

Perseverance

- I. At times in Christian experience, for various reasons, a Christian's zeal for God, His word, His house, His service and His people might wear thin or grow cold. Ministers need to consider that and act accordingly. **ISA 50:4.**
- A. In a culture where sin abounds and temptation is on every side, true love may become cold. **MAT 24:12.**
1. Perilous times are not defined by political or economic trouble but by rampant sin. **2TI 3:1-5.**
 2. An inordinate affection for the world and the flesh can choke God's word (**LUK 8:14**) and lure one into abandoning the faithful. **2TI 4:10.**
 3. It becomes very difficult to discern the inward working of the Spirit when a person lives like this. **ROM 8:5; 1JO 2:15.**
- B. Under continual oppression, people can become numb to the encouragement of God or His minister. **EXO 6:9; JOB 9:16.**
1. Be honest. Are the burdens and responsibilities which God has given you all that heavy? **HEB 12:3-4; JER 12:5; PRO 24:10.**
 2. Be cautious. In times of weakness, desperate and foolish decisions are sometimes made. **GEN 25:29-33; HEB 12:15-16.**
 3. Be considerate. Negative contributions to the house of God can be contagious. **DEU 20:8; JOS 14:8.**
 4. Sometimes, desperate situations are needed to humble a person sufficiently to remember the Lord. **PSA 78:34; DEU 8:3 c/w ISA 57:15.**
 5. Being faint does not exempt us from persevering in the work of God. **JDG 8:4; 2SAM 23:10; REV 2:10.**
 6. Our weakness only magnifies our dependence upon God, Who gives strength to the weak who wait on Him. **2CO 12:9; HEB 11:34; ISA 40:29-31.**
 7. If you must grow faint, do so FOR God's house, not BECAUSE of it. **PSA 84:2, 10.**
- II. Unrealized expectation is a great contributor to lack of zeal. **PRO 13:12.**
- A. Do not confuse *deferred* hope with *empty* hope. The former promotes strength, the latter weakness. **PSA 27:13-14 ct/w PRO 29:18.**
- B. No Christian ought ever to say that there is no hope. **1TI 1:1.**
- C. Our troubles may be *because* of our hope, not the *loss* of our hope. **ACT 26:6-8; 28:20.**
- D. Be cautious to not confuse God's promises with personal expectations. Much disillusionment comes from assuming fulfillment of what God has not promised. **JER 14:13-16.**
- III. God does not run the universe on our time schedule. Faith in His promises must be complemented by *patience* (**HEB 6:10-12; 10:35-36; 12:1**). Consider these examples where faith AND patience were required:
- A. Abraham. **GEN 12:2-4.**
1. Relocated five times. **GEN 12:5, 10; 13:1, 18; 20:1.**
 2. Contended with famine. **GEN 12:10.**
 3. Strife and family trouble. **GEN 13:7-9.**
 4. War against the kings. **GEN 14:14.**
 5. A weak moment. **GEN 16:2, 16.**

6. Twenty-five years later, the promised son is given. **GEN 21:5.**
- B. Joseph. More than twenty years elapsed (during which time life was not always pleasant) from the time of his dreams to their fulfillment. **GEN 37:2; 41:46-47; 45:6.**
- C. Caleb. He waited for more than 40 years to receive the promise of inheritance. **JOS 14:7-10.**
- D. Elijah. One of the greatest prophets of God for more than three years could only minister to a widow in a strange land while God's timetable was fulfilled. **LUK 4:25-26.**
- E. Their endurance was, like Moses', tempered by their *respect to the recompense of the reward*. **HEB 11:26.**
- F. If the goal for which one waits is valued highly, time is of little consequence. **GEN 29:20.**
- IV. Christian experience is often likened to agriculture. Seasons of sowing without reaping should be expected, but that doesn't mean we give up on sowing. **ECC 11:4-6; PSA 126:5-6; MAR 4:26-29; GAL 6:9; JAM 5:7.**
- V. If you have become faint in your Christian walk, do as David. **1SAM 30:6; PSA 27:14.**
- VI. Remember, patience is a fruit of the Spirit (**GAL 5:22**) and thus an evidence of sonship and full salvation. **ROM 8:11, 14.**
- A. Doing well may not be recompensed until Resurrection Day. **LUK 14:13-14.**
- B. The person who continues in obedience even though he doesn't see immediate rewards shall reap everlasting life. **ROM 2:6-7.**