They were once truly a part of the people of God, walking in their company and even partaking of the Holy Spirit, but they were like dead branches on the tree because there was no faith present.

b. There are many passages that speak this way...

- 1 Cor 10 speaks of those who drank of the rock which was Christ and then perished.
- 2 Peter 2 speaks of those who deny the Lord that bought them, and who were enlightened and escaped the pollutions of the world and then fell away.
- Heb 6 speaks of
  - “those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come”...
  - And it says, “if they fall away, [it is impossible] to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.”
  - And then this illustration is used of such covenant people:
    - **Heb 6:7-8 For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briars, *it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.***
    - Such persons are like the dead branches in John 15 and Romans 11. They are attached to Christ, but not by true faith and so there is no fruit.

c. These persons are in the covenant,

- they have made a profession and are part of the people of God...
- they are called brethren, and when they are disciplined, they are said to be cut off.
- They are attached to Christ by the covenant, but not in a saving way...
  - To them are the curses rather than the blessings of the covenant.

C. The biblical view of perseverance makes warnings to be very useful and necessary for a believer.

1. Let me illustrate by analogy...

- It was necessary for you to hear the gospel to be saved, even though God had elected you before the foundation of the world—

- It was necessary for you to hear and to believe, and it was appointed by God that you would hear and believe.
  - If you hadn't, you could not be saved...
  - There was a real transaction that took place in your soul.
  
- 2. And so it is that without warnings, you would not persevere.
  - It is necessary when you are tempted and even go astray that you hear God's warnings about falling away.
    - It is very true that if you do not continue, you will be cut off!
      - But if you are elect, you will hear the warning and you will heed it!
    - You will do as David did when Nathan came to him.
      - The warning will be effectual to call you back just as the gospel was effectual to call you in in the first place.
      - You see it is true that only those who persevere to the end will be saved, and it is true that all those who truly believe will persevere!