

## ☞ Persistent Faith

### Review:

**Precious Faith** – we have received the same faith as the original disciples had. It is a gift from God established in the person of Jesus Christ. We trust him to always know what is best. The more we know him, the stronger our faith will be.

**Powerful Faith** – faith that sees results starts by hearing God's voice. We must learn to hear his voice and depend completely on him, resisting all distractions. Then we can have powerful faith that sees phenomenal results.

### Persistent Faith

*The key to living victoriously, without being bogged down by life issues and all ☞ sorts of problems is to have persistent faith. **Persistent faith does not give up.** It presses on in difficult times and desperate situations. Persistent faith pushes forward regardless of the medical, bank, credit, academic, emotional or economic report. It's the kind of faith that makes you tell yourself each day: "No matter what, I win. I'm coming out of this."*

*We know that God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. So, let God handle it. Have persistent faith – believe – don't give up – press on. It can be difficult to press forward when all you see around you are issues and problems, but you must remember, Jesus Christ is the way maker (He makes a way where there is no way). What is difficult for man is an easy thing for the Lord. You just keep on trusting God.*

Don't lose hope and give up praying. Keep the faith, knowing that God will come through, even if it's not in the way you expect Him to.

In Matthew 15 a Canaanite woman cried out to Jesus for mercy on her daughter, but Jesus did not say a word. Even his disciples tried to discourage the situation and get rid of her. But she didn't give up and knelt before him saying, "Lord, help me." Even then, Jesus did not grant her request, but basically said that she was not his priority at that time. Still, she would not give up. She understood that her request was not the most important at the moment, but still asked for his mercy. Then, Jesus was impressed and said she had ☞ **great faith** and her daughter was healed.

Ever feel like you've been praying and asking over and over for the same thing and it begins to seem pointless? Maybe you think God just doesn't hear you and you may as well stop begging. But Jesus said to ask, seek and knock and the door will be opened (Matthew 7:7). Be assured when you pray, God is looking at the persistence of your faith. He is working when you can't see Him. Keep praying, your miracle is on the way.

*--Greg Laurie... Sometimes we will say, "I am not worthy to pray". I hate to break this to you. Even on your best day you weren't worthy. You never will be worthy, so get over it. Your access to God is not based on your merit. It is based on his sacrifice. God's love for you is not dependent on your progress, but on his perfection. That means you can go to God anytime no matter what you have done just like the Canaanite woman did. And*

*when you pray, seek to find the will of God and pray with persistence. That is the key to prayer. You need to get your will aligned with God's will.*

A persistent faith carries on even when we feel like God is not listening, or we begin to ☞ have doubts. **Persistent faith survives doubts** and prods us to continue in our life of prayer and practice even when it seems pointless.

We don't know all the reasons why there are delays to the answer, but here are some thoughts... Sometimes the reason you don't get the answer as quickly as you would like is because a spiritual battle is raging that you know nothing about. In Daniel 10 an angel was dispatched with an answer for his prayer, but was delayed because of a spiritual battle. It wasn't that Daniel's prayer was not answered; it was that there was something else going on in the spiritual realm. **God answers all prayers. He answers in one of four ☞ ways: No, slow, go, or grow.** Sometimes God will say no. Just no. "I am not going to do that for you. Period." Sometimes God says slow. "The time is not quite right. Later." Sometimes God says go. "You are on. I am in it. Go for it." Sometimes God says grow. He will let you go through certain circumstances that will stretch your faith. The key in all ☞ of these is to never give up, but to **keep on trusting God.**

Have you ever watched a child as they are learning to walk? All they are familiar with is just lying there or at most crawling. But even though that is all they have ever known, they recognize there is something more for them to do. They know that they are not meant to sit there or crawl on their hands and knees forever, so they get up. They take their first steps, and then they fall. They fall a lot. It could be a very frustrating thing for the child if all he focuses on is the falling. Learn the lesson of the child who's learning to walk. He ☞ **doesn't focus on his failures.** He doesn't lament the countless times he has fallen. Instead, he focuses on walking – always on walking. When he falls he gets back up and continues to do so until he falls no more. Take a cue from the toddler learning to walk.

Jesus talked about faith a lot and one of the ways he described it was by comparing to a mustard seed...

Matthew 17:20

I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.

Luke 17:6

If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you.

*--Online Devotional... The mustard plant is a fast-growing annual herb, growing up to 10-12 feet tall in only a few months. It was the smallest seed the Jewish people planted in their gardens. Yet it became their largest plant when it was grown.*

*The mustard seed is a striking example of the potential of a seed. Although it starts out small and insignificant, it quickly grows into something that blesses others.*

*Now let's consider some things about seeds other than how small they are. A seed does nothing until it is planted. In the parable of the sower, Jesus said that the seed planted in good soil is the person who hears the word and understands it. So, read your bible and do what it says. Study the word to understand it.*

*A seed can even push aside rocks or other obstacles, but it does not do so instantaneously. A seed does not move hindrances by an explosive burst, but by a relentless expansion of growth continually pushing outward and upward. As a seed becomes a plant, it continues to draw nutrients from its source, and thus continues to grow bigger and stronger, forcing hindrances out of its way. So, keep on growing in your faith by reading your bible and praying.*

*No seed is ever affected by what other seeds do. Even if other seeds die, it keeps on. A seed is persistent, never giving up. Only death will stop it from growing and working to produce fruit. This may be the most important characteristic of a mustard seed: it never gives up!*

I heard a preacher talk about a mustard plant they had in their yard years ago. They didn't really want that mustard plant, so they just ignored it, but it continued to grow. The next season, they cut it down before it was full grown, but it grew back. The season after that they poured gasoline on it when it was very small, but that little rascal just kept on growing. That is a picture of persistent faith. It never gives up, no matter what.

## **Conclusion**

2 Corinthians 5:7

We live by faith, not by sight.

We trust God no matter the circumstances may be. We don't give up just because the situation looks bleak. Remember, Peter walked on water when he kept his focus on the Lord. When we focus on the difficulties life throws at us, we begin to sink and get overwhelmed. Keep walking in faith and don't give up.

Colossians 1 talks about continuing in your faith by being established and firm and not moved from the hope we have in the gospel. In other words, stay at and persist. Stay grounded in the word and don't stray from it. Don't let anything move you or cause you to turn away. Remember the end of the story... we have a great future. So, hang in there. That's persistent faith.

Abraham is commended as one with persistent faith...

Romans 4:19-21

without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead — since he was about a hundred years old — and that Sarah's womb was also dead. **20** Yet he **did not waver** through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened

in his faith and gave glory to God, **21** being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

If you read the story in Genesis there is a lot more detail and you might question whether Abraham really had unwavering faith or not...

We're going to watch a short video with Bob Sorge talking about Abraham's unwavering faith. Bob Sorge is "the speaker who can't talk"—that is, he is reduced to a whisper because of a debilitating vocal injury he suffered over 20 years ago. Through the journey, God has given him an empowering message that explores God's purposes in fiery trials.

🔗 **Bob Sorge video.**

Unwavering, persistent faith keeps on growing. There may be ups and downs, but it never gives up. God is impressed with that kind of faith. He calls it great faith.

🔗 **This is persistent faith. It is grounded. It's brave. It's undeterred and unwavering. It's steadfast and immovable. It's increasing. It never gives up!**

2 Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. **8** Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Can you say that? Are you committed to that? Remember, this is a precious faith that is a gift from God. It comes with power and some fantastic promises. So, it is worth it to persist in this faith. Don't give up.

**Worth it All**