

Home Group Leader's Notes
Week of February 11, 2024

Sermon Series: *You CAN Have It All*, week #6 – “Perseverance”

The first chapter is a call to add qualities and actions to our faith. The promise is that God will make us like Jesus in our character and prepare us for a rich welcome in heaven. Our focus this week is on “perseverance.” Three key questions for this week:

- 1) What kind of perseverance is in mind? To know this, you must read chapter two.
- 2) Why is perseverance on this “add” list?
- 3) How can we help each other persevere?

May our Father keep you encouraged, and the Spirit give you insight as we follow Jesus together.

WHAT HELPS?

We all face challenges and temptations. What truly helps you in those times? Do you share them with others when you are in difficult times? Why or why not?

Obviously, I am stressing the need for us independent Americans to learn to do life together. This calls for transparency, building trust, and believing that God wants us to follow Him in unity.

LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD

We are walking through a letter in the Bible written to (1) encourage believers to live in the knowledge and grace of God, (2) to be people of holiness and godliness, and (3) to warn them of false teachers, and (4) to be prepared for the difficult days ahead. This letter could be written to the church today. These same challenges and dangers are in our culture and the same grace and knowledge of God is just as needed.

Peter said in chapter one that the result of adding certain qualities (practices) is that “we can become partakers of the divine nature.” That is, we can grow to be more like Jesus. Each week we are spotlighting one quality that Peter says to add to our genuine faith. The sequence looks like this: Add to your faith, goodness (excellence), to goodness add knowledge, to knowledge add self-control. Peter then wrote to add “perseverance” to our self-control. Written in sequence, it looks like the following: Faith – Goodness – Knowledge – Self-control – Perseverance . . .

Some have defined “perseverance” as ‘to hold up or bear up in times of difficulty, to remain steadfast, especially in times of opposition or challenge.’ Our English word is translated from the Greek word *hypomonē*, which literally means ‘to remain under something like a heavy load.’ Another might define it as ‘the need to keep on keeping on in spite of adversity.’ It is more than patience when being persecuted. It is also endurance in holiness when we encounter temptation.

Consider the following Scriptures and questions about “perseverance:”

What were the recipients of this letter facing and what kind of perseverance was needed?

2 Peter 2:1-3

What helps us persevere?

1 Thessalonians 1:3

2 Thessalonians 3:3-5

1 Peter 1:3

Hebrews 12:1

James 1:3

James 5:11

Question: Why is “perseverance” on this list of things to add?

APPLY IT THIS WEEK

Ask the Lord to bring to mind the pressures and temptations that you are you facing. From what we studied, what does God promise to do in you? What is your role in perseverance? Since God wants us to follow Jesus together, could you share your challenges with a friend this week?

DISCUSS TOGETHER

Knowing that God has given us His power “so that through them we may participate in the divine nature” as we “make every effort” to add these qualities (practices), how does “perseverance” fit into the process of God changing us?

I am a good starter! I can come out of the blocks fast. But sustaining my efforts can fade, can grow weak. In order to finish well, I need perseverance – to learn to patiently and obediently trust God. If I add qualities but don't continue, I cannot finish well in God's plan.

In 2 Peter 2:1-3, we see some of challenges and pressures that the recipients of this letter were facing. What are we facing today? What kind of “perseverance” is needed?

Like the early churches, we are facing false teaching, temptation to immorality, and lies intended to draw us into the enemy's snare.

The perseverance needed is continued obedience, community, resistance of the devil, and being on mission with God's good news in love.

How can we be a help to each other when we need to persevere? Also, are there some things that we tend to do in relationships that don't help us persevere?

This is often missed in the community of those who follow Jesus. We are naturally independent but supernaturally connected. I hope we can learn what it means to persevere together.

PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for our church to love and support the many families facing difficult days
- Pray for our High School ministry and those going to winter retreat Feb 23-25
- Pray for International Friendship Connection as they love and build relationships
- Pray for and encourage your Global Partners

May our God of promises keep you encouraged as you shepherd His family.
Steve