

INFINITY WAR? —CHRISTUS VICTOR WEEK 10— *Colossians 1:21-23 (ESV)*

I. OUR PAST: _____

²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind,
doing evil deeds,

II. OUR PRESENT: _____

²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death,

III. OUR FUTURE: _____

in order to present you

holy

and blameless

and above reproach before him,

IV. OUR DUTY: _____

²³ if indeed you continue in the faith,

stable

and steadfast,

not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard,

which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven,

and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

THE BOTTOM LINE

_____ a _____ past, present, and future
and use that _____ you _____ Jesus.

A Definition of Perseverance of the Saints

(Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 788)

The perseverance of the saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God’s power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again.

The Problem of Misunderstanding “Eternal Security”

(Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 806)

Here we see why the phrase *eternal security* can be quite misleading. In some evangelical churches, instead of teaching the full and balanced presentation of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, pastors have sometimes taught a watered-down version, which in effect tells people that all who have once made a profession of faith and been baptized are ‘eternally secure.’ The result is that some people who are not genuinely converted at all may ‘come forward’ at the end of an evangelistic sermon to profess faith in Christ, and may be baptized shortly after that, but then they leave the fellowship of the church and live a life no different from the one they lived before they gained this ‘eternal security.’ In this way people are given false assurance and are being cruelly deceived into thinking they are going to heaven when in fact they are not.

On the Three Metaphors of 1:23

(Scot McKnight, *Colossians*, 178-79)

Paul defines the character of perseverance in three spatial metaphors: “[stable],” “[steadfast],” and “[not shifting from].” The first connotes standing on a firm foundation (Eph 3:17), the second as firmly located on that foundation (1 Cor 7:37; 15:58), and the third a refusal to be moved from that foundation (also 15:58). Each metaphor contributes to a single image: perseverance entails *firm attachment* to the foundation, that is, to the hope of the gospel. Paul here approaches perseverance as one who has seen others drift away from the gospel, abandon the gospel, and as a result have returned to the alienation of mental hostility toward God and evil behaviors (Col 1:21). Fidelity to the gospel from the heart leads to behaviors of goodness, as Jesus himself taught (Matt 7:24-27)... Commitment to orthodoxy [...] is not a disposable factor for Paul: perseverance is perseverance in apprehension of the gospel itself, as well as authentic trust and obedience of the Lord. Authentic perseverance transforms the person into Christlikeness (2 Cor 3:17-4:6) because of the power of the authentic gospel.