

To Faith Add... Perseverance

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“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, perseverance...” (2 Peter 1:5-6)

Will your faith “stick?” By that I mean, do you have the kind of faith that will endure for the long haul? Or, is yours a fly-by-night kind that is here today, gone tomorrow? Peter is telling us in no uncertain terms that to have “an entrance into the everlasting kingdom” we must have a faith that will not quit, no matter what. Do you?

The word “perseverance” can be studied from a Thesaurus by looking at its synonyms. Such words as “grit, stubbornness, doggedness, tenacity, endurance, steadfastness, determined resolve” all describe beautifully what God is looking for in a saving faith. Sometimes, when those “d” words attack your faith (doubt, despair, discouragement, depression), you just have to have the grit to put one foot in front of the other and slog your way through the day with rugged determination. You have to say to God in prayer, “I will not quit no matter how badly I feel or how much I am suffering today.”

Have you ever read the book of Revelation through the eyes and heart of those first century saints who were feeling the full power of Rome against them? It seemed so hopeless to continue to believe when all around them they and their loved ones were being unmercifully butchered for confessing Christ. But Jesus, who had promised never to leave or forsake them, wrote them a personal letter and said, *“You will suffer for ten days (i.e. a short time), even be thrown into prison, but be faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life”* (Rev. 2:10).

And many of them did! *“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”* (Rev. 14:13). Now that’s the faith of our fathers. Now that’s perseverance!