

Taking a stand – Persevere

Persevering in faith is not simply about holding on when times are hard; it is about learning to see God's hand in the seasons when He seems most hidden. Faith, at its core, is relational—it is not belief in an abstract idea, but trust in a living Person who has spoken, acted, and promised. Yet this trust is tested most sharply in the waiting, the silence, and the struggle. The Scriptures tell us that faith is “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen,” but they also show that this assurance is forged, not found ready-made. Abraham waited decades for a son. Joseph spent years in prison before God's promises unfolded. The psalmists cried, “How long, O Lord?” again and again. Perseverance in faith, then, is not the absence of questions, but the refusal to give up trusting the One who holds the answers.

There is something profoundly humbling about real faith. It is not a display of inner strength or positivity, nor is it naïve optimism that everything will work out. Rather, persevering faith acknowledges weakness, fear, and uncertainty—and yet still turns towards God. As Timothy Keller often said, “Faith is not the strength of your belief, but the object of your belief.” A fragile faith in a strong Saviour is infinitely better than a strong faith in a fragile idol. The essence of perseverance lies in returning again and again to Christ, even when our hearts feel cold and our prayers seem to bounce back unheard. The Lord honours those who, like the father of the possessed boy in Mark's Gospel, cry out honestly, “I believe; help my unbelief!” Such prayers are the breath of perseverance.

The challenge for many believers is that we often expect faith to feel easy. We assume that if we are walking rightly with God, our path will be smooth, our prayers quickly answered, and our purpose clear. Yet the history of the Church and the witness of Scripture suggest otherwise. God often allows our faith to be stretched so that it might be strengthened. Like a muscle, faith grows under resistance. James writes, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:2–4). When we do not understand what God is doing, we are invited to trust who He is. And it is in that trusting—when we cannot see the outcome—that our roots go deeper, our dependence grows, and our understanding of His grace matures.

In my own experience, and perhaps in yours too, perseverance often begins with remembering. Remembering who God is. Remembering what He has done. Remembering how He has been faithful in the past. The psalmist rehearses God's deeds not to inform God of what He already knows, but to remind his own soul that the Lord has never failed His people. When we rehearse the goodness of God, we train our hearts to see beyond the immediate to the eternal. We remind ourselves that delay is not denial, and that God's timing—though rarely ours—is always perfect. Persevering faith is nourished by remembrance, watered by prayer, and strengthened in community.

There is also a quiet power in the fellowship of believers when it comes to perseverance. Faith was never meant to be lived in isolation. When one member suffers, the others lift them up; when one grows weary, another lends strength. The early Church thrived under persecution not because they were extraordinary individuals, but because they were a Spirit-filled community

anchored in Christ and devoted to one another. Perseverance in faith is sustained when we allow others to see our struggles and walk with us through them. The enemy's strategy has always been to isolate, to make us feel alone in our weakness. God's design, by contrast, is to bind us together in love so that His strength might be made perfect in our shared frailty.

It is also worth remembering that perseverance is not a grim endurance but a hopeful waiting. The New Testament word often translated as "patience" carries the sense of steadfast endurance under trial, but it also contains the fragrance of hope. We persevere not because we are stoics, but because we believe that there is a resurrection at the end of every cross. Christ endured the cross "for the joy set before Him"—the joy of redeeming His people and restoring creation. Our perseverance, too, is anchored in joy. It looks forward to the day when faith will become sight, when every tear will be wiped away, and when we will see the One we have trusted face to face. That future hope gives present strength. As Isaiah declares, "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31).

For many of us, the test of perseverance comes not in moments of crisis but in the long obedience of ordinary days. When life feels repetitive, prayers seem unanswered, and spiritual growth appears slow, it is easy to lose heart. Yet it is precisely there—in the daily faithfulness, in the unseen acts of trust and obedience—that the Spirit does His quiet work of transformation. God is forming in us a faith that lasts, a character that endures, and a hope that cannot be shaken. The call to persevere is not a demand to do more but an invitation to remain—abiding in Christ, drawing life from His presence, and trusting that He who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion.

Persevering in faith, then, is ultimately an act of love. It is the steadfast choice to keep loving God even when we do not understand Him, to keep trusting when we cannot see, and to keep walking when the road feels long. It is the faith that clings to the cross and looks beyond it to the crown. And as we persevere, we discover again and again that He who calls us is faithful, and He will do it.

Questions

1. When have you found it most difficult to trust God, and what helped you to keep believing during that time?
2. How does remembering God's past faithfulness strengthen your ability to persevere in the present?
3. In what ways might trials and waiting be shaping your faith, as described in James 1:2–4?
4. Who in your life helps you to persevere in faith, and how might you strengthen that sense of spiritual community?
5. What would it look like for you to "hope in the Lord" and renew your strength today, as Isaiah 40:31 encourages?