

Perseverance: Finishing the Work That He Gives Us

I. THE PERSEVERANCE OF JESUS

- A. Paul prayed that we imitate the patience or perseverance of Jesus (2 Thes. 3:5). As a Man, Jesus endured the same resistance, pressures, obstacles, and opportunities that we also must endure.
- ⁵***May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance. (2 Thes. 3:5, NIV)***
- B. Perseverance speaks of being ***diligent to press into God and to do His will in small things*** with humility and gratitude. The grace of perseverance empowers us to be faithful in pressure, which includes resistance from people, the mundane routines of life, and both opportunities or lack—of appreciation, cooperation from others, impact, finances, health, energy, and relationships.
- ⁴***In all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses...⁵in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; ⁶by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love... ⁸by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. (2 Cor. 6:4–10)***
- C. Perseverance includes bearing up under daily pressures as well as ***finishing our work*** instead of quitting. Finishing our work or ministry assignment speaks of persevering with diligence in the face of smallness, weakness, and resistance. Jesus finished His assignment (Jn. 4:34; 5:36; 17:4; 19:30). Paul finished his (2 Tim. 4:7-8) and prayed for believers to finish theirs (2 Thes. 1:11).
- ⁴***I have glorified You...I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. (Jn. 17:4)***
- ²⁴***None of these things move me...so that I may finish my race with joy... (Acts 20:24)***
- ¹¹***We also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power... (2 Thes. 1:11)***
- D. Paul pressed in for the prize of being faithful to walk in the fullness of His destiny.
- ¹²***Not that I have already attained...I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me [fullness of Paul's destiny]...¹⁴I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call [fullness of his assignment] of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:12-14)***
- E. Perseverance is one of the greatest virtues that we can develop in the grace of God (Rom. 5:3-4; 15:4; 2 Cor. 1:6; 6:4; 12:12; 1 Thes. 1:3; 2 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:10-11; Heb. 6:12). It is a rare and beautiful miracle to walk in steadfastness for decades in the face of daily routines, difficulties, lack, and opportunities that distract us from our divine assignment and calling.

- F. On the last day, Jesus will not ask how big our ministry was or how happy we were, or how easy our life was, but how faithful we were and how consistent we walked in love by serving others.
- G. Jesus so values the small things that He rewards us for them in the age to come (Mt. 25:21).
²¹Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord. (Mt. 25:21)
- ¹⁰God is not unjust to forget your work...¹¹Show the same diligence...until the end, ¹²that you do not become sluggish, but...through faith and patience [perseverance] inherit the promises. (Heb. 6:10-12)*
- H. We must lay aside weights—which are not sinful, but are things which distract and minimize our ability to run. Look to Jesus as the source and model of what it looks like to run with endurance.
¹Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross... (Heb. 12:1-2)
- I. We measure the fruit of prayer and fasting by years, even decades, not by weeks and months.
⁴And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, lord?” So he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. (Acts 10:4)

II. PERSEVERANCE IN DIFFERENT SEASON

- A. ***God's plan is global.*** The Spirit is raising up the most powerful prayer movement in history (Lk. 18:7-8; Rev. 5:8; 8:4; 22:17; Isa. 24:14-16; 25:9; 26:8-9; 27:2-5, 13; 30:18-19; 42:10-13; 43:26; 51:11; 52:8; 62:6-7). It is one of the major themes of end-time prophecy.
- B. There were different seasons in the life of the early Church. The early church would go to the nations voluntarily (Acts 1:8) or by being thrust to the nations by pressure (Acts 8:1). Ministry organizations like natural families go through various stages of growth. IHOPKC is in our teenage years. The teenage years are challenging. There are new dynamics emotionally, financially, spiritually, and relationally. The dynamics include both opportunities and challenges.
- C. ***Season one: the birthing of a new movement***—Jesus traveled with a team of 12 young leaders for about 3 years. Later, 70 more men were added to the movement (Lk. 10:1).
- D. ***Season two: the first season of growth***—The early church (Acts 1-4) ate meals together daily. It was a new message and movement with a new sense of community all in one city.
- E. ***Season three: the time of going out***—The leaders and the people went out to other cities.
- F. ***Season four: the time when the nations embraced the movement***—The Gentiles began to come into the kingdom with different cultures (Acts 10). We see resistance to this expansion (Acts 15).