

KNIGHTS FOR CHRIST



The ARMOR *of* GOD

Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

Ephesians 6:11

Bill Johnson

24 VIRTUES OF A GODLY MAN

Perseverance

*Don't quit
before the blessing.*

- NOT ONLY SO, BUT WE ALSO REJOICE IN OUR SUFFERINGS, BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT SUFFERING PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE; PERSEVERANCE, CHARACTER; AND CHARACTER, HOPE. AND HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT US, BECAUSE GOD HAS POURED OUT HIS LOVE INTO OUR HEARTS BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHOM HE HAS GIVEN US. — ROMANS 5:3-5

PERSEVERANCE

- A MAN OF GOD NEEDS BOTH PERSEVERANCE AND PATIENCE. PERSEVERANCE IS STAYING WITH A PROJECT OR BATTLE UNTIL IT IS FINISHED. PATIENCE IS TOLERATING PAIN OR DIFFICULTY. BILLY GRAHAM SAID: “PATIENCE INCLUDES PERSEVERANCE—THE ABILITY TO BEAR UP UNDER WEARINESS, STRAIN, AND PERSECUTION WHEN DOING THE WORK OF THE LORD.”

DEFINE PERSEVERANCE

- THE WORD PERSEVERANCE MEANS PERSISTING IN OR REMAINING CONSTANT TO A PURPOSE, TASK OR BELIEF IN SPITE OF OBSTACLES AND OPPOSITION. IT IS THE ABILITY TO ENDURE PAIN, FRUSTRATION, AND DISAPPOINTMENT WITHOUT GIVING UP, GIVING IN, LETTING DOWN, OR QUITTING. PERSEVERANCE HAS THE CONCEPT OF REMAINING FAITHFUL AND STEADFAST EVEN WHEN THINGS ARE GOING AGAINST YOU. TO PERSEVERE WE HAVE TO HAVE ENDURANCE.

- THE GREEK WORD USED IN THE ORIGINAL TEXTS MEANS TO “BEAR UP UNDER A LOAD”. THIS IS WHAT WE DO WHEN WE PERSEVERE. WHEN WE ARE PRESSED ON ALL SIDES WITH TREMENDOUS PRESSURES, WE STAND FIRM AND WILL NOT BE MOVED. DEPENDING ON THE TRANSLATION WE SEE WORDS LIKE ENDURE, STEADFASTNESS, PATIENCE, AND OF COURSE....PERSEVERANCE. SO YOU GET THE IDEA OF PERSEVERANCE...WHEN THINGS ARE TOUGH IT IS THE VIRTUE AND THE QUALITY OF BEING ABLE TO STAY THE COURSE AND KEEP ON KEEPING ON.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSEVERANCE

- WHEN WE COME TO THE PLACE THAT WE OPEN UP OUR HEARTS AND LET JESUS BECOME OUR SAVIOR, THE NEXT STEP IS THAT WE BEGIN TO MAKE HIM OUR LORD AND SUBMIT TO HIS WILL.
- THE ENEMY WILL ALWAYS RESIST ANY MOVE THAT WE MAKE TOWARD GOD. WE NEED THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES AND A STRONG DEPENDENCE ON HIM TO MAKE IT.
- GOD HAS A PLAN FOR OUR LIVES AND IT TAKES PERSEVERANCE TO STEP INTO THAT PLAN.

- JESUS SAID IN JOHN 16:33 THAT IN THIS WORLD WE WILL HAVE TROUBLES. SO, WE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED WHEN TROUBLE COMES. ACTS ALSO TELLS US THAT WE WILL GO THROUGH MANY TRIALS TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD. ACTS 14:22
- PETER ALSO SAID IN 1 PETER 4:12. DEAR FRIENDS DO NOT BE SURPRISED AT THE PAINFUL TRIAL THAT YOU ARE SUFFERING.
- SO THE WORD SPECIFICALLY TELLS US THAT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS NO “BED OF ROSES” AND THAT WE NEED TO ALWAYS BE READY TO WALK IN THE VIRTUE OF PERSEVERANCE.

STAND
FIRM



AND SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD!!!

1. WE PERSEVERE THROUGH DIFFICULT TASKS WE PERFORM

- SOMETIMES GOD CALLS AND PLACES MINISTERS IN DIFFICULT PLACES OF SERVICE. IT IS EASY TO BECOME DISCOURAGED AND EVEN HAVE A STRONG DESIRE TO QUIT IF WE DON'T OPERATE WITH PERSEVERANCE. WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT REVIVALS AND SOUL-WINNING CHURCHES, ONE THING YOU WILL USUALLY FIND IN COMMON – THERE WERE STRUGGLES AND THE MINISTERS IN THESE EVENTS HAD TO DISPLAY PERSEVERANCE.

- BEHIND EVERY GREAT MINISTRY WERE MEN, WOMEN, AND CONGREGATIONS THAT STOOD IN FAITH AND SAW THE PLAN OF GOD COME TO PASS. ONE OF THE GREAT BIBLICAL STORIES OF PERSEVERANCE IS THE STORY FOUND IN NEHEMIAH. THE WALLS OF THE CITY OF JERUSALEM LAY IN RUIN AND NEHEMIAH FELT THE CALL OF GOD TO RESTORE THEM. HE FACED ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS, BUT WITH GOD'S CALL COMES ANOINTING AND WITH PERSEVERANCE, NEHEMIAH RESTORED THE WALLS IN ONLY 52 DAYS. THE IMPOSSIBLE BECOMES POSSIBLE WITH GOD'S HELP AND STANDING FIRM.

Man of
Faithfulness



NEHEMIAH

WE NEED TO PERSEVERE THROUGH TIMES OF SUFFERING

THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS A MIGHTY MAN OF GOD WE GET A GLIMPSE OF ONE OF THE REASONS THAT HE WAS SUCH AN INFLUENCE ON THE WORLD FOR THE GOSPEL IS THE SUFFERING HE ENDURED FOR THE GOSPEL'S SAKE. IN THE BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS WE GET A GLIMPSE OF SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HE AND OTHER CHRISTIANS WENT THROUGH IN ORDER TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE MAN FROM GALILEE – JESUS CHRIST- SON OF GOD.

2 Corinthians 6:4-10 New Century Version (NCV)⁴ But in every way we show we are servants of God: in accepting many hard things, in troubles, in difficulties, and in great problems. ⁵ We are beaten and thrown into prison. We meet those who become upset with us and start riots. We work hard, and sometimes we get no sleep or food. ⁶ We show we are servants of God by our pure lives, our understanding, patience, and kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by true love, ⁷ by speaking the truth, and by God's power. We use our right living to defend ourselves against everything.

⁸ Some people honor us, but others blame us. Some people say evil things about us, but others say good things. Some people say we are liars, but we speak the truth. ⁹ We are not known, but we are well known. We seem to be dying, but we continue to live. We are punished, but we are not killed.¹⁰ We have much sadness, but we are always rejoicing. We are poor, but we are making many people rich in faith. We have nothing, but really we have everything.

PAUL ALSO SUFFERED FROM SOMETHING HE CALLED A THORN IN HIS FLESH. WE DON'T REALLY KNOW IF THIS WAS A PHYSICAL PROBLEM OR A SPIRITUAL ATTACK BUT WE DO KNOW THAT PAUL CALLED IT A "MESSENGER OF SATAN". THE WORDS "TORMENTED" AND "PLEADED" SHOW THAT PAUL WAS CAUSED GREAT SUFFERING BECAUSE OF THIS THORN. HE DECLARED THAT THE GRACE OF GOD WAS SUFFICIENT TO GET HIM THROUGH THE PROBLEMS THAT IT CAUSED AND MADE HIM MORE HUMBLE AND DEPENDENT ON THE LORD AND HIS STRENGTH. IN OTHER WORDS, HE PERSEVERED THROUGH HIS SUFFERING.

THE APOSTLE PAUL SUFFERED MANY PERSECUTIONS AS WELL. HE SAYS IN 2 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3 VERSES 10-12:

2 Timothy 3:10-12 New Century Version (NCV)

¹⁰ But you have followed what I teach, the way I live, my goal, faith, patience, and love. You know I never give up. ¹¹ You know how I have been hurt and have suffered, as in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. I have suffered, but the Lord saved me from all those troubles. ¹² Everyone who wants to live as God desires, in Christ Jesus, will be persecuted.

AS PAUL NEARED THE END OF HIS LIFE HE WANTED TIMOTHY TO KNOW AND REMEMBER HIS TEACHINGS BUT ALSO HE WANTED TO BE SURE HIS YOUNG DISCIPLE KNEW THAT PAUL SUFFERED GREAT PERSECUTION FOR THE CAUSE OF JESUS. WHAT A GREAT PROCLAMATION HE MADE CONCERNING HIS WHEN HE SAID "BUT THE LORD DELIVERED ME FROM THEM ALL" NOTICE THAT PAUL ALSO SAYS IN VERSE 12 THAT ALL THOSE WHO SERVE THE LORD WILL SUFFER PERSECUTIONS. IF YOU ARE BEING HARASSED, TROUBLED, AND COME AGAINST, IT IS JUST A SIGN OF TRUE SERVICE FOR THE LORD. HALLELUJAH!!



PERSEVERING WHEN LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE ANYMORE

- ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT TIMES IN LIFE IS WHEN THE EVENTS OF THIS WORLD NO LONGER MAKE ANY SENSE. WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO THINK AS LONG AS WE ARE SERVING GOD THAT EVERYTHING SHOULD BE JUST FINE. IT DOESN'T TAKE LONG FOR US TO FIND OUT THAT WE HAVE A REAL ENEMY THAT WILL OPPOSE US AND TROUBLE IS PART OF LIFE. ONLY NOW, WE HAVE A FRIEND TO GUIDE US THROUGH TROUBLE-THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, LIVING IN US.

- A BUSINESS MAN WHO HAS DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO THE LORD AND TITHED FAITHFULLY MAY EXPERIENCE BANKRUPTCY DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ARE BEYOND HIS CONTROL.
- PARENTS MAY HAVE RAISED THEIR CHILDREN IN THE NURTURE AND ADMONITION OF THE LORD ONLY TO SEE THOSE CHILDREN REBEL AGAINST GOD AND HIS WAYS.
- EACH OF THESE EVENTS WILL BE DISHEARTENING AND CAN ONLY BE USED FOR GOD'S GLORY THROUGH PERSEVERANCE.

- IN THE EARLY 1950'S JAMES ELLIOT AND A GROUP OF MISSIONARIES FLEW INTO AN JUNGLE AREA OF SOUTH AMERICAN THAT HAD NEVER HEARD THE GOSPEL. THEY LANDED THEIR PLAN AND WERE IMMEDIATELY ATTACKED AND KILLED BY THE WARLIKE NATIVES OF THAT REGION. HIS WIDOW, ELIZABETH ELLIOT PERSEVERED AND LATER WENT BACK TO THAT AREA WITH SOME OTHER MISSIONARIES AND WON THEM TO CHRIST. MOSTLY BECAUSE OF THE SACRIFICE HER HUSBAND MADE WITH HER LIFE. ETERNAL LIFE WAS BROUGHT TO THIS WHOLE CULTURE OF PEOPLE BECAUSE SHE DID NOT QUIT.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE PERSEVERE??

- ONE OF THE FIRST ASSETS OF BEING A PERSON WHO PERSEVERES IS THAT IN ORDER TO PERSEVERE YOU MUST BECOME A SPIRITUAL WARRIOR. YOUR SUCCESS AS A CHRISTIAN IS DIRECTLY TIED TO YOUR SKILL AS A SPIRITUAL WARRIOR. IN ORDER TO MOVE FORWARD AND ADVANCE IN CHRIST WE LEARN TO STAND ON THE PROMISES OF GOD AND BATTLE THE ENEMY WHO IS A LIAR. THE TRUTH FOUND IN THE SCRIPTURES IS THE WAY WE OVERCOME AND PUT THE DEVIL IN HIS PLACE. TO PERSEVERE, YOU MUST BE A WARRIOR.

- THE SECOND THING THAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PERSEVERE IS THAT YOU NATURALLY EXPERIENCE TREMENDOUS GROWTH. ROMANS 5:3-4 NEW KING JAMES VERSION (NKJV) ³ AND NOT ONLY *THAT*, BUT WE ALSO GLORY IN TRIBULATIONS, KNOWING THAT TRIBULATION PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE; ⁴ AND PERSEVERANCE, CHARACTER; AND CHARACTER, HOPE.
- THIS IS A SPIRITUAL PROCESS: WE HAVE TRIBULATIONS IN OUR LIFE. AS WE ENDURE THROUGH THESE THINGS WE LEARN AND GROW IN SPIRITUAL PROWESS. THE MORE WE ENDURE WE BUILD CHARACTER AND A MAN WITH CHARACTER HAS THE THING WE ALL NEED TO PRODUCE FAITH==HOPE

THE MOTIVE FOR PERSEVERANCE

- THE PRIMARY MOTIVE FOR PERSEVERING IS SIMPLE. WE LOVE GOD BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US. WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS AND WERE STANDING GUILTY AND CONVICTED OF SIN, DOOMED FOR HELL, GOD SOUGHT US OUT AND OFFERED US WHAT NO ONE ELSE COULD – SALVATION.
- BECAUSE WE HAVE EXPERIENCED LOVE FROM ONE WHO PERSEVERED ON THE CROSS WE DESIRE TO STAND FIRM FOR HIM AND HIS CAUSE.

WHAT HINDERS PERSEVERANCE?

- UNCONFESSED SIN – WE CAN'T SERVE TWO MASTERS. IF WE HOLD ON TO AND COVER OUR SIN WE CAN NOT PERSEVERE.
- ATTACHMENT TO WORLDLY THINGS – WHEN WE LIVE WITH OUR FEET AND OUR HEART IN EARTH. IF WE ARE NOT TOTALLY INVESTED IN HEAVEN AND ITS VALUES, WE CAN NOT PERSEVERE.
- UNRESOLVED DISCOURAGEMENT - DISCOURAGEMENT WILL KILL HOPE AND WE CAN'T PERSEVERE WITHOUT HOPE. THE POWER OF GOD IS DRAINED WHEN WE LIVE DISCOURAGED.

WHAT CAUSES US TO ENDURE?

- WE MUST EXERCISE OUR FAITH- TRUSTING GOD IN BIG THINGS AND LITTLE THINGS BUILDS FAITH.
- WE MUST STAY IN THE WORD OF GOD- THE WORD OF GOD HELPS US KEEP ON KEEPING ON.
- WE MUST DEPEND ON THE FELLOWSHIP THAT WE GET THROUGH BROTHERS AND SISTERS. ENCOURAGEMENT HELPS US TO STAND WHEN WE ARE STANDING WITH SOMEONE.
- WE MUST ACCESS THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. FLESH CAN'T ENDURE BUT THE SPIRIT CAN.

REWARDS OF PERSEVERANCE

WHEN WE PERSEVERE WE ACTUALLY GET TO SEE THE PROMISES GOD HAS MADE TO US FULFILLED. SO MANY TIMES GOD MAKES US PROMISES AND WE QUIT BEFORE THOSE PROMISES CAN BE REALIZED. PERSEVERANCE HELPS US TO SEE THEM COME TO PASS.

THE BLESSINGS OF GOD - 5:11 WE ARE CONSIDERED BLESSED BY GOD IF WE ENDURE AND PERSEVERE. WANTS SOME BLESSINGS?? HANG IN THERE AND SEE THE BLESSINGS OF GOD COME ON YOUR LIFE AND FAMILY.

- A POWERFUL INFLUENCE - WHEN PEOPLE SEE THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE AN ABILITY TO ENDURE HARD TIMES, THEY LOOK UP TO YOU AND IT CAUSES YOU TO HAVE A POWERFUL INFLUENCE ON THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING ANSWERS TO LIFE'S STRUGGLES. GOD GIVES YOU THE ABILITY TO IMPACT OTHERS WITH YOUR LIFE.
- SPECIAL PLACE IN THE KINGDOM. THE REWARD FOR SOMEONE WHO PERSEVERES ACCORDING TO 2 TIM 2:11-12 IS THAT WE WILL REIGN WITH CHRIST.