

THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

by

Charles M. Horne

Chapter 6 of *Salvation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971)

Perseverance does not mean that everyone who professes faith in Christ and who is accepted into a church is thereby secure for eternity. Many who profess to have salvation do not possess it. Neither does it mean that it is impossible for a Christian to backslide, that is, to move in a direction of disobedience to God for a time (cf. Lk 22:31-34).

Apostasy (falling away) does not denote a loss of salvation. Instead, it is a deliberate, decisive rejection of the gospel on the part of one who has known it but never committed himself to the Christ of whom it witnesses (2 Pe 2:20-21; note the comments on Heb 6, pp. 95-97 of this bk.).

Professing Christians may come into such close contact with the supernatural forces of the gospel that they continue for some time to be scarcely distinguishable in their manner of life from those who are actual possessors of Christ's life. However, testing eventually proves their faith to be temporary (cf. Mk 4:2-9).

Perseverance is a much more adequate term than *eternal security* to describe the scriptural concept intended here. "It is utterly wrong to say that a believer is secure quite irrespective of his subsequent life of sin and unfaithfulness. The truth is that the faith of Jesus Christ is *always* *respective* of the life of holiness and fidelity."¹

Some prefer the term *preservation*, believing that it best indicates that it is God alone who carries out the saving purpose of His electing love.² Perhaps it would be well to utilize both terms for a more adequate definition of the concept.

The synthesis of the preservation of God and the perseverance of the saints is well expressed by Peter: "Who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pe 1:5, ASV). Note especially the following three things in this text.

1 John Murray, *Redemption: Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), p. 154.

2 Herman Kuiper, *By Grace Alone: A Study in Soteriology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), p. 138.

1. Believers are *kept*. The term which Peter uses is a military one. It means that our life is garrisoned by God, that He stands over us all our days.

2. Believers are kept *through* faith. The final preservation of believers is never divorced from the use of means.

The Scriptural truth of final preservation is not the doctrine that a man who has truly believed is secure of ultimate salvation without any regard to his behaviour; but, on the contrary, it is the doctrine that God secures the ultimate salvation of every true believer by effecting, through the power of the Holy Spirit, his free persistence in Christian faith and obedience to the very end.³

3. Believers are kept *unto* salvation. This undoubtedly refers to the final consummation, the salvation to be revealed in the last time (Ro 13:11; Heb 1:14; 9:28).

THREE HISTORICAL VIEWS REGARDING PERSEVERANCE

Remonstrants

The Remonstrants--followers of Jacob Arminius and led by Bischoff and Grotius--presented to Holland and Friesland in 1610 a series of articles known as the Remonstrance. Among these articles was one which taught that true believers could and often did fall away, completely and finally, from saving faith. The heart of their opposition was found in their idea of freedom and the *tension* that this freedom would inevitably bring. It was objected that if believers are confident that their election is inalienable they would then lack in a sense of responsibility and of the seriousness of sin. The fact of the matter is that the Reformed position does not deny that believers offer resistance to God and that this results in loss for them, but it does deny that this resistance can be total and final.

Rome

According to Catholic doctrine, grace can be lost. The sacraments communicate many graces but they do not establish a will that is irrevocably turned to God. Rome maintains that both Scripture and experience teach that in the midst of the Christian's warfare there is always the possibility of radical and total apostasy; saving grace

³ Ernest F. Kevan, *Salvation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1963), p. 96.

can be lost. Penance is the sacrament Christ instituted primarily in connection with lapses from grace.

As one studies the position of the Remonstrants and Rome, he soon discovers that it is synergism which is at the heart of the opposition to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. (The term *synergism* means literally "working together"; the thought here is that in the work of individual salvation both man and God cooperate.)⁴

Lutherans

The controversy with the Lutherans was quite different from that with the Roman Catholics. Later, however, when synergism became an increasing part of Lutheran theology, the points of similarity greatly increased. Initially Lutherans rejected the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints but they did not deny the assurance of salvation. In the case of the Remonstrants and Rome, both of these concepts were rejected.

Lutherans accused the Reformed position of developing the concept of perseverance and assurance a priori from election, of proceeding logically from the unchangeable decree of election to the inalienability of persevering grace. As Professor Berkouwer well states, this charge was not correct. "We can be all the more thankful to be able to establish that in the doctrine of the Reformed churches the assurance of salvation is not at all connected with or founded on abstract information about God's election. . . . They did not wish to deviate from Calvin's thought of Christ as the 'mirror of election.'"⁵

Gerhard maintains, with other Lutherans, that one must differentiate between *total* and *final* falling. (Cf. Eze 18:24). He exegetes 1 John 2:19 as teaching that the elect can fall totally for a time, but never *finally*. In this way he both affirmed the assurance of salvation and opposed the Reformed confession of perseverance.⁶

BIBLICAL SUPPORT

(This list of texts is selective, not exhaustive.)

4 See Everett F. Harrison, ed., *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), p. 510.

5 G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Perseverance*, Studies in Dogmatics, vol. 6. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), p. 60.

6 Ibid., pp. 68 ff.

John 6:39-40

This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He gave Me I shall lose nothing but shall raise it up at the last day. For this is My Father's will, that every one who sees the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I shall raise him up at the last day (Jn 6:39-40, New Berkeley).

The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is taught here in unmistakable terms. Christ Himself teaches us that the elect (those given by the Father to the Son, v. 37) will be kept (guarded) to the very end. "In the Divine decree all is fixed beyond the possibility of man's will to change. God has a will for men in the mission of His Son, and the Son has come to execute it; and whatever opposition the execution of it may meet with, all is definite and certain. There is nothing haphazard in this work. God has entrusted it to One who will lose nothing of it, but who will raise it all up at the last day."⁷

John 10:27-30

My sheep listen to My call; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who gave them to Me, is greater than all and no one can wrest them out of My Father's hand. I and the Father are One (Jn 10:27-30, New Berkeley).

Three statements in this passage emphasize perseverance.

1. Christ has made certain ones His sheep by giving them *eternal life* (cf. 3:16; 10:10). This new life differs qualitatively from that which characterizes the present age, and quantitatively in that it will never end.
2. Christ states that such will *never perish*. They shall never enter again into a state of condemnation, the condition of being banished forever from the presence of God. The Greek text contains the emphatic double negative here!
3. He asserts that no one shall snatch them out of either His hand or His Father's. "The greatness of the Father, not of the flock, is

⁷ George Reith, *The Gospel According to John*, Handbooks for Bible Classes and Private Students, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1889), p. 105.

the ground of the safety of the flock."⁸ Paul puts the same truth more lyrically in Romans 8:38-39.

John 17:11; cf. 11:42

Holy Father, preserve in Thy name those whom Thou hast given Me, so that they may be one as We are (Jn 17:11, New Berkeley).

I know that Thou dost always hear me (Jn 11:42, New Berkeley).

Our great High Priest prays that the Father *stand guard* over those whom He has given Him, that they be not overcome of the evil one or evil (17:15). The oneness for which He prays is not that of external ecclesiastical merger nor of ontological (essential) oneness with the triune God; rather, it is an inner spiritual oneness of purpose to stand over against the world in an effort to redemptively reach it.

1 John 3:9

No one who is born of God makes a practice of sinning, because the God-given life principle continues to live in him, and so he cannot practice sinning, because he is born of God (1 Jn 3:9, Williams).

The expression "because His seed abides in him" (NASB) is variously interpreted. Some would suggest that "His seed" is a collective noun for the children of God; thus, "for the offspring of God abide in Him" (RSV, marg.). Others would hold, and this seems more probable, that "His seed" means "God's nature" (RSV) or "the divine seed" (NEB) and that "in him" refers to the child of God. If this latter sense is accepted, the implication would then be that the new nature received at the new birth remains and exerts a strong internal pressure toward holiness.

The analogy of birth is also significant in respect to perseverance. The same principle applies in the spiritual world as in the natural. A son may fight and rebel against his father; but however unfilial his behavior may be, his conduct never makes him someone less than a son.

⁸ A. T. Robertson, *The Fourth Gospel--The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Word Pictures in the New Testament, vol. 5 (New York: Harper, 1932), p. 186.

1 John 5:18

We know that no one who is born of God makes a practice of sinning, but the Son who was born of God continues to keep him, and the evil one cannot touch him (1 Jn 5:18, Williams).

The King James Version reads, "He that is begotten of God keeps himself." The preferred reading, however, renders the phrase "He who was born of God keeps him" (NASB, RSV). In this latter translation the subject of the verb (viz., "He that is begotten of God") is Christ, not the Christian. The truth then is not that the Christian keeps himself but rather that Christ keeps him. It is only as the Son "keeps" the Christian that the Christian can hope to "keep" God's commandments (3:24; 5:3).

Philippians 1:6

I am certain of this very thing, that He who began the good work in you will go on until the day of Jesus Christ to complete it (Phil 1:6, Williams).

In connection with our earlier discussion of the meaning of the biblical concept of perseverance, it is helpful to note the context of this reference. The preceding verse speaks of *human perseverance*--"Your partnership in the gospel" (v. 5, KJV). This text (v. 6) speaks of *divine preservation*--"He who began the good work in you will go on until the day of Jesus Christ to complete it." A discussion of this matter which does not fully recognize both of these elements is unscriptural.

Paul teaches us that our persevering is ultimately dependent on His persevering grace! "So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure" (1:12-13, ASV).

1 Peter 5:10

And after you have suffered for a little, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you (1 Pe 5:10, NASB).

Four important truths are put forth in this text. First, our divine calling is *in* Christ. Next, this call is from the God of grace--literally, "of every grace."

Third, this call is *unto* His eternal glory, and to that end Christ Himself will "perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish" us. God can be counted on to complete His saving work. *Perfect* means "restore." (This word is used of mending nets in Mk 1:19. Cf. also 2 Ti 3:17, RSV; Lk 6:40.) *Confirm* can be translated "make steadfast." (This was the kind of ministry to which our Lord called Peter, Lk 22:32.) *Strengthen* could also be "equip for active service." (This is the only place in the New Testament where this word occurs.) *Establish*--this word is omitted in some ancient manuscripts.

And, fourth, this call will find its fulfillment *after* believers have suffered a little while.

BASIC PROBLEMS

Biblical Warnings

If we are to take seriously those many passages which warn against apostasy, must we not acknowledge the possibility of a real falling away from faith?

Those who oppose the doctrine of perseverance call to our attention the many "if" passages of the Bible. Note just a few of these:

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered" (Jn 15:6, ASV).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (Jn 15:14, ASV).

"If so be that ye continue in the faith . . ." (Col 1:23, ASV).

"For we are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginnings of our confidence firm unto the end" (Heb 3:14, ASV).

In addition to those passages which speak conditionally, we have a number which explicitly warn against apostasy as a real threat and which also indicate the reality of very serious lapses. Warnings against apostasy are especially frequent in the epistle to the Hebrews (3:12-13; 12:25; etc.). Actual cases of apostasy would include David, Solomon, Hymeneus, Alexander, Philetus, and Demas.

Paul speaks in his epistles to Timothy of "some [who] . . . have made shipwreck of their faith" (1 Ti 1:19, Williams) or who have "gone astray from the truth" (2 Ti 2:18, New Berkeley). These and other passages such as Hebrews 6:4-8 and 2 Peter 2:1 would seem so forceful that it might be argued the doctrine of perseverance is hopelessly doomed to wreck itself on them.

In attempting to answer this line of argument, it must be pointed out that the many passages which speak of conditionality and apostasy (feared and actual) do not exhaust the entire biblical description of the relation between God's grace and faith. We must relate these statements to the *total* context of Scripture. Berkouwer states, "The opponents of the doctrine of perseverance knew these passages, of course; but they always stress that the 'if,' the conditional, must always be understood in the text, even though it is not found there in so many words. Further, such 'unconditional' texts, they said, had to be understood within 'the entire' conditional context of the Scriptures."⁹ One cannot help but ask at this point on what basis it is to be concluded that unconditional passages are to be interpreted in the light of conditional and not vice versa. One suspects that dogmatic rather than strictly exegetical considerations determine the matter.

Berkouwer continues,

It is apparent, however, that the expedient forced the opponents of perseverance into a standpoint which badly damaged the sovereignty of grace. If anything is certain, it is this, that according to the Scriptures God's grace does not stop short at the limits of human freedom of choice. Whoever claims this is bound to see faith and grace as two mutually exclusive and mutually limiting elements in salvation, and he is bound to emerge with a doctrine of grace that is synergistic in principle.¹⁰

If we properly understand the biblical relationship of faith to grace, then we will realize that our persevering cannot be a factor independent of God's preserving us. God's grace insures our persevering--but this does not make it any less *our* persevering. It is noteworthy that when Jude exhorts us to keep ourselves in the love of God (v. 21), he concludes with a doxology for Him who is able to keep us from falling and who will present us without blemish before the presence of His glory (v. 24). The warning passages are *means* which God uses in our life to accomplish His purpose in grace. "The profundity of the doctrine of perseverance must be sought precisely

⁹ Berkouwer, p. 90.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 90-91.

in the fact that admonition is included in it and that at the same time, through faith, perseverance is confessed as a gift."¹¹

One of the most difficult passages in the area of perseverance is Hebrews 6. There are three major views which may be noted. First, there is the *saved-lost theory*, which argues that a true believer can be lost through deliberate apostasy.¹² It should be carefully noted, however, that this passage indicates the impossibility of repentance following such apostasy. (Other passages which might be understood to support this theory would include: Mt 24:13; Mk 3:29; Lk 9:62; Heb 10:26; 1 Jn 5:16.)

Second, there is the *hypothetical theory*, which maintains that the writer is dealing with suppositions and not with fact, in order that he may correct wrong ideas.¹³ Although much may be said in support of this view, it does seem to unduly minimize the impact of the warning.

Third, there is the *non-Christian theory*, which holds that there is no indication of saving faith in the hearts of the persons being described.¹⁴ The experiences mentioned describe how exceedingly close it is possible to come to being a Christian without truly being one. Specifically the arguments for this view in respect to the wording of the text are the following ones.

1. "They were enlightened" (v. 4a). Those described here have been decisively confronted with the light of the gospel. To reject it meant that life could never be the same again. It is possible that the verb translated "enlightened" could refer to baptism.¹⁵

2. "They had tasted the heavenly gift" (v. 4b). Not only have they been confronted with the light of the gospel; they have also in a measure understood and relished the revelation of God's mercy. Perhaps as enlightenment may suggest baptism, so the tasting (experiencing) of the heavenly gift may suggest the Eucharist. Obviously it is possible for people who have experienced both of the sacraments to commit apostasy.

3. "They had become partakers of the Holy Spirit" (v. 4c). To "partake of the Holy Spirit" is to be a sharer of His gifts or influences. The point here seems to be that not only had those

¹¹Ibid., p. 111.

¹²Charles W. Carter, ed., *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), pp. 83 ff.

¹³W. H. Griffith Thomas, *Hebrews: A Devotional Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), p. 74.

¹⁴F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), pp. 118 ff.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 120.

described been baptized and received the Eucharist, they had also experienced the laying on of hands.

Early apostolic history has a record of one outstanding character who believed when he heard the gospel, was baptized, attached himself to the evangelist whose preaching had convinced him, and presumably received the Spirit when apostolic hands were laid upon him--yet Simon Magus was pronounced by Peter to be still "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:9ff., 18ff.), and showed himself in the following decades to be the most determined opponent of apostolic Christianity. If we ask in what sense a man like that could have partaken of the Holy Spirit, the words that follow here may point the way to an answer.¹⁶

4. "They had tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come" (v. 5). Those described here had partaken of the gifts or influences of the Spirit in connection with the proclamation of the gospel and the miraculous gifts by which this early beginning of Christianity was characterized. "Simon Magus realized how good the word of God was when he heard it from Philip's lips and he was amazed at the signs and great 'powers' that accompanied the proclamation and reception of the gospel."¹⁷ Even unregenerate men partook of such miraculous power (Mt. 7:22-23).

"The persons here described, then, were persons who not only enjoyed what has been termed the common influences of the Holy Spirit, but His miraculous gifts--who not only witnessed the effects of these gifts in others but were partakers of them themselves."¹⁸

This passage would thus appear to be teaching us that God will pardon all who truly repent but that Scripture and experience alike suggest that it is tragically possible for individuals to arrive at a state of heart and life where they can no longer repent.

FOR FURTHER READING

Glaze, R.E., Jr. *No Easy Salvation, A Careful Examination of the Question of Apostasy in Hebrews*. Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman, 1966.

Prayer and Perseverance

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 120-22.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ John Brown, *An Exposition of Hebrews* (London: Banner of Truth, 1961), p. 287.

The prayers of believers themselves. There is power in prayer; it elicits an answer (note Ja 5:16). James points to Elijah as an example of this power. The power, however, resides in God's mercy. "Prayer can have fire and power only if it comes eagerly to *Him* and looks for *everything* from Him in boundless confidence."¹⁹ Because of the power and efficacy of prayer it is not surprising that there is also a great emphasis on *perseverance* and *continuity* in prayer (1 Th 5:17; cf. Col 4:2). Whatever Paul precisely means by his instruction to "pray without ceasing," it was not antithetical to continuous labor (1 Co 15:10). The apostle certainly did not advocate a prayer-mysticism which suppresses ordinary life pursuits. In his Thessalonian epistles he specifically warns against this. (See also Eph 6:18; cf. 1:8; Ro 12:12; Col 1:9; 2 Ti 1:3).

True prayer is offered in *faith* (Ja 5:15); it expects nothing from itself but everything from God. It is such that it assumes significance in perseverance. "Constancy in life is not deducible in a deterministic way; it must be seen in the living relation between prayer and faith."²⁰ Perseverance is closely connected with prayer and is inconceivable apart from it. We persevere only *through the exercise of faith and prayer*. Prayer is one of the divinely ordained *means* of bringing Christians to eternal glory (1 Ti 2:1-2; Eph 3:14-21; 2 Th 3:1).

The intercession of Christ. We cannot speak correctly of perseverance if we do not take into account the fact of Christ's high priestly intercession. Paul speaks succinctly but significantly of this in his doxology in Romans 8:31-35. Note especially verse 34: "Who is he that condemns? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us" (ASV). "All present and future tribulations, all threats and dangers are summarized; but they fall away, or rather they are covered over by the one great love."²¹ Clearly there is an immediate connection between the intercession of Christ and the utter impossibility of anything separating us from the love of Christ.

Another important passage in respect to Christ's intercession on our behalf is Hebrews 7:25: "Hence also He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them" (NASB). Our great High Priest ensures our never failing acceptance before God (cf. Is 53:12).

¹⁹ Berkouwer, p. 128.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 131.

²¹ Ibid., p. 132.

The inference is inescapable that the intercession of Christ brings within its scope all that is necessary to salvation in the fullest extent of its consummation perfection. This is to say that the intercession covers the whole range of what is requisite to and of what is realized in the eschatological salvation. The intercession of Christ is interposed to meet every need of the believer. No grace bestowed, no blessing enjoyed, no benefit received can be removed from the scope of the intercession, and the intercession is the guarantee that every exigency will be met by its efficacy. The security of salvation is bound up with his intercession and outside of his intercession we must say that there is no salvation.²²

A careful study of John 17 will help us to understand more fully what is intended when our Lord is described in the Hebrews passage as making intercession for those who come to God through Him. Three additional ideas may be observed.

1. Jesus' intercession is always efficacious; it always accomplishes the purpose intended (Jn 11:42).

2. His intercession includes those who are still unbelievers but who are among the elect (Jn 17:20-21). In John 17:1-5 Jesus' petitions have peculiar reference to Himself; verses 6-20, to His disciples; and verses 21-26 to the whole church. In verse 20 the precise distinction made is between the eleven, on the one hand, and all those who are brought to genuine faith in Christ through their word, on the other. Some had already been brought into the fold, but down through the entire reach of the new age others would be converted through their word and the word of those to follow them. "The eye of Jesus scans the centuries, and presses to his loving heart *all* his true followers, as if they had all been saved even at this very moment."²³

3. His intercession is part of a total high priestly work which also includes propitiation. The intercession is based on the atonement (Ro 8:34; Heb 7:25-27). They are coextensive in their intent.

Finally, as a clear illustration of the importance of Christ's intercessory ministry in perseverance, we may consider the experience of Peter in those closing days of our Lord's earthly life. Peter had a wrong view of perseverance. He found the basis for his continuance

²² John Murray, *The Heavenly Priestly Activity of Christ* (The Campbell Morgan Lectureship, June 18, 1958), (London: Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate), p. 13.

²³ William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to John*, New Testament Commentary, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1954), p. 363.

in himself. He sees Christ treading the path of sorrows and he places Christ's life in the light of his own faith and love. No matter how difficult the road, he wants Christ to know that he can be counted on for support. Peter will console his Master in the hour of frightful isolation; Christ can count on Peter to never forsake Him. Here is a self-confidence which is diametrically opposed to true confidence.

In sharp contrast to this kind of "perseverance" is the intercession of Christ.

We behold the image of the praying Christ confronting the spectre of Satan with his sieve. It is through His intercession that a very different kind of permanency appears: "I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not!" It is Christ Himself who brought Peter to his senses, when He turned about and looked at him after the crowing of the cock (Luke 22:61). Peter's fall was miserable. He, the one who had confessed Christ at Caesarea Philippi, was the very one who forsook Him in the darkest hour of His life. He made his contribution to the total forsakenness of the Man of Sorrows. Truly, it was not Peter's faith, love, and faithfulness that preserved him. His life was saved by the intercession of Christ, when he had centered his attention on his own life alone, when all his moorings were cast away by his oath, and when it appeared that only chaff remained from Satan's sifting of his life.²⁴

The intercession of the Holy Spirit. In relating the intercession of the Spirit specifically to perseverance, we turn once again to that same chapter of Romans in which Paul speaks of the intercession of Christ. "He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Ro 8:27, NASB). In this statement the apostle teaches us that the Spirit compensates for what is lacking in our prayers. We are given insight here in respect to the relation between perseverance, the believer's weakness, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit. We are not left to ourselves in prayer; in our weaknesses the Holy Spirit takes up our case with the Father, with groanings that cannot be uttered. Incidentally but significantly, the praying referred to in this text is probably not that of the Spirit working in and through the prayers of the saints but rather a praying which the Spirit does Himself. Even though our prayers are dreadfully weak at their best, the Spirit's intervention brings a great consolation. Ultimate victory, perseverance in hope (Ro 8:23-26), is only possible because of the Spirit's prayers which transcend our weaknesses. When

²⁴ Berkouwer, p. 145.

we face the dangers, temptations, and trials of life we must realize, as Peter did, that we shall be preserved by the powerful intercession of Christ and His Spirit and that *ultimately* for that reason alone our faith did not die.