

THE

HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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PERSEVERANCE

Although the word "perseverance" appears only once in the Bible in Ephesians 6:18, it is a characteristic which commonly shines in God's people. To persevere means to be steadfast in purpose, to continue in some course of action in spite of the opposition. It means to endure and to persist in an effort that is considered difficult. Now let us ask ourselves: Do we 'persevere' as we try to live the Christian life?

Perseverance also means that everytime we fall down, we get right back up and do better the next time. If I sin, I should not throw my hands up and doom myself to failure. I must repent of that sin and try not to do it again!

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It takes courage and a strong will and this is probably illustrated very convincingly in the life story of this certain man, shown below. (His age appears in the column on the right)

Failed in business	22
Ran for Legislature -- defeated	23
Again failed in business	24
Elected to Legislature	25
Sweetheart died	26
Had a nervous breakdown	27
Defeated for Speaker	29
Defeated for Elector	31
Defeated for Congress	34
Elected to Congress	37
Defeated for Congress	39
Defeated for Senate	46
Defeated for Vice President	47
Defeated for Senate	49
Elected President of the U. S.	51

That was the record of Abraham Lincoln. He could have easily quit early in life, but instead he persevered.

Everytime we stumble in this life, whether we are overcome by a temptation or we fail to act in a Christian manner, we must learn that all is not lost. Sometimes as disciples of Christ we give up hope of eternal life too easily. We think that if we make just one mistake, then we are immediately bound for hell and there is absolutely nothing that can be done about it. But the Lord watches over his children. *"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand."* (Psa. 37:23,24)

We are also told in 2 Tim. 4:18 that the Lord *"will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom"*. That applies to every disciple who strives to

walk *"in the light"*. As long as we abide IN Christ, we can accomplish anything *"through Christ which strengtheneth me"* (Phil. 4:13). Brethren, if we will never give up in trying to live the righteous life, no matter what the opposition, then yes, we most certainly can and will make it to heaven! That is what the Good News is all about!

To help us in our perseverance, we have the perfect example in Jesus Christ. Often our life seems impossible and the temptations appear irresistible. Often it is a struggle to be *"steadfast in the faith"*. We could easily throw in the towel and join the multitudes who show no respect for God's commandments. But, lest we forget, our situation is a cake walk when compared with what our Saviour went through! *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."* (Heb. 12:2-4) When we think we are ready to give up being a Christian, first of all remember that Christ sacrificed Himself for you and me. He died a cruel and agonizing death on the cross, not for us to go halfway to heaven and then to quit. He died so that we may go all the way!

The Scriptures plainly state that the reward is ours if we never give up. *"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved"* (Matt. 24:13) *"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, IF we faint not."* (Gal. 6:9) Brethren, if we persevere, the reward truly will be worth the effort. So let's not get downhearted or

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discouraged over the few obstacles we may have to go around. Let's not pout or mope either about how tough the Christian life is. We know it is the only path to travel. All it takes is a little perseverance. *"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed?"* (Heb. 12:11-13)

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Where did Joshua fall face down after his first military defeat?
2. What did James and John want to do to the town that did not welcome Jesus?
3. What was John told to do with the little book he took from the seventh angel?
4. Which bird is not mentioned in the Bible: crane, crow, eagle, owl, ostrich, or stork?
5. With what did Samson kill a lion?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Jephthah, a judge of Israel, was born of a harlot. True or False? TRUE (Judg. 11:1)

2. God tells his people in Leviticus to be partial to the poor. True or False? FALSE (Lev. 19:15)

3. In his dream Jacob saw the Lord also on the ladder. True or False? FALSE, HE WAS ABOVE IT (Gen. 28:13)

4. Job, who claimed God as his creator and giver of life, also states his affliction came from God. True or False? TRUE (Job 10:13)

5. In Psalm 150 every verse contains the word "praise". True or False? TRUE

CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE ALIKE?

Has there ever been an author who, in writing a book, did not expect his readers to understand that book in just the way in which he presents his subject matter? In writing on some political or human interest subject, no author would write a book in order to puzzle or perplex his readers. The most important subject of all time is Salvation! Surely the Father in Heaven, who *"so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son"*, would not inspire the apostles (who wrote the New Testament) to perplex people concerning salvation.

A common conception today is expressed in these words: "Oh, well I don't think God intends for us to understand the Bible alike anyway." These words are spoken to account for differences in religious practice. Is such an explanation acceptable to God? Absolutely not!

God has always presented His commandments in such a way that they could not be misunderstood. From the very beginning it was so. God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit of a particular tree in the garden. He told them that eating the fruit would mean death to them. Did they understand that command? They certainly did. Eve confessed this to the Satanic serpent. Hence, our first parents understood the way of death and the way of life, and they understood it alike.

God is the same today and forever more. Today there is only one way to understand God and that is to understand Him alike. Does it seem reasonable that God would give Christ for the salvation of lost humanity, and not make the commandments sufficiently plain of that Savior? If the way is obscure and perplexing, CHRIST DIED IN VAIN. It would be cruel of God to say that the Lord shall come, *"in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting punishment from the presence of the Lord"* (II Thess. 1:8-9) and then fail to reveal that gospel sufficiently simple for us to understand alike. Anyone who accuses God of such a thing is guilty of blasphemy!

Christ didn't expect man-kind to understand differently and be divided into many denominations. But He prayed that God would bless the apostles and, *"those that believe on me through their word: that they may all be one, even as thou art in me and I in thee; that they may be one in us"* (John 17:20-21) Jesus expected that those who believe the Bible would be one! Believing the word of the apostles makes just one people. Notice carefully this scripture recorded in (Acts 4:32) *"And the multitude of them that believed were*

of one heart and soul"

Paul believed, through inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the apostles would pen the wonderful words of life so all could understand the doctrine. So he said (Romans 16:17) "Mark them that cause division, and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them". Paul commanded every congregation to which he addressed a letter that they must be one. See the following: (I Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:4-6; Phil. 2:2; Col. 3:15; etc.) Similarly Peter and John commanded a oneness in understanding. (I Peter 3:8; II John 9).

With these and many other verses, we can only conclude that we must be one in understanding of the scriptures. God has spoken plainly and in simple language. Division and misunderstanding results from men's lusts. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they will turn away their ears from the truth, and shall turn aside unto fables." (II Tim. 4:3) Let all beware lest they be guilty of this sin.

written by THOMAS CAMPBELL

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submitted by Buster Boyd

Why not change the pattern
of your prayers now and then?
Wake up some morning and ask,
"Dear Lord, is there anything
I can do for YOU today?"

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
May 4 - 8	Chestnut Grove Church Danville, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
May 8 - 10 (F-Su)	West Gadsden Church Gadsden, AL 7:00 evenings 10:30am & 5:00pm Sun.	David Burnham Max Gaskins Marty Livingston J. D. Nash
May 10	Antioch Church Livingston, TN	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
May 17-22	Hopkinsville, OH	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
May 22-24	Poplar Grove Church Burkesville, KY	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
May 29-31	Poplar Bluff, MO	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)

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WHO SHALL BE SAVED?

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he SHALL BE SAVED." (Jn. 10:9)

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord SHALL BE SAVED." (Rom. 10:13)

"He that believeth and is baptized SHALL BE SAVED." (Mark 16:16)

"He that endureth to the end SHALL BE SAVED." (Matt. 10:22)