

The Power of Perseverance (April 26, 2020 by Rev. Anthony Menzel)

The title of today's sermon is "The Power of Perseverance" ...

I am always preaching to myself...
But today that is especially true...

Sometimes we get tired...
But we must keep pressing our way with the Lord Jesus...

Scripture 1: Matthew 24:3-14

³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for ^[a]all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, ^[b]pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

⁹ "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

1) ***We have to keep walking in the love of Jesus Christ...
We are in the end times...
Not because of the plagues and the wars and the rumors of wars, but because the Gospel, the Good News about Jesus Christ, has been preached in almost all the nations...
The Lord Jesus could come back at anytime...
Moreover, tomorrow is not promised to anyone...

Even if the Lord Jesus' Second Coming is delayed, we should always be prepared to leave this earth...

We have to be careful not to grow cold...

We have to be careful not to become lukewarm...

We have to stay dedicated to the Lord Jesus...

Scripture 2: Revelation 3:14-22

¹⁴ “And to the [l]angel of the church [l]of the Laodiceans write,

‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ¹⁵ “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither [k]cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. [l] Therefore be [m]zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

²² “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ’ ”

****An important part of walking in the love of Christ is to pray for people instead of criticizing them...

We reap what we sow...

Scripture 3: Galatians 6:7-10

⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Let's show mercy for others...
It's not our place to judge but to pray...

Scripture 4: Matthew 7:1-5

“Judge^[a] not, that you be not judged. ² For with what ^[b] judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. ³ And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? ⁵ Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

2) ***Another important part of perseverance is to keep praying faith-filled prayers...

Last week we talked about praying for the nation...

Two weeks we talked about praying for ourselves and other individuals in our lives...

We have to keep praying...

Scripture 5: Luke 18:1-8

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, ² saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor ^[a] regard man. ³ Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ^[b] ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ ⁴ And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man, ⁵ yet because this widow troubles me I will ^[c] avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’ ”

⁶ Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said. ⁷ And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? ⁸ I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”

And our petitions are not just for receiving justice...

They are for receiving all types of blessings, which can simply be defined as good things...

Scripture 6: Matthew 7:7-11

⁷ “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

****An important part of perseverant prayer is to continue to pray faith-filled prayers...

Scripture 7: James 1:2-8

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces [a]patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be [b]perfect and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

3) ***Another area in which we need to persevere is in repentance...

When we make mistakes, we have to apologize to the Lord and ask Him to change us...

Scripture 8: Luke 18:9-14

⁹ Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ ¹³ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be [d]humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

If we have hurt someone, we should be quick to say we are sorry and try our best not to make the same mistake again...

Scripture 9: Matthew 5:21-26

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to those ^[d]of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ ²² But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother ^[e]without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ ^[f]shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ^[g]‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of ^[h]hell fire. ²³ Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

4) When we talk about perseverance, I want to close by encouraging us by remembering that
It’s ok to admit when we are tired...

Scripture 10: John 8:31-32

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

In this battle, we are going to get tired and frustrated...
The enemy is always going to try to come and steal our joy...

Scripture 11: 1 Peter 5:8-11

⁸ Be ^[c]sober, be ^[d]vigilant; ^[e]because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. ¹⁰ But ^[f]may the God of all grace, who called ^[g]us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, ^[h]perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*. ¹¹ To Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

We are going to cry sometimes...

We are going to make mistakes everyday...

Some days may be better than others...

But every day we are going to do, think, feel, or say something wrong...

***We are going to get down sometimes...

Scripture 12: John 16:29-33

²⁹ His disciples said to Him, "See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! ³⁰ Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God."

³¹ Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? ³² Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his ^[e]own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. ³³ These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you ^[f]will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

But we cannot let ourselves stay down...

Even if no one else is there to support us, God is there for us...

Scripture 13: Psalm 30:4-5

Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of ^[b]His holy name.

⁵ For His anger *is but for a moment*,

His favor *is for life*;

Weeping may endure for a night,

But ^[c]joy *comes* in the morning.

Remember that we don't need anything or anyone else but the Lord Jesus to be happy...

Scripture 14: 1 Peter 1:3-12

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance ^[b]incorruptible

and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been ^[c]grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ⁸ whom having not ^[d]seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to ^[e]us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

We may be locked up in our houses...

We may get bad news...

But like the saying goes, don't focus on how big your problem is, but focus on how big your God is...

The Lord Jesus is bigger than our biggest problems...