

## **Discipleship - Session 9**

### **Continue the 8 Characteristics Of A True Disciple Number 5 - Perseverance**

Tell about your self-control project from the last session.

Things we will cover this lesson:

1. The meaning and value of perseverance.
2. Why we should rejoice in difficult circumstances.
3. A look at some of the heroes of the faith.
4. Perseverance in prayer.

Assignment:

1. Continue ALONE prayer log. (One day -- 1/2 hour.)
2. Communing Word log.
3. Also go over the material you learned this session. Look up all the scriptures. Put this lesson to practice in your daily life.
4. (If needed, give them a self-control project.)

Read again the 8 characteristics from 2 Peter 1

2 Peter 1:5-7

<sup>5</sup>But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your **faith virtue**, to virtue **knowledge**,

<sup>6</sup>to knowledge **self-control**, to self-control **perseverance**, to perseverance **godliness**,

<sup>7</sup>to godliness **brotherly kindness**, and to brotherly kindness **love**.

Characteristic Number 5 is **Perseverance**.

**PERSEVERANCE** - Definition:

- In the NT the characteristic of a man who is not moved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings
- To remain, to abide, to not recede or flee, to endure (study David's mighty men)
- Also translated by the words *patience* (esp. in the KJV) and *endurance*.

Be sure to learn to persevere in the work of self-control!

Consider these Scriptures with the word **perseverance**.

Romans 5:3-4 <sup>3</sup>And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces **perseverance**; <sup>4</sup>and **perseverance**, character; and character, hope. (NKJV)

Colossians 1:9-12 <sup>9</sup>For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; <sup>10</sup>that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; <sup>11</sup>strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all **patience** and longsuffering with joy; <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. (NKJV)

Hebrews 12:1 <sup>1</sup>Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let 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, (NKJV)

James 1:2-4 <sup>2</sup>My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup>knowing that the testing of your faith produces **patience**. <sup>4</sup>But let **patience** have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (NKJV)

Next consider these passages which express the meaning of perseverance:

Galatians 6:9 <sup>9</sup>And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap **if we do not lose heart**. (NKJV)

1 Peter 5:10 <sup>10</sup>But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, **after you have suffered a while**, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*. (NKJV)

Philippians 3:12-14 <sup>12</sup>Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; **but I press on**, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. <sup>13</sup>Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and **reaching forward** to those things which are ahead, <sup>14</sup>**I press toward the goal** for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (NKJV)

1 Peter 4:12-16 <sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not think it strange concerning **the fiery trial which is to try you**, as though some strange thing happened to you; <sup>13</sup> but **rejoice** to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. <sup>14</sup> If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. <sup>15</sup> But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. <sup>16</sup> Yet **if anyone suffers as a Christian**, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. (NKJV)

1 Peter 1:6-7 <sup>6</sup> **In this you greatly rejoice**, though now for a little while, if need be, **you have been grieved by various trials**, <sup>7</sup> that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, **though it is tested by fire**, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, (NKJV)

Matthew 5:10-12 <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are **persecuted** for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you **when they revile and persecute you**, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. <sup>12</sup> "**Rejoice and be exceedingly glad**, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (NKJV)

Hebrews 11:36-38 <sup>36</sup> Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented -- <sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in* dens and caves of the earth. (NKJV)

2 Corinthians 11:24-28 <sup>24</sup> From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. <sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; <sup>26</sup> *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; <sup>27</sup> *in* weariness and toil, *in* sleeplessness often, *in* hunger and thirst, *in* fastings often, *in* cold and nakedness -- <sup>28</sup> besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. (NKJV)

2 Timothy 2:3 <sup>3</sup> You therefore must **endure hardship** as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

Ephesians 6:10-13 <sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able **to stand** against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, **to stand**. (NKJV)

Consider these men who have persevered:

- Job - Job 2:7-10
- Noah - Genesis 6:5-9
- Joseph - Psalm 105:16-22
- Moses - Hebrews 11:23-29
- Paul - 2 Corinthians 11:23-28
- The list of faithful in Hebrews 11.

Perseverance proves our faith. Only the faithful persevere. Only the faithful understand the maturing benefit of perseverance. As we will see even more in later lessons, circumstances (especially difficult circumstances) are what God uses to push us to the cross in our life.

One of the major areas of learning perseverance is in the area of prayer. Persistence and perseverance in prayer were taught by our Lord.

Luke 11:5-8 <sup>5</sup>And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; <sup>6</sup>for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; <sup>7</sup>"and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you?' <sup>8</sup>"I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet **because of his persistence** he will rise and give him as many as he needs. (NKJV)

Note the context of the above passage in Luke 11:1-13! This is intercession -- coming to God on behalf of someone else. We know we do not have what is needed. Our friend, God, does. We can boldly and persistently knock. This is what God desires to build in us -- a persistence to go for what God has provided. God wants bold prayer warriors who will persevere until they get what God has made available for His children. God uses such times as this to help build up our faith. Weak faith does not persist. Strong faith does.

This is persistence in prayer.

Listen again to Jesus in Luke 18:1-8.

Luke 18:1-8 <sup>1</sup>Then He spoke a parable to them, that **men always ought to pray and not lose heart,** <sup>2</sup>saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. <sup>3</sup>"Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' <sup>4</sup>"And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, <sup>5</sup>'yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' " <sup>6</sup>Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. <sup>7</sup>"**And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him,** though He bears long with them? <sup>8</sup>"I tell you that **He will avenge them speedily.** Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find **faith** on the earth?" (NKJV)

If an unjust judge will finally do what is right, how much more will our Father!

Why would God withhold for a length of time? He has a reason.

Answer: Faith alone is the major reason. Real faith is never disappointed.

Consider how a farmer waits for the full ripe fruit before he picks. A child might pick it while half-ripe. As soon as it is ready, then it can be picked -- **speedily!** When things are right (things in us as well as in others), then God will answer speedily.

Faith that believes can allow God to take His time. It knows God is waiting for the full ripe fruit.

This is perseverance in prayer.

**SUMMATION STATEMENT: Perseverance is patient endurance. It is the ability to go through difficult times knowing God will even use the difficult time to develop something good in us. God never promises us life without difficulty, but He has promised to be with us during our difficult times. During these times we must learn to persevere because perseverance promises great Christ-like development in us. The Holy Spirit will help you to persevere in daily living and also in prayer.**