

Christian Perspectives: the power of perseverance

At the front of our church on Main St. is a message sign that can be seen by passing traffic. The last message that was on it said something like this. ?Persevere-even the snails made it to the ark.? When I first read it I found it quite amusing, but on further thought I realized how important it is for each one of us to persevere in our Christian walk.

When we look into scripture into 2 Thessalonians and focus in on what Paul has to say, I think we can find several areas where we need to persevere.

The first is to keep on gathering together with the local church. There is a special sense of His presence when His church gathers. The world today is trying very hard to distract us from gathering together. Matthew 18:20 says ?For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.? Keep on worshipping. Keep on encouraging one another

The second is to keep on growing in your faith. After his introduction, Paul mentions three things about those believers that make him thankful. He was thankful that they were growing in faith, in love, and in perseverance. Not only were they persisting with their meeting together, Paul pointed out that there was growth in their faith. This is a good place to ask yourself ?Am I growing as a Christian?? Am I becoming more and more mature in my faith?

The third is to keep on showing love. ?The love every one of you has for each other is increasing.? Not only did Paul thank God for their growth in faith, He was thankful for how their love was increasing. God loves you with an unconditional love. He loved us while we were sinners, and sent His Son to demonstrate His love. His love demands a response. We love Him because He loved us first. John wrote that you couldn't say that you love God if you don't love your brothers and sisters. He used strong language. If you claim to love God, but don't love others, then he calls you a liar.

God is going to send people into your life who need love. Will you demonstrate your love for them? Don't give up. Don't stop loving. Keep on persisting and growing in your love for others.

The fourth is to keep on enduring your trials. Paul wrote, ?Among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials among you.?

In life, we are going to experience painful trials. You can't avoid them. We often have no control over our circumstances. The only thing we have control over is how we react to painful circumstances. James 1:2-3. If we rejoice and persevere in our trials, God will turn it into our good. What we consider liabilities, God turns into assets. The bible says we should rejoice because our trials make us better. There is great value in enduring trials with a smile. The Bible has many people who could have been victims, but because of their faith they became victors. There is something to be said for the persistent attitude that says, ?I won't give up. I won't quit. I'm not going to give in or give up.

So don't give up. Don't quit. Keep on persevering to the end. Remember, Satan wants you to give up and quit. But God wants you to keep on keeping on in Jesus' name!

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