

Perseverance



"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." Hebrews 12:1



The Berean Lamp
For the Body of Christ.

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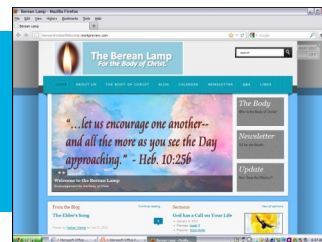
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Called to Persevere

By Scott Moller

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for you are with me.”

(Psalm 23:4a)

King David ruled Israel about 3,000 years ago. He became king when he was 30 years old and ruled for 40 years. He was known as a mighty warrior who expanded the kingdom and subdued Israel's enemies. He captured Jerusalem and built it as his capital city. He firmly established his kingdom so that during his son Solomon's reign, Israel experienced peace and prosperity. In Acts 13:22, God declared, “I have found David, son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.” Who could ask for a greater compliment from God?

But long before David became king, God sent the prophet Samuel to anoint him as the future king of Israel. At the time he did not appear to be anything like a future king. He was only a young boy about 10 to 15 years old. He was the youngest of eight brothers. He was relegated to the lowest of duties: a shepherd of his father's flocks. He was considered of such little importance by his father that he was not even invited to attend the feast with Samuel.

Even Samuel was sure one of the older brothers would be chosen as the next king, but God had other plans. God reminded Samuel, “The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7b). God directed Samuel to anoint David as the next king of Israel, which he did. 1 Samuel 16:13 tells us that “from that day on

the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power.” But Samuel left, and David went back to being a shepherd boy. No pomp. No circumstance. It was just back to the sheep for David.

It must have been somewhat confusing for David. God had anointed him king, but he was only a shepherd boy. He remained in the humblest of positions. He received no honors. But he was growing in the Lord. He was learning to be faithful in the small, unimportant things. He was maturing.

As the years went by, he was eventually called into the service of King Saul. He served in the court, watching and learning. Later he gained notoriety as a young man when he volunteered to fight Goliath and defeated him. As time went on, he became a great warrior in King Saul's service. The people began to take notice of David, and they sang songs of his victories.

At this, Saul became jealous of David. He believed that his kingdom was at risk of loss to David. From that time forward, Saul tried to kill David, and he was forced to flee for his life. For years David was forced to live as an outcast in hiding and in fear of his life, many times being hunted by Saul.

David wrote many of the Psalms during these trying times. He wrote of his anguish and struggles being surrounded by his enemies. How he must have questioned his turmoil: he had been anointed, he had served faithfully, and he had defeated the Lord's enemies. Why? Why? Why? But he remained faithful, even to the point of sparing Saul's life twice, all while Saul was attempting to kill him. He never took things into his own hands to become king. David persevered and waited on the Lord to fulfill His promise, which, of course, God did at the proper time and place.

As Christians, we can relate on a spiritual level with David. The Bible tells us when we put our faith in Jesus Christ we receive the

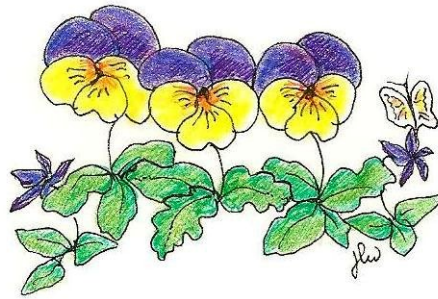
Editor in Chief: Nathan Warner
Oversight Committee: Pastor Scott Moller, Deacon Bob Larsen, Nathan Warner
Editors: Natalie Madsen, Jani Warner, Julie Moller

anointing of the Holy Spirit. We are adopted into the family of God and become children of the King. We become joint heirs with Jesus who sits at the right hand of God.

Yet the world does not recognize Christians as children of the King. In fact, it is just the opposite. The world mocks, despises, hates and sometimes murders followers of Jesus Christ. How can this be? Jesus told His disciples that His kingdom was not of this world. He called His kingdom the kingdom of heaven.

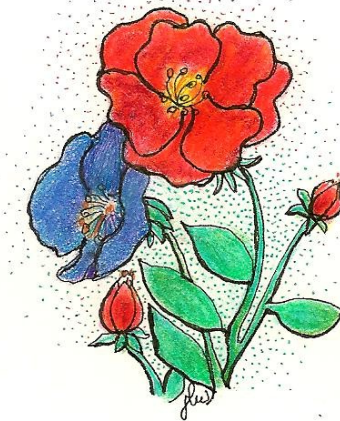
Like David, we have been anointed, but we have to wait for the fulfillment of the promise. Jesus warned us that the world would hate us because of Him. There would be much opposition. We must pick up our crosses and follow Him. Peter tells us in I Peter 1 that we will suffer trials so that our faith might be proved genuine. Paul tells us in Romans 4 of Abraham: "He did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God ... being fully persuaded that God had the power to do what he had promised."

Let us be like David – remaining faithful through the trials, patiently waiting on the Lord, learning to depend on God, trusting in His promises, all the while representing our King.



"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever" (Isaiah 40:8).

By Jani Lynn Warner



But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day. (Proverbs 4:18)

By Ginny Larsen

Enduring Earthquakes

By Nathan Warner

*“...If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?”
(Psalm 11:3)*

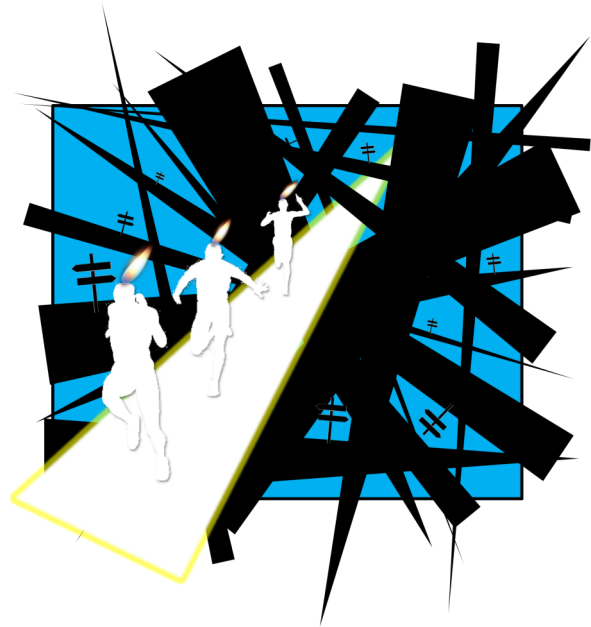
Now and again, the everyday mode of human existence is violently overturned whether in our personal lives or in society at large. Scripture and history record these revolutions time after time. We see how individuals, communities, and empires quake and crumble when their foundation is shaken or destroyed by revolutions. On a personal scale it could be a death in the family, illness, or any number of other things. On a societal level, war, famines, or natural disasters may be responsible. During these times, people are often confused and afraid by the “shock and awe” going on around them. Their philosophies and theologies are overturned, and they despair as all their known and trusted foundations are destroyed. How can they endure trials and tribulations with nowhere to stand and no sure ground in sight?

The most violent of these revolutions in human history occurred not long after the Fall, during the Flood, when man’s rebellion against God reached a critical height, and He destroyed the world by water, demolishing the “firm” foundation of man’s pride and arrogance. The next major revolution will be like “the days of Noah” (Luke 17:26) and will occur in the end times or last days.

Many Christians believe we are currently living in these last days. For Believers, the last days represent the time when mankind consummates its rebellion against God, but more importantly, it is the time just preceding the return of our glorious Savior, Jesus Christ. We hear and say much about the “signs of the times,” and many Christians spend a great deal of time, whether seriously or casually, following the “weather maps” of this age or making “climate models” in an attempt to predict or realize the spiritual seasons.

While it should never become the only fo-

cus of our lives, Jesus did encourage us to look for the signs of His coming and watch for the signs of the times, learning the lesson of the fig tree that “‘as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that He [Jesus] is near, at the very gates’” (Matthew 24:32-33).



What an encouragement it is that Jesus said we would be able to recognize the season of His return! Yet we must remember that a little earlier in the chapter, Jesus also warned us to beware of deceptions: “‘Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many’” (Matthew 24:4-5 NIV). Paul reminded his readers that much deception was abroad concerning the end times: “Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a).

These deceptions were aimed specifically at believers to confuse, disorient, and dishearten them by convincing them that prophecy was already fulfilled or being fulfilled. Could it be

that in our days, similar deceptions will imitate how we expect the end times to commence? Regardless, Paul warned us not to be taken in by these deceptions.

Perhaps these imitation deceptions are not unlike the many Jewish “messiahs” that came onto the scene throughout history and led people astray by imitating how prophecy was interpreted or expected to unfold. The Jews had the true prophecies concerning the coming Messiah, and they spent much time projecting and interpreting how those prophecies would come into being. The sad reality was that their interpretations were not at all what the prophecies actually foretold. Jesus came as the fulfillment of prophecy, and the Jews for the most part did not recognize Him, yet they often were aroused to follow others who claimed to be the Messiah.

Time after time, they asked Jesus, “‘*What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?*’ Jesus answered them, ‘*Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.*’ They replied, ‘*It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?*’ But the temple he had spoken of was his body” (John 2:18-21).

Jesus continually refused to show them signs that would fulfill prophecy in the way that they interpreted it. The only sign He promised them was the sign of His resurrection: “‘*An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah*’” (Matthew 16:4). When Jesus’ ministry didn’t conduct itself the way they thought it would, they abandoned Jesus and killed Him because He didn’t fit in the foundation they were standing on.

Jesus did not arrive to save them in the way that they expected to be saved. He did not fulfill the prophecies the way they expected them to be fulfilled, but they were fulfilled in the way that God meant them to be fulfilled when His Holy Spirit inspired them: “...*we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of*

Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:19-21).



“For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”
(1 Corinthians 3:11)

The Jewish nation rejected their Messiah because He did not fit the will of man. This example is a good thing to keep in mind when we consider unfulfilled prophecy. Will some see the Antichrist as the returned Messiah? Will the “son of lawlessness” “fulfill” prophecy from someone’s interpretation? Will he shock and awe people into doubting Scripture, the sovereignty of God, or the rightful claims of Christ?

Most of us believe that things will be fairly clear-cut in the end times. Some of us even believe we have a clear roadmap in our interpretation of prophecy for how it will all play out – all we need is the start date and then we’ll be able to tell everyone what will happen

next and when it will happen. Many more of us have little concern that we will be fooled by any false acts of man or spirit, regardless of how prophecy comes into fulfillment.

But it is important to remember that Jesus posed the question: will any believers be left on earth when He returns? *“‘And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?’”* (Luke 18:7-8). Here, God’s faithful endurance to His people is compared to man’s indecisive and faint endurance. How will Believers endure the deceptions that are made to look like the truth? Will they be moved? How secure is our foundation for weathering the storms and enduring the earthquakes that may come against our faith?

Paul tells us that there is only one secure foundation for Believers: *“For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ”* (1 Corinthians 3:11). Jesus described Himself as the Stone that the builders rejected, which would be made the Chief Cornerstone (Luke 20:17). When Peter told Jesus, *“‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it’”* (Matthew 16:16-18). Jesus says He will build His church on the Truth that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and hell itself will not overcome it.

Jesus is clearly speaking about Himself as the firm foundation in His parable of the wise man who built his house upon a rock:

“‘Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock’” (Matthew 7:24-25), as opposed to the foolish man who built his house on the shifting sand of the world: *“‘everyone who hears these*

words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it’” (Matthew 7:26-27).

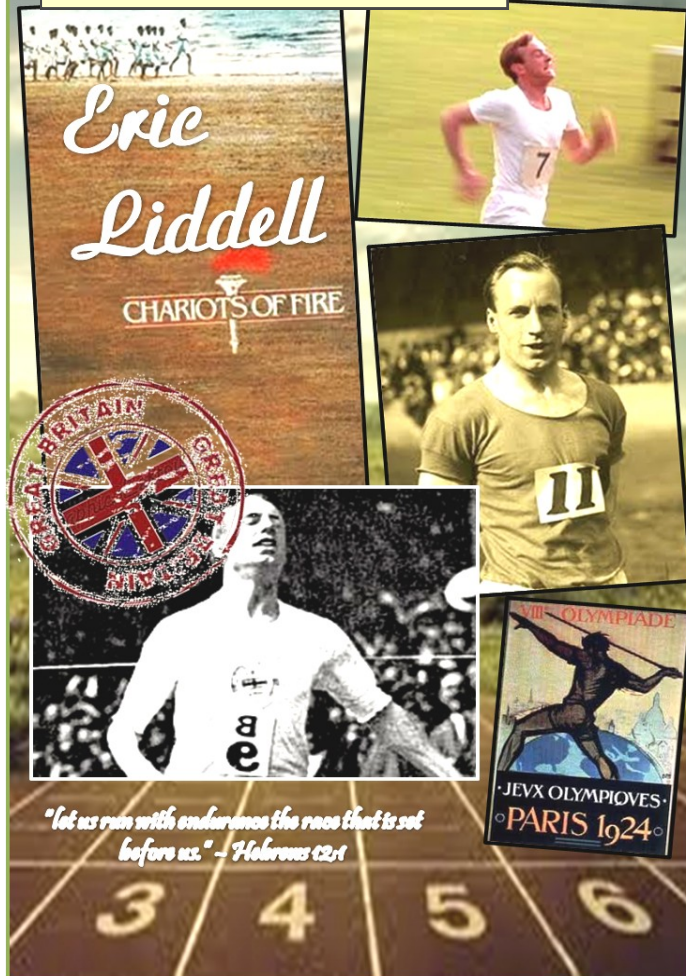
The only secure foundation we have is Jesus. We will not be able to endure the storms in life by standing on man’s interpretation of prophecy, words of wisdom, or man’s profound thoughts. Nor will we be able to withstand the earthquakes that are coming upon the “facts”, hopes, and delusions of mankind in the last days if we have built our lives on them.

If we, as Believers, look to anything other than Christ for our security – if we place them neatly as the bricks of our foundation, we risk stumbling like those who rejected Christ. They had as their foundation the signs, wonders, and miracles that they had interpreted the Messiah would bring as the proof to His claim. Their house fell and great was the ruin of it, though God’s promise to them stands as a testament to His faithfulness and His purpose.

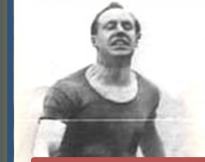
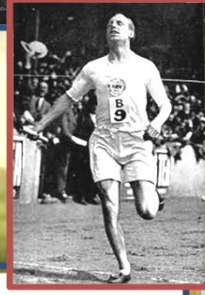
The only way to keep our balance in the billowing storms and shifting ground of this life is to *“lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **looking to Jesus**, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted”* (Hebrews 12:1-3).

Jesus is the Rock upon which we must stand if we are to remain unshaken in personal difficulty, famines, wars and rumors of wars, and earthquakes in various places. Let us look to Him in all we do, taking comfort in the secure and steady promise that *“...neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 8:38-39).

Lives of the Christians



"let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." - Hebrews 12:1



See the film
"Chariots of Fire".

"We are all missionaries. Wherever we go we either bring people nearer to Christ or we repel them from Christ." - Eric Liddell

Eric Liddell was born to missionary parents in Tianjin, China, in 1902, and he was sent home to Britain for education when he turned 8 years old. He became known as the fastest runner in Scotland while at Eltham College, where his headmaster described him as "entirely without vanity." He graduated from Cambridge University with a Bachelors degree in pure science and set off for the Paris Olympics of 1924 to run for Britain. He refused to run on Sunday, because he believed it violated the Sabbath, and sprinted to victory the next day in the 400 meter race, winning a gold medal and setting a world record not broken until 1936. He was nicknamed the "Flying Scotsman" for his speed. In 1925, Liddell left behind the fame and glory of athletics and returned to China as a missionary. When the Japanese invaded China in 1937, Liddell was taken to Weihsien Internment Camp where he became known as "Uncle Eric." He continued to spread the Gospel there until he died from a brain tumor 5 months before the end of WWII. During the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Chinese government released documents that England had sought a prisoner exchange for Liddell, but the Scotsman gave his place to a pregnant woman instead.

The Fruit of Patience

By Betty Harstad

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."
(Galatians 5:22-23)

We may wonder if we will continue to have patience and endurance when troubles seem persistent in this fallen world. We may wonder if God will be able to work out His purpose in us through hard times when we stumble, resist, and often tremble. We may wonder if joy is still available for us even in the midst of trials.

Usually, we who have a new nature desire to bear good fruit rather than succumb to the

deeds and thoughts of the old nature during times of sorrow and loss. We do so want to bear up with patience without complaint. But we soon find that our own best efforts fail, and we are so easily "*distressed by various trials*" (I Peter 1:6b). Thankfully, someone once pointed out to me that the word "fruit" in Galatians 5:22-23 is singular (not "fruits"), meaning we are to abide in the one Vine. "*I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing*" (John 15:5). Yes, even the fruit of long-suffering is produced when we abide in the Vine as our strength to bear comes only through Him. During our weaknesses, He hears our cries for help and works in us with compassion until we finally realize that He is willing and well-able to fulfill His promise of fruit-bearing in us as we become more solidly rooted in Christ, the true Vine.

Over a year ago, I was in utter despair with a seemingly unsolvable problem, but a man set me back on course again with the simple yet profound reminder to rely on my heavenly Father and to *"fix my eyes on Jesus Christ."* This reminder did not immediately take away my highly emotional state or solve the earthly problem I was dealing with, but it did set my mind again on the higher and eternal purpose of God in my life and the lives of my loved ones. Our temporary earthly struggles can be more easily endured knowing that God will make a way for His eternal plan to be fulfilled in and through us. He is worthy of all our trust!

During deep trouble, life may seem so dark and joyless with no light at the end of the tunnel. These times call for us to humbly and patiently wait upon the Lord until we again see the light of deliverance. *"Weeping may last for the night but a shout of joy comes in the morning!"* (Psalm 30:5b). Our Lord sends members of His body to come alongside us in happy or sad times. Sometimes they read Scripture from the front at church, share Scripture personally, sing well-chosen songs, or simply share during Bible Study. As for myself, I have learned to truly treasure a warm smile, a card in the mail, the sound of various musical instruments, the sharing of answered prayers, joys, sorrows, and the partaking of simple pleasures as I walk alongside other believers down the pilgrim path. In the book *Pilgrim's Progress*, Hope and Faith would often come alongside Christian to quietly share the Word, guiding and encouraging him to continually follow the One who made the Way for our great salvation. It is good to be reminded that Jesus *"endured the cross for the joy that was set before Him"* (Hebrews 12:2).

Writing this article has helped me to see more clearly what a grand, glorious, and unshakeable foundation we have in God. Years ago, an insightful member of the body of Christ gave me the following verse as a reminder to wait patiently for hope and joy. She seemed to know these fruits would come eventually into my life, and yes, they always do. *"Why are you in despair, O my soul? And*

why are you disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God" (Psalm 43:5).

May we, who have received the good Word from the Scriptures and through the body of Christ, be diligent to remind others of His promises in times of need. *"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit"* (Romans 15:13).

LET US REASON

*Come now, let us reason together...
you can follow your heart,
but the truth is far better.*

*"Come now, let us reason" says the Lord...
Let go of the riches
that your soul can't afford.*

*Come now, oh wretched soul...
It is the heavenly riches
that will make you whole.*

*Come now, don't hesitate...
It breaks my heart
to see you in this state.*

*Come now, before it's too late...
His return is soon
there's no time to wait!*

"Come now, let us reason" says the Lord...

*Though your sins are like scarlet,
He can make them like snow...
Though they're red like crimson,
He can make them like wool.*

By Jesse Larsen

Sing A New Song

Thomas Obediah Chisholm

Great is Thy Faithfulness

The Franklin Favorite

The Pentecostal Herald

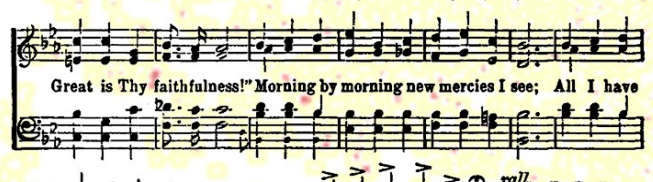
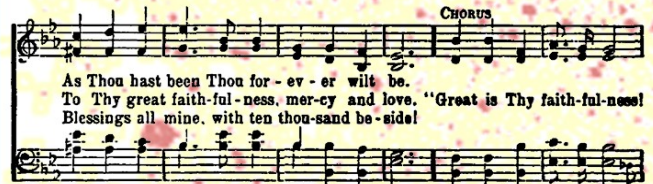
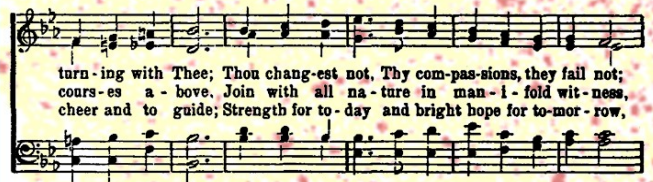
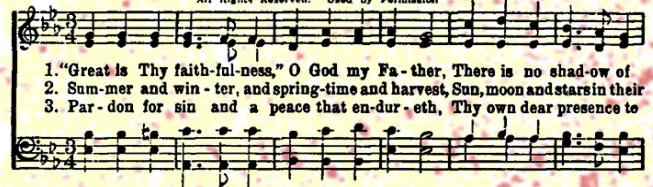
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Great is Thy Faithfulness

T. O. CHISHOLM

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WILLIAM M. RUNYAN



Thomas Obediah Chisholm: "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

By Maggie Moller

"Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness."

(Lamentations 3:21-23)

"For great is Your love, reaching to the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the skies."

(Psalm 57:10)

Thomas Obediah Chisholm was born on July 29, 1866, in Franklin, Kentucky. As a child, he was educated in a small country schoolhouse. At age 16, he got his teaching

certificate and became the teacher of the same country school he had attended as a boy. At age 21, he became the associate editor of the weekly newspaper, *The Franklin Favorite*.

His life was forever changed in 1893, when, at a revival meeting under the ministry of Dr. Henry Clay Morrison, he turned his life over to Christ. Dr. Morrison then persuaded Thomas to move to Louisville to become the editor of his periodical, the *Pentecostal Herald*. In 1903, Thomas was ordained as a Methodist minister. He then served for a short time at a church in Scottsville, Kentucky, before moving to Indiana due to his poor health. In 1916, he moved again, this time to Vineland, New Jersey, where he worked as an insurance salesman. He retired in 1953 and moved into the Methodist Home for the Aged in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, living there until his death on Feb-

ruary 29, 1960.

Although he suffered from poor health his entire life, Thomas was determined not to focus on his sufferings but rather on the faithfulness of his Lord. He once said in a letter written to a friend, "My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health in the earlier years until now....I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness." What a testimony of remaining focused on God even in the face of great sufferings and hardships!

In his lifetime, Thomas wrote over 1,200 poems, of which 800 were published, and many were set to music. "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" was published in 1923 and remains one of his most well-known hymns. According to Thomas, it was not written for any specific purpose other than to share the Biblical truth of his faithful God and Father. From Thomas' humble life, we see that God uses believers of all backgrounds and occupations to reveal His Faithfulness in their walks of life. Whether they are preachers and missionaries or newspaper editors and insurance salesmen, God is faithful to them and reveals His great plan through them for their lives.



HORIZON

*Beyond this dim horizon
Beyond this troubled sea
The Willows have all gathered
In hope and memory.*

*The Saints hold high their candles
A million stars at night
A vigil for the war -
The struggle for the Light.*

*Every well-laid lie
That took our breath away
All the works of death
That bury day-to-day.*

*Tortures of the soul
That rack and rend disease
Horror laid against us
That poison every breeze.*

*And yet there is no darkness
Deep enough to drown
The Light within the heart
That Love has turned around.*

*Life holds us to its struggle
Your life you had to lead
The tears that you have cried
The blood you had to bleed.*

*All the wounds, cut so deep
That Love did not repay
All the scars that mar our lives
That Joy did not obey.*

*You know now this journey
Rides a million storms
But in its passing struggles
Christ in us is formed..*

By Nathan Warner

Time to Move

By Jim Poppenhagen

“Delight thyself also in the LORD: and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.”

(Psalm 37:4-5)

Although the Bible says in Psalm 46:10, *“Be still and know that I am God,”* there comes a time in most of our lives when we have to pick up and move - I mean to completely relocate to a new address. My wife, Marge, and I have moved many times, perhaps more than a dozen times over the years, and each time we prayed about it and felt the Lord's leading and blessing.

One such time was when I had recently graduated from Bible School and felt the Lord wanted me to relocate to a different place where I could serve Him, please Him, and do His will. As we waited on the Lord, Marge and I both felt that we should go north and possibly start a church in Cook, MN. So we contacted my brother, Glen, who lived in Babbit, and asked him if he could find a place there where we might move. Then we let my father-in-law know we were ready to move, so he came down with his truck, and we loaded it up with all our belongings.

“Where are we going?” he asked me once we were on the road.

“I don't know, yet,” I told him, “but I know the Lord will provide a place.” He thought that rather strange, to say the least, but we kept on driving north.

Upon arriving at Virginia, thirty miles south of Cook, I called my brother to see if he'd found a place for us to live as we were hoping to land somewhere when we arrived in town. He told me he had been in a restaurant the night before and heard someone say there was a vacant place that had just become available for rent. We decided to look into it, placed a call to the owner, and had the house held just for us. The owner met us and led us to a nice

country place six miles south of Cook. It was perfect for our needs at the time, so we thanked the Lord and moved in immediately.

Despite God's providence with providing us a home, I still didn't know what the Lord wanted me to do in Cook. I only knew that He had opened the way for us to be there for now. I didn't have a job, so I soon went into Virginia to see a former boss of mine, who had also moved up there. He asked me if I had a job, and when I said no, he asked if I could come and work for him there at the hospital clinic. I accepted it at once as another answer to prayer. While we waited for the Lord's leading, we attended church in Virginia until I felt the Lord calling me to become a fulltime pastor in Beaver Bay, where we moved shortly thereafter.

Time and time again in our lives, Marge and I have learned *“to not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble”* (Matthew 6:31-34). I encourage you to put your trust in God's provision, and I can say with the Apostle Paul that *“my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:19).



The “Sweet Singing” Hymnist of God

By Maria Madsen

When thinking of the great ministries of John Wesley in the eighteenth century, most readers overlook the work of his brother Charles Wesley, who, if not more so than John, had a most fruitful and Godly ministry through the love of Christ.

On December 18, 1707, Charles was born to Samuel and Susanna Wesley in Epworth, England. He was the eighteenth child and youngest son in the Wesley family of nineteen. He grew up under the strict but loving care of his mother Susanna. Though times were tough and financial trouble hindered the large family, Susanna raised her children diligently, providing them with an early knowledge of the Bible. Each morning, she gathered her ten surviving children to read Scripture and sing songs together. Many were surprised at her exceedingly patient way and her well-behaved family.

From an early age, Charles enjoyed singing and music. He was also very talented in writing poetry, a gift passed down from his father. He was homeschooled by his mother until he was eight years old. Then, he was sent to Westminster School, where he excelled in his studies under his oldest brother Samuel’s tutoring. When he was nineteen, he went to Christ Church College in Oxford. His brother John was also in a college in Oxford, and they visited each other often.

At this time, John became quite serious about seeking to live a spiritual life. Charles, on the other hand, was carefree and indifferent, but he soon “became deeply concerned for the salvation of his soul” (Jackson, pg. 30). He and John began doing good deeds for God to earn their salvation, for they did not fully understand how to receive the salvation that comes through Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. They strove to please God by works, which was Mr. Law’s system of belief, a writer whose texts they read for guidance. Charles, John, and their friends began to meet together to pray, read the Bible,

and to grow in their understanding of God. Their group was called the “Holy Club,” and they were named the “Methodists” by their college classmates. One “Methodist” in their group was the famous preacher George Whitefield, who was one of Charles’ close friends.



Charles and John spent their young years learning and living for God. They practiced sharing the love of God with others and worked in the church.

A year after their father’s death in April of 1735, John and Charles received the opportunity to preach to the Indians and emigrants who had set up a new colony in Georgia, America. The brothers sailed to America to begin their first missions work.

But Charles’ way of teaching was not yet perfected, and he gained the peoples’ dislike because of his temper and strict teaching, which was forthright and unbecoming to the people who had never heard the Word of God before. They planned how to get rid of him, and Charles was almost shot a few times, but God shielded him. He was accused of trying to start a mutiny among the colonists, but John

saved him. Charles fell deathly ill and was without any comfort for some time. The mission work he had tried desperately to succeed in failed.

He returned to England without his brother, vastly disappointed and depressed. He tried to find the holiness of a righteous life with God, but he felt empty inside. He realized that something was wrong as his efforts to please God and stop sinning seemed hopeless. In the months after leaving Georgia, Charles was confused and doubtful that he would ever find what he was seeking. He had experienced peace when he first felt zeal for God, but that peace had disappeared. Now he felt only despair and hopelessness. The illnesses he had often dealt with came upon him again, and the attacks of intense pain in his side returned. Several times, Charles was in such agony that he felt about to die, but each time God pulled him through. In time, John came back to England with the same empty feeling. Together, the brothers searched for answers.

During one of Charles' periods of gloom, he wrote this entry in his journal: "I began my twenty-seventh year in a murmuring, discontented spirit; reading over and over the third of Job." A month later he wrote, "I called upon Mrs. Pendarris, while she was reading a letter of my being dead. Happy for me, had the news been true! What a world of misery would it save me!" (Jackson, pg. 100)

But hope was not lost. A man named Peter Boehler, who was a Moravian Christian, became a dear friend of the Wesley brothers, and he shared the true message of salvation to them. It took time for Charles and John to understand this new doctrine. Boehler was a strong, young Christian, and he continued to patiently explain to them the free gift of forgiveness through the following years.

Finally, on May 21, 1738, God opened Charles' heart to the salvation message, and he believed! The past years were full of doubt and hopeless wondering, but then God sent His Holy Spirit, and Charles received the perfect peace of knowing that Jesus Christ had saved him through His blood. He understood that salvation was not by good deeds to win oneself

to God but that Christ died to forgive sinners. What a feeling of joy, hope, love, and peace Charles felt! He was saved for eternity!

John was filled with joy for his brother, and a few days later, Christ became his Savior, too. Charles and John had found the truth they had been seeking: Jesus Christ. Later, Charles wrote, "I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ...I saw that by faith I stood, by the continual support of faith...I went to bed still sensible of my own weakness...yet confident of Christ's protection"(Clifford). He also wrote, "I began a hymn upon my conversion" (Morgan, pg. 45). Which hymn he meant is unknown, but perhaps he referred to his hymn "And Can It Be." The fourth verse especially may speak of his powerful conversion:

Long my imprison'd spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray;
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart set free,
I rose, went forth, and follow'd thee.
(Jackson, pg. 124)

Charles' life was changed forever. He left behind his temper and started to preach the gospel. He and John were filled with the love of Christ, and they demonstrated this love through their work in the church and to others. Charles became powerful in prayer and preaching, bringing many to Christ. He especially found pleasure in preaching and caring for the poor. He spent countless hours writing beautiful poetry and hymns. His amazing preaching, either from the pulpit or the tip of his pen, vividly described Christ's love, forgiveness, and salvation. Wherever he was, he always created new songs in his mind. Some of his most well-known hymns include, "O, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"; "Jesus, The Sinner's Friend"; "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"; "Christ The Lord Is Risen Today"; and "Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending." Over 6,000 of his hymns have benefited mankind everywhere, and many stories are told how his hymns brought comfort and peace to

persecuted Christians.

One of Charles' fruitful ministries was to visit the criminals in Newgate Prison. In Charles' day, crime was high, and almost every day thieves or murderers were sentenced to the gallows. Even poor women and children who committed petty crimes were killed as punishment. Charles spent hours being locked up with the prisoners, consoling and sharing the gospel with those who were condemned to die. Most of them were eager to be saved and became confident in going to Jesus. Though Charles was at first skeptical about them being saved at the very end of their sinful lives, the Holy Spirit assured him that each one who believed would be with God.

Charles took the gospel to Ireland and Wales, where, in the latter country, he met and courted Sarah Gwynne. On April 8, 1749, Charles and Sarah were married in Brecon, Wales. Their marriage was one of love and devotion. Sarah, whom Charles affectionately called his "dear Sally," lovingly supported her husband through his ministry work. They had eight children, of whom only three lived past infancy: Charles Jr., Samuel, and Sarah. They settled down in Bristol, England, where Charles continued in his work and published his hymns and poetry at times for their income. Charles never ceased to write the words of his heart, help his brother, and labor for the people of England. He took many opportunities to pray for, baptize, and counsel new Christians and strengthen the Methodist churches. God was with him everywhere he went and protected him from those who persecuted him. He was safely led by God through riots and angry mobs. Countless times, his life was spared, but because of his weak body and his laborious and tiring work, Charles suffered many times from fever, exhaustion, and depression. But through it all, he remained cheerful and enthusiastic in serving the Lord.

Finally, at the close of 81 years, Charles fell ill with weakness for the last time. In the joy of soon being with the Lord, Charles dictated his last hymn to his dear Sally:

In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem?
Jesus, my only hope Thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart,
O, could I catch a smile from Thee,
And drop into eternity! (Clifford)

About a week later on March 29, 1788, Charles died peacefully in his home in Marylebone, London. His family and friends greatly missed him, for they had respected and cherished him as a dear husband, father, and brother in Christ. A memorial was set up in his honor, but they knew that he was in the presence of the Lord, whom he had served wholeheartedly and had looked forward to seeing face-to-face.

Throughout his life, Charles Wesley brought hundreds upon thousands of people to the Lord through his powerful preaching, his poetry, and most importantly, his heart-touching hymns. His life and ministry were full of countless miracles and amazing stories of God's work through him. His powerful influence on the people of Europe along with John's fine work also created the Wesleyan Revival, which turned the sinful souls of England back to God. And because of all that he did through life and love in the Lord Jesus Christ, he will receive many rewards as he enjoys his free gift of eternal life in an eternal home with the Lord, where he will continue to sing praises to His Savior. Let us all try to be as devoted to God through our faith and as loving to all in our deeds as Charles Wesley was.

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**“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time
are not worthy to be compared with the glory which
shall be revealed in us”**

(Romans 8:18).

By Nathan Warner



*The night is almost gone, and the day
is near. Therefore let us lay aside the
deeds of darkness and put on the
armor of light. Rom. 13:12*



The Day is Near
By Ginny Larsen

In His Strength

By Natalie Madsen

*"In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; in Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation."
(Exodus 15:13)*

As I sit before a blinking cursor, my fingers poised above the keyboard, my thoughts are whirling. I asked the Lord to help me choose an endurance topic for an article, and He immediately reminded me what is *really* on my heart right now. For quite some time, the Lord has continually given me a burden for the lost and a reminder of the fact that I cannot simply sit back and pine for unbelievers to approach *me*, to ask *me* how they can be saved. I cannot simply hope my life serves as a sufficient example by itself. While my actions *do* serve as a reflection of what I believe, words cannot be forfeited for the sake of comfort and ease. The feeling that rests in my heart right now is discouragement.

Yesterday, I watched a video about a ministry effort that is being started in California. The ministry director made up his own unbiblical approach to evangelism: stop people, say hello, quote a few rapid-fire verses, and wrap it up neatly with a "repeat after me" sinner's prayer. False converts are being deceived right and left! The Last Days are here – time is ticking. We have only a short time left to bear testimony to the saving grace of Christ our King. Atheists, agnostics, free-thinkers – they are all gathering to proclaim their independence and blasphemy. The world is turning from the One who created it. The one true, living God is rejected in science, religious studies, history, and politics. Christians are being murdered, tortured, mocked, and hated.

Nonetheless, as born-again Christians, we are commanded to "prove [ourselves] to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom [we] appear as

lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15). The Apostle Paul continues, proclaiming that he holds "fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain" (Philippians 2:16). Are we holding fast so that we will "have reason to glory"? I know I fail. It is incredibly discouraging when the world ignores the message of salvation in Christ through repentance and faith in Him alone. When we finally muster our courage to speak words of truth, we are often ignored or pointed out as lunatics.

Some verses of pure conviction that have stabbed my heart over the past couple of years are found in Romans 10:14-15, which say, "How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, 'HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!'" *How will they hear the Gospel unless we preach it?*

The world is dying from the disease of sin. We are pharmacists, in a sense; we have the medicine to heal their sickness! We have to get the cure to them, but God is the One who must make it do the healing. This is a truth among others that the Lord has to consistently bring to my mind, because I so frequently feel like giving up spreading His fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15-16).

We must keep in mind that *when we serve our Lord and King, our work is never in vain!* The Lord has complete control over the result of the workings of our weak hands. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:58, said, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."

Whatever battles we appear to lose on earthly terms, our victory is in Jesus Christ, Who will ultimately win over all evil for eternity. First John 5:4 says, "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our

faith,” and Christ announced, “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

When we spread the Gospel, we are merely planting seeds. We do not save anyone ourselves – the Lord is the One who convicts the heart and opens the eyes of the unbeliever. “So then neither he who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth” (1 Corinthians 3:7).

Our work does not return void. Although we might struggle to survive in this world of darkness, our perseverance will be rewarded. Hebrews 6:10 says, “For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.”

He is FAITHFUL and His promises are SURE! His is a strength that outlasts any other power, and His faithfulness is surer than any earthly assurance. “Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass” (1 Thesalonians 5:24)!

What affliction or turmoil we experience here on earth gives us a longing for eternity. Whatever sort of hurt we have here – this “momentary, light affliction” – is, as 2 Corinthians 4:17 says, “producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison...”

What we face here on earth is temporal. What we face for eternity is forever. We need to fix our eyes on the things above, the things of Christ, the *eternal* things. When we focus on Him, all earthly things fade away, and we can bear any turmoil here on earth, as we are “persecuted, but not forsaken” (2 Corinthians 4:9).

“He Leadeth Me” is a hymn that illustrates the beautiful Savior we have, the gentle, just, and true Shepherd who leads us.

*He leadeth me! O blessed thought!
O words with heav’nly comfort fraught!
Whate’er I do, where’er I be,
Still ‘tis God’s hand that leadeth me!*

*Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mind,
Nor ever murmur nor repine,
Content, whatever lot I see,
Since ‘tis Thy hand that leadeth me!*

*And when my task on earth is done,
When, by Thy grace, the vict’ry’s won,
E’en death’s cold wave I will not flee,
Since God thru Jordan leadeth me!*

*He leadeth me, He leadeth me,
By His own hand He leadeth me:
His faithful foll’wer I would be,
For by His hand He leadeth me.*

Let our hope rest in Christ our Lord and King and let our endurance come from Him, in Whom we have strength and Who took all weight of punishment on Himself to Calvary. Persevere in serving our King!

“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”
(Hebrews 6:19-20)



Persevering Has Its Reward

By Dave Weatherly

Christianity is a love relationship between God and His children. Those who are truly saved have a deep love for God. The Apostle John writes of this love in 1 John 4:19: *"We love because he first loved us."* A true believer has an ongoing love for God that holds fast in times of trouble.

Persevering through trials is proof of living faith (James 1:12). Our faith is tested to prove its genuineness, and by God's faithfulness to us in trials, we have assurance of our Salvation. It is through God's power that we are preserved, not by any work of our own.

*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. **These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.** Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy" (1 Peter 1:3-8).*

What we need to do as believers is to trust in God's promise that He will preserve us as Jude reminds us that Jesus *"...is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen"* (Jude 1:24-25). It is Jesus who keeps us from stumbling; no

strength of our own will suffice.

Perseverance does not earn eternal life, but it is proof of true faith and love. James writes, *"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him"* (James 1:12). The ultimate reward for the believer is the "Crown of Life."

FORGIVEN

*There are hours and days and years
When hope is tightly bound
And joy cannot express itself
In a thought or dream or sound.*

*There are prisons for the mind
And ransoms for the heart
That we easily enter
But not easily depart.*

*And here we'd languish long
Straining against the walls
Wishing someone'd hear us
Besides echoes to our calls*

*Into these haunted houses
Only Christ will find us out
And raze the ragged walls
Built by fear and doubt.*

See!

*The chains are falling round you
That once had held your thought
The dungeon walls have crumbled
The gates lean into rot!*

*The road is now before you
The Way you always knew
The Friend who never left you
Is going to see you through.*

By Nathan Warner

Enduring Perilous Times

By Jani Lynn Warner

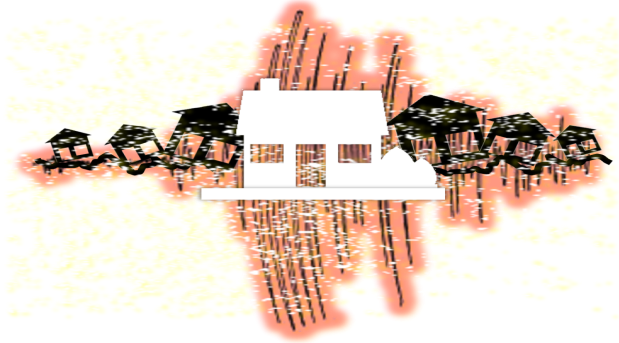
We are living in perilous times: *"...in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"* (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

We are living in times when even the secular world recognizes the "lovers of their own selves" and has labeled them "narcissists" in their own vocabulary. It is interesting to note that many psychologists claim narcissists cannot be helped because they refuse to recognize that they have a problem.

In 2 Timothy 3, these "lovers of their own selves" are described as a danger to all those around them. Our world today is clearly being run by these dangerous "lovers of their own selves." They seem to be on a pathway to controlling and destroying everything around them in these days of worldwide distress – including economies, populations, and even the earth itself. Sometimes we may wonder how close we are to the prophecy of the seventh trumpet, when the 24 elders worship God and say that the time of His wrath has come, and He *"shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth"* (Revelation 11:15-19).

One thing we see today is that the marketing of fear and terror is certainly lucrative in these times – doomsday information is everywhere on almost every subject, whether on economies, wars, persecutions, earthquakes, weather modification, disasters, terraforming the earth, transformationalism, scalar weapons, plagues, nuclear radiation, food toxicity, and possible disaster scenarios for the "end of the world" on every front. Certainly, this is a time when there are *"men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the*

world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Luke 21:26 RSV). The KJV translates the Scripture as "men's hearts will fail them for fear."



To "faint" is to fall, to dismay or deprive of strength. The 1828 Webster's Dictionary defines "dismay" as a fall or loss of courage, yielding to fear, a loss of firmness effected by fear or terror. If ever we Christians worldwide need encouragement to have our hearts and minds fixed firmly on God and His Kingdom, it is now. In Joshua 1:9, God declares, *"Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid; neither be thou dismayed."* The hymn "How Firm a Foundation" was inspired by Isaiah 41:10, and the second verse reads: "Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed, For I am thy God and will still give thee aid; I'll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand."

The world is in terror and fear, I believe, because they know they have a problem – Jesus is coming! Today, mankind is making shelters in the deep places of the earth, *"in the caves and the rocks of the mountains"* (Revelation 6:15). Some of these shelters are even for seeds! The world's problems, however, are not the Christian's problems. The Christian's problem is fear of the world. When we fear the world, we fear its terrors. Such fear is idolatry, because we are to fear God and God alone. We are saved from God's wrath and have a future and a hope in Christ.

How do we overcome the world, the deceiver, the accuser, that old serpent called the devil, and Satan, *"which deceiveth the whole world"* (Revelation 12:9)? In Revelation 12:11 we read: *"And they overcame him by the*

blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." God will not forsake us, for He is our firm foundation, faithful and true. The last verse of the hymn declares: "The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to its foes; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

The Perseverance of God

By Jesse Larsen

While there are verses in the Bible that emphasize a perseverance on our part (such as Hebrews 10:36), there are also some verses that emphasize a perseverance on God's part. The perseverance that God expects from us will not be accomplished unless it is God who is persevering through us. For example, Paul told believers that *"it is God who works in you both to **will** and to **do** for His good pleasure"* (Philippians 2:13).

Personally, I believe that God has given us a free will in order to accept His free gift of eternal life. A gift, by its very nature, must be received - otherwise it is not truly a gift. This is why John 1:12 says, *"As many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God."* So we receive Him first, and **then** we become children of God (not the other way around), which is one of the main reasons that I believe in free will.

However, although I believe in free will, I also believe that our wills are regenerated once we have been born again, and it is then God who works in us to will and to do for His good pleasure (as Philippians 2:13 declares). Philippians 1:6 declares that **He will** complete the work that He has started in us - because it is in fact the Holy Spirit who is persevering through us!

Paul told the Philippians to *"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"* (Philippians 2:12) just before stating that it is God who works in them to will and to

do for His good pleasure. Notice that Paul was not telling them to work for their salvation (which is the idea that some people seem to get when they read that verse). Instead, he was telling them to work out the salvation that God had already given them. This is also made clear by the statement: *"created in Christ Jesus **unto** good works"* (Ephesians 2:10).

It is our being created in Christ Jesus that enables us to do the good works that He requires of us - and by doing them, we are working out the salvation that He has given us. This explains what Paul meant when he said that he was *"striving according to [God's] working which works in me mightily"* (Colossians 1:29). To strive without His working in us will only leave us burned out, because our motive may not have been righteous. But God's working in us gives us the right motives as He continually searches our heart (See Psalm 139:23-24). He also gives us the strength to perform His work. This is important to remember because there are times when we get so carried away in the work of the Lord that we forget the Lord of the work. I say that not to look down on anyone, but because I have been there myself, which is why I know it to be true.

But the Lord's working through us is done more and more as we abide in His Word: *"If you abide in My word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free"* (John 8:31-32). Because of this (and also because 1 Peter 1:23 tells us that we are born again by the Word of God), I cannot emphasize the importance of the Word of God enough. It is what keeps us from sin (See Psalm 119:11). The Word of God is what gives us strength to will and to do God's pleasure, is described by the Psalmist as *"a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"* (Psalm 119:105), and is understandable to the young (See Psalm 119:9).

Reading the Word causes us to want to read it more. Like many other things, we need to develop a taste for it. And once we delight in His Word (the Lord and His Word go together), He then gives us the desires of our heart (See Psalm 37:4). Until then, we will

end up frustrated, seeking things that only satisfy temporarily before leaving us even emptier than we were in the first place. Once again, I have been there myself, and the times that I have been the most depressed and discouraged are times when I have not been abiding in His Word.

Since it is through His Word that the truth sets us free (See John 8:31-32), it is through His Word that God's Holy Spirit perseveres through us. Only then is it true that *"tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character hope"* (Romans 5:3-4). But we quickly become burned out if we strive in the flesh to persevere. We need to recognize the Believer's position in Christ to persevere as God would have us persevere.

For example, Hebrews 10:14 says, *"By one offering [Christ] has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."* Obviously, someone who has been perfected **forever** cannot be unperfected, which brings me to the words of Philippians 1:6 again: *"He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."* With some of us, there may be missed opportunities to have grown more in our walk with the Lord, but the above verse guarantees that God Himself will continue to persevere in those who have *"been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever"* (1 Peter 1:23). Anything that has been born of corruptible seed can perish, but those who are truly born of incorruptible seed *"shall never perish"* (John 10:28)! Never means never, and this is why 1 John 3:9 states that God's seed **remains** in those who have been born of God.

Although we will not reach sinless perfection while we are on this earth, those whom God is persevering through no longer **practice** sin, because they see sin as God sees sin. So it is the Holy Spirit who sees sin for what it is, through us, and therefore it is He who perseveres through us. I believe that this is what is meant by the statement: *"sealed [by the Holy Spirit] unto the day of redemption"* (Ephesians 4:30). A true believer may struggle with sin

(especially a babe in Christ - See 1 Corinthians 3:1), but, nevertheless, *"sin shall not have dominion over you [if] you are no longer under law but under grace"* (Romans 6:14). And once again, the Word of God is where to turn if we are struggling with sin (See Psalm 119:11). When a true believer understands their position that they *"shall never perish"* (John 10:28), they have far more gratitude and a much higher motive to obey the Lord than if they strove in the flesh to obey His commandments. They then realize God's commandments *"are not burdensome"* (1 John 5:3). If someone who seemed to be a believer clearly rejects Christ, the following verse explains why....

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us" (1 John 2:19).



June Newsletter - LOVE

Submission Deadline: June 3

Publish Date: June 10

Theme: Love, Love your neighbor as yourself, love your enemies, God is love, the love of God, marriage, marriage commitment, "He answered, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' ; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" etc...