

Better Way Apostolic Church- Bible Class

Subject: Perseverance through Testing and Trials: Romans 5:1-5

The 1828 edition of Webster's American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines perseverance as:

1. *Persistence in anything undertaken; continued pursuit or prosecution of any business or enterprise begun; applied alike to good or evil.*

- *Perseverance keeps honor bright.*
- *Patience and perseverance overcome the greatest difficulties.*

2. *In theology, continuance in a state of grace to a state of glory; sometimes called final perseverance.*

Although the word perseverance is in the Bible, it usually uses various other words and analogies to explain the concept of perseverance. Some synonyms for perseverance are: diligence, endurance, persistence, steadfastness, waiting and sometimes even [patience](#).

The definition of perseverance is "continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition". I like *bible verses on perserverance* like 1 Timothy 4:16 that make me see the word perseverance a little differently. So many times we think of having to persevere through hard times. When I read this verse I think of persevere as holding on. We have to hold on tight to the promises of God and have faith in Him and His word. This makes the word a lot more encouraging to me. I want to hold on to the truth God has told us and help as many people as possible do the same.

1 Timothy 4:16 NIV Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

The Christian's Race

A great horse breeder in Kentucky has had a splendid monument built over the grave of a famous racehorse. On one side of the monument there is this inscription: "Here lies the fleetest runner the American turf has ever known." The Christian race is not to the swift but to the patient. The prize is for the one that endures unto the end. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us," (Hebrews 12:1).

2 Peter 1:5-7 NIV For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

Romans 5:1 The unsaved person is at "enmity with God" (Rom. 5:10; 8:7) because he cannot obey God's Law or fulfill God's will. Two verses from Isaiah make the matter clear "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked" (Isaiah 48:22); "And the work of righteousness shall be peace" (Isaiah 32:17). Condemnation means that God declares us sinners, which is a declaration of war. Justification means that God declares us righteous, which is a declaration of peace, made possible by Christ's death on the cross. Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalms 85:10). "Because the Law worketh wrath" (Romans 4:15), nobody condemned by the Law can enjoy peace with God. But when you are justified by faith, you are declared righteous, and the Law cannot condemn you or declare war!

Access to God (v. 2 a). The Jew was kept from God's presence by the veil in the temple; and the Gentile was kept out by a wall in the temple with a warning on it that any Gentile who went beyond would be wed. But when Jesus died, He tore the veil (Luke 23:45) and broke down the wall (Ephesians 2:14). In Christ, believing Jews and Gentiles have access to God (Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 10:19-25); and they can draw on the inexhaustible riches of the grace of God (Ephesians 1:7; 2:4; 3:8). We stand "in grace" and not "in Law." Justification has to do with our standing, sanctification has to do with our state. The child of a king can enter his father's presence no matter how the child looks. The word "access" here means "entrance to the king through the favor of another."

Glorious hope (v. 2 b). "Peace with God" takes care of the past He will no longer hold our sins against us. "Access to God" takes care of the present: we can come to Him at any time for the help we need. "Hope of the glory of God" takes care of the future: one day we shall share in His glory! The word "rejoice" can be translated "boast," not only in Romans 5:2, but also in Romans 5:3 and 11 ("joy"). When we were sinners, there was nothing to boast about (Romans 3:27), because we fell short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

But in Christ we boast in His righteousness and glory! Paul will amplify this in Romans 8:18-30.

Christian character (vv. 3-4). Justification is no escape from the trials of life. "In this world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). But for the believer, trials work for him and not against him. No amount of suffering can separate us from the Lord (Romans 8:35-39); instead, trials bring us closer to the Lord and make us more like the Lord. Suffering builds Christian character. The word "experience" in Romans 5:4 means "character that has been proved." The sequence is: tribulation patience - proven character - hope. Our English word "tribulation" comes from a Latin word tribulum. In Paul's day, a tribulum was a heavy piece of timber with spikes in it, used for threshing the grain. The tribulum was drawn over the grain and it separated the wheat from the chaff. As we go through tribulations, and depend on God's grace, the trials only purify us and help to get rid of the chaff.

God's love within (vv. 5-8). "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick" (Proverbs 13:12). But as we wait for this hope to be fulfilled, the love of God is "poured out into our hearts" (literal translation). Note how the first three of the "fruit of the Spirit" are experienced: love (Romans 5:5), joy (Romans 5:2), and peace (Romans 5:1). Before we were saved, God proved His love by sending Christ to die for us. Now that we are His children, surely He will love us more. It is the inner experience of this love through the Spirit that sustains us as we go through tribulations.

For many months I visited a young man in a hospital who had almost burned to death. I do not know how many operations and skin grafts he had during those months, or how many specialists visited him. But the thing that sustained him during those difficult months was not the explanations of the doctors but the promises they gave him that he would recover. That was his hope. And the thing that sustained his hope was the love of his family and many friends as they stood by him. The love of God was channeled through them to him. He did recover and today gives glory to God.

Great Opportunities

The late Gypsy Smith used to tell the story of his conversion as a youngster, and of his consequent earnest desire for the salvation of his Uncle Rodney. When Smith was a boy it was not considered wholly proper for a child to address his elders unless spoken to, and especially among the gypsies was it forbidden. This would be doubly true in the case of a subject so serious as an adult's duty or spiritual condition. So, Gypsy simply prayed about the matter and waited for God to give him the opportunity that he so longed for.

One day the lad's uncle took note of Gypsy's worn trousers. "Laddie," said Uncle Rodney, "how do you account for the fact that the knees of your trousers have worn nearly through, while the rest of the suit is almost like new?" "I have worn the knees through, praying for you, Uncle Rodney," the boy answered. And then he added, tearfully: "I want so much to have God make you a Christian." Uncle Rodney put his arms around Gypsy in fatherly embrace and, a few moments later, fell on his knees, confessing Christ as His Savior.

Opportunities will come to speak to others about the Lord when we are sufficiently interested in their souls to wear out our possessions and ourselves in praying for them.