

## Persistence

### Introduction.

1. One of the most needed traits to be successful in life is “Persistence.”
  - Your hardest times often lead to the greatest moments of your life. Keep going. Tough situations build strong people in the end.” Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart
  - “Never lose hope. Storms make people stronger and never last forever.” Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart
  - “Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.” Winston S. Churchill
  - “Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'Press On!' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.” Calvin Coolidge
  - “Don't ever give up.  
Don't ever give in.  
Don't ever stop trying.  
Don't ever sell out.

And if you find yourself succumbing to one of the above for a brief moment, pick yourself up, brush yourself off, whisper a prayer, and start where you left off. But never, ever, ever give up.”

Richelle E. Goodrich, Eena, The Tempter's Snare

2. Jesus taught the importance of persistence in prayer and life.
  - a. Luke records this parable of Jesus in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of his gospel. (Lk. 11:5-13).

Luke 11:5 Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves;

Luke 11:6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him';

Luke 11:7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you {anything.}'

Luke 11:8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him {anything} because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

Luke 11:9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Luke 11:10 "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

Luke 11:11 "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he?

Luke 11:12 "Or {if} he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?

Luke 11:13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will {your} heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

b. Turning to Luke the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter Luke records a similar parable of Jesus. (Lk. 18:1-8).

Luke 18:1 Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart,

Luke 18:2 saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man.

Luke 18:3 "There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me legal protection from my opponent.'

Luke 18:4 "For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man,

Luke 18:5 yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.'"

Luke 18:6 And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said;

Luke 18:7 now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

Luke 18:8 "I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"

3. These parables teach us a lesson on "Persistence."

a. Both **the needy host at midnight** and **the widow** are real examples of persistence.

b. They refused to give up until they obtained their requests.

c. **As long as we live, it is vital that we never give up!**

d. Heaven is reserved for those who never give up. (Rev. 2:10).

4. The word "persistence" means "persevere, keep going, never give up, be unyielding, never say die, stick to it, stop at nothing."

5. Persistence is an admirable characteristic and it is a characteristic that is needed in so many aspects of life.

6. Here are some of them.

### **Rearing Children**

1. We need persistence in rearing children.

a. It has never been easy raising children, and it is certainly not easy today!

b. What father or mother has not felt like "throwing in the towel" on certain days?

c. Yet the successful parent is the one who never quits trying despite many setbacks and problems and discouragements.

2. We need to realize that **the prizes of life are not at the beginning of any journey, but at the end.**

a. God has commissioned us to train them in the way they should go, and we should persist and stick to our great assignment.

- b. We must lay one brick at a time until we have built into our children the love of God, respect for authority, undying faith in Jesus.
- c. We cannot, we must not quit, but must try and try again!
- d. It is vital that we not merely entertain children as parents or as a church, but we get them involved in the work of the church.

### **Teaching Someone The Gospel**

1. We need persistence in teaching someone the gospel.
  - a. Some have never known the joy of leading someone to Christ often because of a lack of persistence.
  - b. They tried, but when rejected they quit!**
  - c. It is vital that we never give up in our efforts to reach others with the saving message of the gospel.
    - 1) Some may respond to the gospel immediately
    - 2 Some will respond, but not always immediately.
    - 3) The seed we plant may take time to grow and the resulting faith lead to salvation even if we are not present or have died.
2. **We should never give up!**
  - a. We must think of each person as a potential “gold mine” for Jesus and persist in our endeavors to win that soul to Christ.
  - b. We must not let Satan discourage or hinder us from teaching others** with his lies.

They are not interested.	They might get mad.
You do not know enough to teach others.	You have to have all the answers.

- c. We must never let Satan deceive us into thinking that teaching others is not our responsibility.
3. As long as there is breath in our bodies and the love of God is in our souls, we must never cease to try to reach others with the gospel.
  4. **We are debtors.** (Rom. 1:14-15a).

Rom 1:14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

Rom 1:15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

- a. Though Paul was the chief [foremost] of sinners, he was saved because of the mercy of God.
- b. Paul felt an obligation to share the gospel with others and did so even when persecuted and imprisoned.
- c. We, too, should feel this same obligation to share the gospel with others.

d. **Though we were sinners and still sin God has shown mercy to us.**

e. He has saved us and given us the assurance of heaven all by His undeserved, unmerited mercy.

### **Bible Study**

1. We need persistence in Bible study.
  - a. Some people only occasionally study the scriptures, but are disappointed that they do not get more out of the Bible and are not able to teach others.
  - b. It is only through persistent study that the precious truths of the Bible will be ours to benefit from and to share.
2. Let us systematically and diligently study the scriptures each day - not haphazardly reading the Bible now and then.
3. Let us follow these exhortations. (Psa. 1:1, 2; 119:105; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:2; 3:15; 2 Pet. 3:18).

Psa. 1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

Psa.1:2 But his delight [pleasure, longing] is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

Psa. 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth

1 Pet 2:2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

1 Pet 3:15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always {being} ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

2 Pet 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him {be} the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

### **Work**

1. We need persistence in work.
2. Too many of us work hard for a while and then quit for a variety of reasons.
  - a. One reason for this is a lack of persistence, **a lack of stick-to-itiveness.**
  - b. We fail to recognize that a hit and miss religion will never get the job done - never be successful!
  - c. To be successful we must be persistent.
  - d. It often takes years to see the results of a good work, but the results are worth it.

3. The scriptures admonish us to be persistent. (Gal. 6:9, 10; 1 Cor. 15:58; Tit. 2:14).

Gal 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Gal 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not {in} vain in the Lord.

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, **zealous for good deeds.**

### Prayer Life

1. We need persistence in prayer life.
  - a. Jesus emphatically stressed that fact in the 2 parables we read at the beginning of our lesson.
  - b. There are many times when we feel that we are not “getting through.”
  - c. Certain days we feel like prayer is not worth all the effort.
2. But we should continue to pray, said Jesus, like the host who continued to “bug” his friend at midnight and the widow who continued to “bug” the judge.
  - a. **Persistence in prayer will pay off.** God said it and I believe it.
  - b. **When the devil whispers in our ears**, “You don’t need to pray today...you are too tired or too busy,” we should ignore his destroying advice and get on our knees in prayer.
  - c. We must never cease to pray.
3. **Jesus said.** (Lk. 11:9).

Luke 11:9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

- a. The words “ask, seek, knock” are present tense in the original Greek language that denotes continuous action.
  - b. More literally Jesus’ words should be rendered, “Keep on asking and it will be given you; keep on seeking and you will find; keep on knocking and it will be opened to you.”
4. Paul wrote. (Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17).

### Conclusion.

1. **After a great snow storm a little fellow** began to shovel a path through a large snow-bank before his grandfather’s door. He had nothing but a small shovel to work with. A man passing by asked, “How do you expect to get through that drift?” The boy replied, “By keeping at it.”
2. **Without question we need to keep at it!** We need persistence in life!

3. Persistence will bring rich blessings to us in life and will enable us to win the prize of everlasting life.
4. The quitter is a loser.
5. It is vital that as God's children we be persistent despite our shortcomings and weaknesses.
  - a. God knows we will never be perfect. (1 Jn. 1:8, 10).
  - b. However, He does expect us to never give up, but to be persistent!
6. **Daily we are to take up our cross** in our constant and persistent efforts to be faithful disciples of Jesus.

Luke 9:23 And He was saying to {them} all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and **take up his cross daily and follow Me.**