

The Doctrines of Grace

6. Can A Believer
Finally Fall Away?



Arminius said, “No.”

But his followers wrote, in their Fifth Article, that this question...

“must be the subject of more exact enquiry in the Holy Scriptures, before we can teach it with full confidence of our mind.”

The Synod of Dort (1618-19) stated:

“That such as have once received that grace by faith, can never fall from it, finally or totally, notwithstanding the most enormous sins they can commit.”

Four possibilities:

- 1. I am saved, and I know that I am.**
- 2. I am saved, but I don't know it for sure.**
- 3. I am not saved, but I think that I am.**
- 4. I am not saved, and I know it.**

What this teaching does **NOT** mean:

1. That everyone who *professes* faith will be saved in the end.

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Antichrists

**“They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.”
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Many, on the Day of Judgment

“Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’” (Matt.7:22-23)

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- 2. That true Christians don't go through times of doubt and depression.**
- 3. That true Christians can't fall into serious sin.**

What this teaching does mean:

That all those whom the Father chose and gave to Jesus – the ‘sheep’ for whom he died – are drawn by the Holy Spirit to trust in Christ, and not one of them will be lost.

God finishes what he started.

**“... he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
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“And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.” (Jn.6:39)

**“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”
(Jn.10:28)**

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1Peter 1:3-5)

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“Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about his calling and choosing you; for as long as you practise these things, you will never stumble...” (2Pet.1:10 NAS95)

Real Warnings

“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.” (Jn.15:5-6)

Real Warnings

**“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!”
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“Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it.” (Heb.4:1)

Real Warnings

“Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so.

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.”

(Heb.6:1-6)

Real Warnings

“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. 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?” (Heb.10:26-29)

True Spiritual Comfort

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

‘For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 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. (Rom.8:35-39)

