

## Deepening The Walk

# Faith Perseveres

(If you have questions, please feel free to contact Kelly Dixon by email [kelly@ladiesforJesus.com](mailto:kelly@ladiesforJesus.com))

Christopher Columbus is one man in history that was known for his perseverance. He had four known voyages from which one of them was fruitful in discovering the Americas. During his voyages there were many struggles many of which began with government and continued through the management of his crew. For example, three days before they discovered America the crew demanded that Columbus turn around to sail back to Spain. All their food had spoiled and there was talk of a revolt amongst the crew. The discovery of land actually caused this to cease. Another such struggle was the riding out of a hurricane during his fourth voyage in which Columbus' ships suffered minimal damage. Columbus was a Catholic Christian and while many still argue as to whether his motives for his voyages were religious reasons or for his own gain of wealth, there are many quotes from his journals that show he recognized his strength to persevere came from God.

Washington Irving, who was an historian in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, wrote of Christopher Columbus:

"He was devoutly pious: religion mingled with the whole course of his thoughts and actions, and shone forth in his most private and unstudied writings. Whenever he made any great discovery, he celebrated it by solemn thanks to God. The voice of prayer and melody of praise rose from his ships when they first beheld the New World, and his first action on landing was to prostrate himself upon the earth and return thanksgivings . . ."

As you begin this study on perseverance, may this description of Columbus' character be an inspiration.

Begin by looking up the definition for perseverance and write it down here:

After reading the basic definition of perseverance, do you feel you are successful at implementing perseverance in your own life? Why or why not?

God uses lessons within perseverance throughout our walk with Him. It isn't one of those simple lessons that you learn and necessarily master. It is one that you learn how to implement at one level and then as you progress through your walk with Him you learn how to implement at a different level. Ultimately, each level builds upon itself and strengthens your faith. That is why we start by looking at the basic definition of perseverance. The basic definition is a base that you can go back to at times to help you. However, overall the lessons God provides within the implementation of perseverance are indefinable. Let's take a deeper look by viewing two aspects of perseverance – the importance of perseverance and maintaining perseverance.

**The Importance of Perseverance:**

Perseverance is important for our spiritual growth. Spiritual growth takes time and repetition. Implied within perseverance is time and repetition.

Let's first look at time:

Write down what these verses mean to you in your own words:

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Philippians 1:6

In our day of instant gratification, I believe this is a concept that is harder for us to grasp today than in past generations. We on many levels look at spiritual growth through childish eyes. We want to skip the lessons God has for us through perseverance and go right to being mature Christians. However, God shows us through His creations that this is not the way He works. Spiritual growth, like physical growth, takes time. It takes years for us to grow to adulthood and it takes a full season for fruit to mature and ripen. We put too much focus on how fast we grow when God is concerned about how strong we grow.

Next, Repetition:

We all have habits. You may be like me; I tend to have more bad habits than good. However, development of good spiritual habits is valuable to our spiritual growth. To develop a habit you must repeat the action on a regular basis. Development of the following habits helps us in our spiritual growth and in our perseverance. Let's look at a few good habits that would be beneficial to our spiritual growth and what Scripture says about each of them.

According to the following Scripture references, what are the benefits of the following habits.

1. *The Habit of Time with God's Word:*

Psalm 18:29-30; Matthew 7:24-27; John 8:31-32; John 15:7-8

2. *The Habit of Prayer:*

Psalm 6:8-10; Matthew 21:18-22; James 5:13-16; 1 Peter 3:8-12

3. *The Habit of Tithing:*

Malachi 3:6-12; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 1 John 3:16-19

4. *The Habit of Fellowship:*

1 Malachi 3:16; Matthew 18:18-20; John 13:34-35; 1 John 1:5-7



Associate with like-minded individuals:

For our spiritual growth, it is important not only for us to persevere, but also for us to associate with like-minded individuals who are striving for similar goals, similar habits, and who understand the need for perseverance in their own lives.

According to Hebrews 10:36-39, why do we need to persevere? What group are we like? (v. 39)

It is hard for us to persevere on our own. When we try to do so, we begin to think it is just us against the world. That is why it is important to frequently assemble with other Christians. Fellowship with other Christians will help us to not get discouraged because they will help encourage us in our common goal to glorify God.

Keep your eye on the prize – Jesus!:

There is a double prize for perseverance. Not only do we glorify the Lord when we persevere, but we also draw closer to Jesus. If we keep a clear vision of our ultimate goal, then perseverance will fall into place.

According to 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 and Philippians 3:12-15, how did Paul keep his eye on the prize?

Read Hebrews 12:1-3:

What must we do to run with perseverance? (v. 1)

How did Jesus persevere? (v. 2)

What does verse 3 suggest that we do so we will not grow weary or lose heart?

**Final Reflections:** Columbus frequently wrote in his journal just four words to describe the day's events: "Today we sailed on." And I'm sure this meant the most to him during those final days right before he discovered the Americas. Those days when he probably felt like everyone was against him and he was beginning to question himself also. There are times in our lives when there's no sign of success, but we must keep sailing on. Columbus would not have experienced the reward of his discovery if he quit and turned around. It would have been a failed voyage in his eyes and the possible damage to his spirit for another voyage could have been detrimental. In our lives we must remember that each voyage that the Lord sets sail in our lives has a reward in the end. It is our responsibility to keep our eyes on Jesus and sail on. - Kelly Dixon

**Your Turn to Reflect:** As it stands today, how well do you think you are doing at perseverance? Take a moment and write down the lessons the Lord has taught you about perseverance in your own life. Review the Scriptures that support those lessons to give you encouragement to continue persevering.

Write this Scripture on an index card and put it in a place you will see it often. Read it daily and be encouraged to remember the Lord is constantly working to fulfill His purpose for your life. Ask Him to not abandon His works in you.

*"The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me;  
Your love, O Lord, endures forever -  
do not abandon the works of Your hands."  
Psalm 138:8*