

June 13, 2018

Memory Verses: Romans 5:3-4 NIV

<sup>3</sup>Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup>perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup>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.

Review: suffering

Today's word: **perseverance**

The word perseverance, according to the Merriam Webster's Dictionary, is defined as continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow said this, "Perseverance is a great element of success, if you only knock long enough and loud enough at the gate, you're sure to wake up somebody."

The Death Crawl from Facing the Giants

What did you see? What did he learn? What did we learn?

Consider Paul's vivid analogy of a footrace as he relates it to perseverance in 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

**Consider Noah and his assignment**

Read Genesis 6:6-17.

What did God tell Noah to do?

Do you have any ideas as to how much Noah was ridiculed and mocked? Can you imagine how he felt? What kept him going?

In spite of the ridicule, Noah never gave up nor did he stop doing what God told him to do. Noah persevered.

Remember: Perseverance is defined as continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition.

Think about these four principles:

- **You must train.** How many of you would enter into a marathon without some type of training? How does this look in 2018? What are some simple day to day disciplines we could do in order to be prepared.
- **Maintain a sustainable pace-** Pacing is so important. It is the key to finishing well. Carl Lewis was known for his steady pace. Sometimes we get fatigued or burned out. Waiting on the Lord's timing is always an appropriate pace.
- **Stay the Course-** you must continue to run despite the obstacles. Wait for God to renew you. Runners often call this a second wind.
- **Finish Strong-** What must we do to finish strong? Athletes get awards. God rewards those who finish strong. Keep running until you cross the finish line.

### **Consider the faith and perseverance of the Canaanite Woman**

Read Matthew 15:21-28

What was the woman's problem?

Describe her daughter's condition.

Describe the conversation between the woman and Jesus.

Do you think his putting her off was a test? Why?

What about the disciple's response?

Imagine how she felt when she heard those words: send her away!

What kept this woman from becoming discouraged and walking away?

Notice this woman could not be put off!

In our memory verse, Paul said, suffering produces perseverance!

Consider this. Paul was not speaking about something he heard on the street. Paul's journey had been quite challenging to say the least. Paul was speaking from personal experiences. Think about it. Paul had been thrown in jail and beaten constantly when he traveled and preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In Second Corinthians, Paul reflects on the fact that on five separate occasions he had received 39 lashes, beaten with rods three times, stoned once, and shipwrecked three times.

Then, here in our text he says rejoice in the midst of our circumstances. Wow! How could he? How can we? However, Paul reminds us, as Christians we can rejoice in the midst of any circumstance.

I am sure you are saying perseverance is hard! You are right, but we can't persevere in our own strength. We need the strength of God.

### **Jesus is our Example**

Read Hebrews 12:1-2

Here again we hear about a race. We also hear that we need to fix our eyes on Jesus. Why?

Jesus persevered. Jesus stood the test despite the difficulties. Jesus endured and so can you and I.