



A note from Pastor Steve

Hello, I had a conversation the other week with a good man of God. We were talking about overcoming our self doubts. It

becomes easy to want to do more and then feel like you never have enough time to get things done, from the to do list at home, to a friend that we need to reach out too. There is always something else to do. When we get in those places of doubting our selves it can feel like it is to much.

We know we can not do everything, but it can feel like we are letting God down. This is when my friend asked me how would I feel if my daughter did not get everything done. Would I be upset? Would I be disappointed? The answer to that for me is clearly no. I understand she can't do everything. I am not concern that she is perfect in everything today. My concern is she growing and/or improving. This is when sort of light bulb goes off. God is a better father than I am. He is the prefect father.

"Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? ¹⁰ Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? ¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" Matthew 7:9 -11 NRSV

We are on a journey and the goal is to move towards Christ. You are not perfect today and can't do everything, but you can grow and seek after God's Kingdom. Remember, just as we don't expect perfection from our loved ones. God understands that we are still working out our salvation. Don't give up... Run the Race Marked out for us.

***Raising up followers who demonstrate
Christ's love!***

Perseverance

We are destined to be conformed to the image of Christ, who is himself “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15); the divine image in which we were originally created is restored to us in Jesus Christ. But this process of being reshaped according to God’s intended pattern takes time.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit and is called sanctification in Christian Theology. After turning our hearts back to God and receiving the justification that comes through faith in Christ, then begins the works of bringing our whole character in line with that of Christ. We begin to mature in knowledge, wisdom, and love.

Our growth in the Spirit is marked by movements up and down, forward and backward, and sometimes even in circles! For human beings, the spiritual life is no straight line of unimpeded progress. It is, however, by God’s unwavering goodness, always undergirded by grace. This is what gives us the hope and courage to persevere.

Persevering on the journey is illustrated quite simply by the response of a monk once made to a curious person’s question, “What do you do up there in that monastery anyway?” The monk replied, “We take a few steps, then we fall down. Then we get up, take another step, and fall down again. And then we get up. . . .” As someone has observed, “It is not falling in the water that drowns us, but staying there.”

- Rueben Job & Marjorie

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. - Heb. 12:1-2 NRSV

Dearly beloved Lord, you know our frailties as well as our strengths. Our largeness of heart can shrink to the size of the next distraction and our power to will one thing can drain away before the insistent claims of many things. Therefore I give you my strengths, that they may be made more resilient. And I offer you my weaknesses, that they may become strengths. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who remained steadfast to the end. Amen.

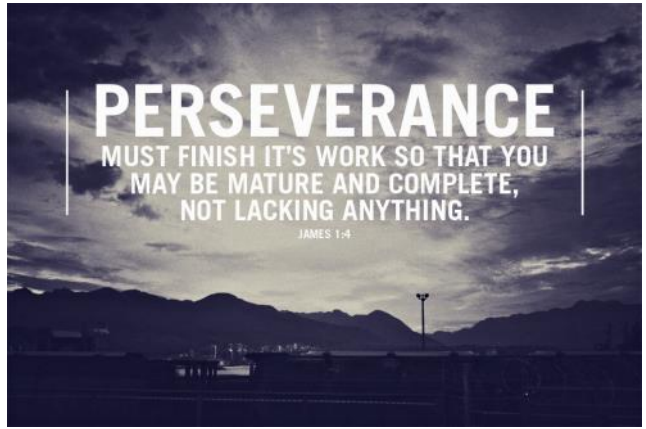
When I was in high school, I spent several months working with a child who had been brain damaged at birth. Volunteers in teams of two would place the boy face down on a table. We would stand on each side of the child, grasp his arms and legs firmly, and begin exercising his limbs in alternating rhythms that resembled the swimmer's crawl stroke: left arm and leg forward and back, then right arm and leg back and forth for the prescribed time. The conviction underlying the work was that rhythmic movement of the child's members would create new nerve pathways in his brain. The goal was to strengthen basic patterns of motor coordination so that the boy's movements could be freer and more intentional.

The deep rhythms of the Christian life are like the patterning exercises used in that boy's physical therapy. These rhythms, which are reflected in the seasons and liturgies of our common Christian heritage, stimulate new spiritual sensitivities in us. Their purpose is to reinforce healthy patterns of discipleship so that our witness to the mystery of Christ among us might be unimpaired. And the conviction behind this understanding is that these deep rhythms mirror the rhythms of God's own life revealed in Jesus Christ and imparted to us through our baptismal union with him. Such rhythms therefore trace a pattern of new life with God and one another measured by the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13).

- John Mogabgab

Perseverance

As we pass through times of feeling adrift, not knowing where we are going or what we are meant to do, we can learn from the rich biblical examples of those who literally floated at sea and had no idea what they were to do.



Noah bobbed about on an oceanic flood, clueless as to when his ordeal would end (Gen. 7-8). All he could do was wait on God's timing. Eventually, over the long and landless days, waiting turned to watching. Let's send out a dove, he thought and the dove was gone. Ah. It's coming back! But what is this? It carries nothing. It has found nowhere to land. Days passed. More waiting. Let's send it out again. A long watch until evening. Then finally, Ah here it comes with a leaf in its beak! Noah watched. Amid the waiting, hope and a sense of future possibility emerged.

Paul and a half-starved shipload of travelers dodged shoals one stormy night off the coast of Malta (Acts 27). All they could do was wait in fear and uncertainty. Wait for the next ugly rock to slice out of the darkness. Wait for the nearly inevitable crunch and splintering of boards. Wait and, it turned out, do one other thing. At Paul's urging, they broke bread and gave thanks to God. It was crazy, wild act. Wilder than the wind, crazier than the pitching of the boat. Their spirits lightened. They made it through the night. Dawn finally glowed crimson in the east. The ship itself shattered on a reef, yet all on board safely reached land, waiting and adrift no more.

At times we drift in our lives. Amid the uncertainty and suspense of not knowing, or the sheer tedium of things remaining the same, we can learn to keep our eyes wide open, scanning the horizon of our experience. Like Noah we may have to do this for a long time

until at last some green sprig signals, “There’s land ahead.” Signs may beckon through something as ordinary as a phone call, as intimate as the touch of a child’s hand, or as subtle as an inner urge whispering, “This is where you need to go!” Like Paul and his near sinking boatload, we would be wise to feast ourselves again and again on signs of promise and hope even as we are tossed about on the sea of not knowing.

—Stephen Doughty

God’s people are always and ever, standing on the banks of the River Jordan. We are always, and ever, on the threshold of the coming of the kingdom, the coming of the governance of God. We are not there yet. We are on the way. It is a journey, not a destination. And therefore, we are ever living with discontinuity — leaving continuity, leaving security, behind in order to embrace what lies ahead. We, of course, give thanks for what has been. We did not arrive at the banks of the Jordan without a history, without leaders, without tradition. We value these and give thanks for them. We tell stories and celebrate what has been. It is how we prepare ourselves to face the future with hope and with joyful anticipation.

With thanks for what has been and with faith in what by the grace of God, is yet to be, we step off into the Jordan River. It’s deep and wide, but milk and honey’s on the other side.

Scripture	Acts 5:12-42	Hebrews 11 & 12
Ezekiel 36: 16-38	2 Corinthians 6:1-12	Acts 27
Proverbs 7:1-3	Philippians 3:1-12	James 1:1-18
Luke 21	Psalms 71	Romans 5:1– 11

Stories of Perseverance

Wondrous God, your saving help is the rock on which our hope is built and our shelter in times of trial. May the memory of your faithfulness sustain our faithfulness to you. And let us never tire of praising you, no matter how difficult our circumstances may be. Amen.

- Prayer from Psalm 71

One day George Muller began praying for five of his friends. After many months, one of them came to the Lord. Ten years later, two others were converted. It took 25 years before the fourth man was saved. Muller persevered in prayer until his death for the fifth friend, and throughout those 52 years he never gave up hoping that he would accept Christ! His faith was rewarded, for soon after Muller's funeral the last one was saved.

From the diary of John Wesley . . .

1738

Sunday a.m., May 7, preached in St. Lawrence's,
was asked not to come back anymore.

Sunday p.m., May 7, preached at St. Katherine Cree's church,
deacons said, "Get out and stay out."

Sunday a.m., May 14, preached at St. Ann's,
can't go back there either.

Sunday afternoon, May 21, preached at St. John's,
kicked out again.

Sunday evening, May 21, preached at St. somebody else's,
Bennet's maybe, deacons called special meeting
and said I couldn't return.

1739

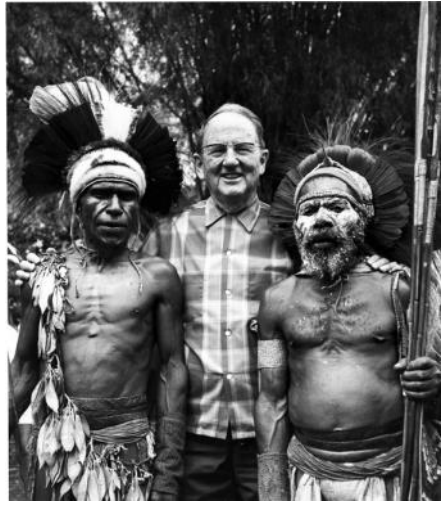
Tuesday, May 8, afternoon service, preached in a pasture in Bath,
1,000 people came to hear me.

Sunday, September 9, preached to 10,000 people
three weeks in a row in Moorfield's.

1742,

Friday, March 10, preached in meadow, chased out of meadow as
a bull was turned loose during the services.

“Some time ago, I read about the work of a Wycliffe Bible translator in a remote village in Papua New Guinea. When the opening chapters of Genesis were first translated into the native language, the attitude toward women in the tribe changed overnight. They had not realized or understood that the woman had been specially formed out of the side of the man. Without even hearing this concept



developed, these people immediately grasped the ideas of equality between the sexes and began adjusting their behavior. The people heard. They believed. They obeyed. They changed. Just like that.

That change doesn't mean everyone in the tribe immediately came to faith in Christ, however. While they immediately recognized the respect God has for both men and women, the members of this tribe had their own hard-to-abandon gods and superstitions. One of their practices was to spit on the wounds of the sick. Their medicine men were known as the spitters, and they did not want someone like Jesus to take away their status in the village.

However, the attitude changed as more of the Bible was translated into the tribe's dialect. When translators read the passage where Jesus cured a blind man in a most unusual way, the medicine men pricked up their ears. The Master spit on the ground, made a paste of mud, put it on the man's eyelids, told him to wash it off — and the man was healed.

Monthly Newsletters

Each month we will be creating and sending out this monthly newsletter to encourage you and to share about our new monthly focus. The plan is for each month to create an intentional theme that we will be looking at to develop and grow our faith. We will be adding more voices and content in future months to more effectively reach our goal. Your thoughts and input are desired.

These Newsletters will be available on the website, in print the first Sunday of the month or mailed directly to you. If you would like to receive a copy mailed to you please let the church office know.

Worship Service Schedule

This Summer we have been looking at different Topics that are not talked about much at church. Due to the nature of these topics and the busyness of Pastor's Steve schedule we will continue to not have video for the duration of this series. We do have an audio recording of our weekly messages that is available. If you like a copy of that please let the church office know. Here is the list of the upcoming Topics:

- July 4—Nationalism
- July 11—Rapture & End Times
- July 25 & Aug 1 — Sexuality
- Aug 8 — The Hidden Truth / Narrow Road
- Aug 15— Angels / Demons / Devil
- Aug 22 — Good People are Going to Hell
- Aug 29 — Perfection / Holiness