

LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP  
LIFE APPLICATION BIBLE STUDY  
CALLED TO PERSEVERE

**PERSEVERE**-to persist in anything undertaken; maintain purpose in spite of difficulty or suffering; to continue steadfastly no matter what.

What would make one persevere somebody might ask. What on earth would drive someone to keep going when the going gets tough to use an outdated cliché. Life is hard enough as it is and we could possibly find something else better to do. Or so we would think. To have a beautiful marriage you have to stick it out through the hard times, to have a strong family you have to be consistent, to have a successful business you must make tough decisions. It is no different in THE KINGDOM OF GOD. In Matthew 11:12, it is said that THE KINGDOM OF GOD suffers violence and the violent take it by force. There's going to be a struggle. How long of a struggle? However long it takes to accomplish the will GOD. You see the will of GOD should be most important to us. THAT is what's key here. IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO US. Because it's very important to GOD. Marriage, family, career, AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD are important to us. They are worth the struggle, the fight, the slow grind forward at times. We cherish it so much, we'll do whatever it takes to see the end result. A person MUST see whatever they're persevering for is IMPORTANT. Paul and Timothy already knew what was most important to them. What is most important to us to persevere?

SCRIPTURE-2 TIMOTHY 1:6-2:7

1. TIMOTHY-a. young and timid leader
  - b. dealt with personal inadequacy(Paul's big shoes to fill, fill your Pastor's shoes)
  - c. mentor in jail facing death(imagine your Pastor facing execution, in the U.S.)
  - d. many defections from the faith(imagine everybody leaving your church except you)
2. PAUL-a. Timothy, his spiritual son is getting hit hard yet encourages him while in jail
  - b. getting ready to die for his SAVIOUR
  - c. suffered much for THE CALL and is now at peace with his coming death because he's at peace with his CREATOR and from not giving up the fight to persevere.

Sometimes serving JESUS CHRIST is more than what we bargained for if we're honest. We wonder why GOD would allow suffering in our lives while others may SEEM to have a joyous time. An easy life. A GOOD time. And here we are, trying to live righteous, slugging it out with the enemy, this world, and yes, even our own flesh, because we have not arrived yet. We might get to the point of quitting on GOD or serving HIM the way HE wants us to. Ridicule, loss, persecution, death, or whatever the case may be, GOD allows it, therefore we MUST endure it. BUT know this my dear brethren, ALL things work together for good for those who love THE LORD, for those who are called according to HIS purpose. HE is not man that HE should lie, nor the son of man that HE should repent. A key word here is purpose. There is a reason my brethren.

-Give some examples of persevering in your own life.

I'll give some examples of some of the brethren in our church. OUR own Pastor and his wife endured tremendous suffering just to keep the church standing let alone growing. But they knew they had a calling and that there was a purpose for the hardship. And just one result of that is that your reading this bible study and hopefully benefitting from it to edify someone else in THE KINGDOM OF GOD or a lost and hurting soul. Another example is our dear sister Francis. Her husband Dean and her went to Ft. Wayne to launch a church and they endured much hardship. But through it all, God got them through. She battled loneliness, her nephew was killed, depression set in, all while raising a family, running a church, ministering to souls, and encouraging women at her job and keeping a good testimony. All because of WHO and what she believed in was important to her. I'll give just one more example of ours at the church. Our good brother L.A. Ruben, don't ask about the L.A., after coming back to GOD from being backslidden, had to endure much hardship to just stay planted in THE LORD. I personally saw some of this. Depression, coming off drugs, damage from drugs, suicidal thoughts, away from his normal environment, feeling sorry for himself are some of the things he had to suffer. GOD will allow us to do things as well so our eyes can be opened if we choose to disobey. But thank you JESUS HE'S a merciful GOD and helps us at the right time. L.A. Ruben is now leading song service at times, a bible study teacher, a regular at our street outreach seeking lost souls, and is leading our prison ministry. GOD can truly make a crooked path straight. Praise THE LORD!

-What was Timothy battling during this time and why?

Answer- Fear, inadequacy, intimidation, and quite possibly battling shame. Shame of himself, Paul, and maybe even CHRIST HIMSELF. Loneliness as well. Paul (his mentor) is in jail, everybody in Asia has left Paul, persecution is rampant. Now there is a chance that Timothy is next. Persecution and suffering is inevitable. Suddenly THE GOSPEL isn't so attractive now. Spiritual violence has come and the violent MUST take it by force, the GODLY way. The hands and knees way. The Alter way.

-What was Paul's response to these problems Timothy was facing in verses 8-12?

- a. share with him in his sufferings of CHRIST.
- b. CHRIST saved us and called us to a holy calling
- c. This calling is according to GODs purpose before time began
- d. Who we suffer for has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through THE GOSPEL
- e. Paul knew his GOD to the point where he knew HE could keep him to the appearing of HIS coming
- f. Stay committed and faithful; he reaffirms Timothy of who he is in CHRIST JESUS.

-Imagine yourself in Paul's shoes; alone, imprisoned, loved ones in trouble and nothing you could physically do about it, deserted by everyone in Asia. How do you think you would react?

Here are some answers given by some of the brethren. Brother Gino says he would cry out to GOD and not be MAD at GOD. Brother Tony says his mind would be everywhere being in a dungeon, stressful, but would eventually call out to GOD in desperation, maybe even get close to GOD. Brother Oscar would question GOD sincerely due to things not making sense. But GOD got Paul out of other situations and that there is only one thing to do and stick with HIM no matter what. Paul drew close to GOD. GOD does things to shape us for a purpose. All honor and glory to GOD no matter what. Brother L.A. Ruben says maybe we're not really sure how we would respond. That's a good answer as well. Lets just pray that THE LORD would give us the faith to endure such a trial.

-Who did Paul point out that was not ashamed of him? Onesiphorus. He was determined to do GODs will. He knew his GOD and was not ashamed. He understood his GOD was not ashamed of him and would be with him no matter what.

- According to 2 Timothy 2:1, what are we to rely on throughout our lives, especially in hard times? Answer-GODs grace. It will be GODs grace that will get us through life. His word says that HIS grace is enough(2 Cor.12:9). There are times when we just want GOD to get us out of trouble, to take the pain away now, pronto. We want the desire of our hearts now, change now, deliverance now, blessings now. But we will find out that GODs grace is truly enough for us. HIS AWESOME SUPERNATURAL POWER can and will sustain us no matter what the situation. It is truly not from us. It is truly up to us.
- Other than saving his own soul, why else must Timothy endure as a good soldier? Answer-(2 Tim.2:2)For other souls. We just don't go through things for ourselves only, these hardships are to teach others that GOD can truly get us through the hard times and come out in victory. That all is not lost but we have gained everything in CHRIST JESUS.
- Why did Paul choose the 3 metaphors of a soldier, athlete, and a farmer?  
Answer-a.soldier-in a war you are concerned about yours and your fellow soldiers survival. It's about life and death. There is no second chance. You want victory but your enemy also wants victory(for your soul). The battle lines are drawn. You fight as a UNIT, NOT AS A LONE RANGER. A lone ranger doesn't last very long in a war. Those are the ones the enemy loves to go after. You take orders from your superior and execute them. You keep moving forward. Whether slowly or fast, you keep moving forward.

b.athlete-The athlete must obey the rules or he is disqualified and will not receive his reward. The same for a saint in GODs Kingdom. We must obey THE WORD OF GOD or we fall into judgement. It is the opponents desire that you cheat. To disqualify you and I.

c.farmer-The farmer MUST LABOR through the elements, no matter how harsh in order to produce a harvest(souls).

-WHO ultimately has the right to call us to persevere? Answer-JESUS CHRIST, who endured the cross for our sake. Not only that but the anguish in the garden of Gethsemane, betrayal of those closest to HIM, the shame that was bestowed upon HIM, HIS own creation and HIS own people ridiculing HIM, beating HIM, and not believing in HIM. Finally separation from HIS HEAVENLY FATHER due to HIM taking our sins. Who are we to not want to persevere for HIM. WE can do all things through JESUS CHRIST who strengthens us(Phil.4:13) if we let HIM. Let us endure as a good soldier because after the war, the soldier goes home. His reward is home with his family. ETERNITY WITH GOD!!!

