

Perseverance in the Call of God

Lately the Lord has been saying “stay the course”

- don't shift or move away from what I am leading because of what is going on around you.

It's easy to change course, step back, get discouraged

- To do something different when we encounter resistance

The Bible addresses this tendency with the word perseverance.

- Perseverance means “Doing what God has led you to do until He leads you to do something else.”
 - o It's one of the hardest disciplines that we face
 - o The world around us has so many other

Do you know what God has called you to do?

- Are you getting itchy in that calling
- Do you see other things that are more attractive

This week I felt like the Lord told me..

“Play for the coach, not the grandstands” – (Persevere in the Call of God)

- **If you play for the coach, then you will stay in the game**
 - o **If you play for the grandstands – you will be sidelined**
- **If you play for the coach, you will win**
 - o **If you play for the grandstands, you will lose**
 - o
- There are amazing rewards for perseverance in the calling of God!
 - o Gal 6:9 (NIV) **Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.**
 - The
- Perseverance in the Call of God makes us mature
 - o Jas 1:2-4 (NIV) Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, [3] because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. [4] Let perseverance finish its work **so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**
- Perseverance produces CHARACTER and HOPE
 - o Rom 5:3-5 (NIV) Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; [4] **perseverance, character; and character, hope.** [5] And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
- **Testing the Vision – Everyone in scripture who is called was tested**
 - o Heb 10:35-39 (NIV) So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. [36] **You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.** [37] For, "In just a little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay." [38] And, "But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back." [39] But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.
 - “Death of a vision” – Sometimes it happens 2X - Sometimes 3X!
 - Death of vision means that EVERYTHING that God has promised seems to be lost
 - o There is no way that the promises of God can come true
 - EVERYONE in the Bible was TESTED in the calling of God!
 - Abraham – God promised a son when He was 75yo
 - o No son for 25 years

- Sarah was past childbearing when the promise came
- ANOTHER 25 YEARS BEYOND THAT - OLD!
- Moses – God Promised to deliver Israel ..
 - Pharaoh refuses to let people go – “Make bricks without straw”
 - Moses is rejected and almost stoned by the elders
 - Then people suffered 10 plagues before deliverance –
 - The Jews also suffered the first 3
- David – Was Anointed King – God led Samuel to make David King
 - Went back to tending sheep
 - Killed Goliath – served the King for 7 years
 - Fell out of favor with King Saul
 - Saul hunted David for 7 Years
- Jesus – was perfect,
 - yet the religious leaders hated him
 - Called him names, accused Him
 - Tried to stone him
 - Was brought up on false charges and crucified on a cross
- - What happens when your calling is tested?
 - **Every calling from God must be tested!**

How does the Enemy attempt to keep us from persevering in the vision?

THREE WAYS

- Distraction
- Discouragement
- Isolation
- **So many believers are sidelined**
 - **Some are wounded** – They are double-minded, unsure of God’s calling and purposes
 - **Many are casualties** – Their love is cold, they are ineffective in their calling

HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN? – Three ways.. Distraction, Discouragement and Isolation

Distraction

- Mat 6:31-34 (NIV) So do not worry, saying, **'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'** [32] For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. [33] **But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.** [34] Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
- The enemy distracts you to keep you from encountering God
 - Your head is “humming” and cannot see or feel God
 - You are pinned down by worrying and being consumed about daily cares
- You are “marinating” in the cares of the world
 - Instead of being “marinated” in the Kingdom and relationship with Jesus
- IF YOU SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM – His reign, His purposes, His direction
- IF YOU SEEK HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS – Right Relationship
 - THIS WILL SILENCE THE "HUM" OF DISTRACTION IN YOUR HEAD
 - You will get clarity on what to do in every situation
 - SEEK HIS KINGDOM (His Leading)

- SEEK HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS (Right relationship with Him)
 - ALL OF THE OTHERS THINGS WILL COME INTO CLARITY
 - STOP THE MOMENTUM OF THE WORLD AND GET CONNECTED TO GOD
 - You
- THE FLOW OF DIGITAL INPUT – We are living in an age of distraction
 - When I was in college – We lived lives that included **Mandatory Reflection**
 - No constant input from digital sources – Podcasts, facebook, Instagram
 - No constant pressure to respond – emails, texts, calls
 - NOW THERE IS NO MANDITORY REFLECTION
 - You can always DISTRACT YOURSELF with more/different input
 - We are **flooded with information** (texts, emails, newsfeeds, podcasts, social media)
 - 6-10 hours average (people spend on their devices- 2018)
 - I am convinced that many believers “SEEK FIRST THE MEDIA” instead of THE KINGDOM
 - These pursuits seem empowering but I notice a different fruit
 - FOMO - produce the feeling that “I need to have/do more”
 - DISTRACTION – I am not able to REFLECT on what God is doing/saying
 - Being alone with Jesus leaves us with peace and direction

DISCOURAGEMENT

- John 16:33 (NIV) "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."
- WE ARE ENCOURAGED WHEN WE HEAR AND AGREE WITH GOD
- WE ARE DISCOURAGED WHEN WE HEAR AND AGREE WITH THE ENEMY
- YOU PARTNER WITH GOD
 - When you believe what God says
 - The Message of God is WHO YOU ARE, YOUR GOD GIVEN PURPOSES and CALLING
- YOU PARTNER WITH THE DEVIL
 - When you believe what the Devil says
 - The Message of the Enemy is about YOUR WEAKNESSES, YOUR INABILITIES
 - It's all about WHAT YOU CAN'T DO,
 - It's all about YOUR PAST FAILURES
- **You have a choice of partnering with God or the DEVIL**
 - PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DEVIL
 - BY AGREEMENT WITH NEGATIVE THOUGHTS - THEY ARE NOT YOURS!
 - THEY SEEM REASONABLE
 - You are not strong enough
 - This is beneath you
 - Are you sure about this
 - The enemy reminds us of sin
 - Look at your hypocrisy
 - You are not loved by God because you keep sinning
 - If people really knew what was inside of you
- **PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD**
- 2 Cor 10:3-5 (NIV) For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. [4] **The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.** On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish **strongholds.** [5] **We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**
 - **We must RECOGNIZE the thoughts that ARE AGAINST THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD**
 - Thoughts that question what God says

- Thoughts that do not affirm God's purposes for us
- We must TAKE CAPTIVE (recognize and replace) thoughts that the enemy delivers
 - MAKE THEM OBEDIENT to Jesus
 - We must bring them under the LORDSHIP OF JESUS
 - They are rendered powerless at the foot of the cross
 - They are of no impact when brought into the presence of Jesus
- We must understand and agree with What God Says about us
 - READ "STATEMENTS OF TRUTH" – THIS IS WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT US!

Isolation

- Heb 10:23-25 (NIV) Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. [24] And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, [25] not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
- TWO-THIRDS (68%) of born again believers are not connected to a local body of believers
 - They are living "off the grid" socially
 - They are unattached... They have no support, accountability or face to face encouragement
 - **Face to face connection with others is a necessary part of the new covenant**
- You cannot engage in ANY OF ministry commandments without connection to the BODY
 - Staying away from BEING the Church is DESTROYING US!
 - It's like saying "being married is important" but you don't "live with" your spouse
 - You can "be married" when you are apart
 - AND you won't "stay married" when you are isolated
 -
- WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE GETTING READY TO BE WITH GOD'S PEOPLE
 - FOUR SCHEMES OF THE ENEMY TO KEEP US FROM TRUE FELLOWSHIP
 - I'm Tired - "let's stay home and rest"
 - THE LIE: Physical rest will take the place of Spiritual connection/encouragement
 - Do you really "feel better" in isolation?
 - "I am not ok today" - I want to be feeling better before I see people
 - THE LIE: I need to be feeling and looking Good to be with others believers
 - TRUTH: Being with others provides us with ministry / encounter with God
 - "I need to figure it out with God before I meet with people"
 - (Do you really get better in isolation?)
 - "The situation in my life is outta whack" or "My kid is not having a good day"
 - THE LIE: Things need to be going ok in my life so that I show others how well I am doing
 - I don't want to look weak
 - I don't want anyone to think that I am not a good parent
 - "We will attend online today"
 - THE LIE: Watching church on a screen is the same as being in fellowship with other believers
 - Information can be transferred by watching TV
 - Fellowship must be done face to face.
- The Example of Jesus
 - Heb 12:1-2 (NIV) Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, **let us throw off everything that hinders** and the **sin that so easily entangles**. And let us **run with perseverance the race** marked out for us, [2] **fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the pioneer and

perfecter of faith. **For the joy set before him he endured the cross**, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- Throw off the good things for the BEST things
- Get rid of sins (than tangle us up)
- RUN WITH PERSEVERENCE
 - BY... Fixing our eyes on Jesus (relationship, emulation)
- Do not change course when things get hard
 - 1Ti 4:16 (NIV) Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.
 - Be guided by discernment, not feelings

WHAT IS THE LORD SAYING TO YOU ABOUT PERSERVERANCE IN THE CALL OF GOD!