

The Vincennes Voice

"...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..." (Matt. 3:3)

A teaching bulletin produced and provided by FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Volume 2 ♦ Issue 9 ♦ February 28, 2021

PERSEVERANCE PAYS OFF

Larry R. Ping II

Perseverance is defined as "continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition." This type of activity is said to pay off. That is, great results come to those who are perseverant. The following words are offered in hopes each of us can become and stay perseverant!

1) Perseverance Requires Continual Activity. In David's song of thanks regarding the ark of the covenant, he says, "*Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually*" (I Chron. 16:11). One cannot be hot for God one day, and then not the next. This was the chief problem with the Laodiceans, of whom it is said, "*I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth*" (Rev. 3:15-16). Perseverance only pays off for those who are consistent, persistent, and continual in their aims for achieving worthwhile goals.

2) Perseverance Requires Endurance. The Lord said, "*But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved*" (Matt. 24:13). The same sentiment can be located in Matt. 10:22 and Mk. 13:13. The idea of Bible endurance is lasting through what could become very difficult times. The Bible calls upon God's followers to endure "*persecutions and tribulations*" (II Thess. 1:4), "*hardness*" (II Tim. 2:3), "*afflictions*" (II Tim. 4:5), "*chastening*" (Heb. 12:7) and "*grief*" (I Pet. 2:19). Life is filled with hard times and struggles, and only the perseverant will keep on keeping on.

3) Perseverance Requires Standing Fast. In Paul's concluding remarks, he reminds the Corinthians to "*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong*" (I Cor. 16:13). When the Bible speaks of "standing fast," it carries with it the idea of not bending to outside pressures. Other men and what they teach often draws

the "simple," or naïve away as a result of not standing fast (Rom. 16:18). The Word of God calls upon folks to stand fast in "*liberty*" (Gal. 5:1), "*in one spirit*" (Php. 1:27) and "*in the Lord*" (Php. 4:1; I Thess. 3:8). The perseverant clearly understand Paul's admonition to "*be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive*" (Eph. 4:14).

4) Perseverance Requires Not Growing Weary. Paul's words to Galatia were "*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*" (Gal. 6:9). Paul admonished the Thessalonians similarly (II Thess. 3:13). Some put up a good fight, but tire too soon, and give up. This is why Paul commanded Timothy to "*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses*" (I Tim. 6:12).

GREAT LESSONS FROM ACTS 8

Larry R. Ping II

Act 8 is a pivotal chapter in the history of the Lord's Church. Persecution had become so heavy, it caused the early Christians to disperse. Luke writes, *"there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria"* (Acts 8:1). To their great credit, *"they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word"* (Acts 8:4). This chapter is rich with lessons. Here are six for your consideration and study.

1) Persecution Should Draw Us Nearer To God, Not Push Us Away From Him. As already mentioned, these early disciples were under severe persecution. Yet, they grew closer to God and His cause. Paul reminds, *"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"* (II Tim. 3:12). When trouble comes, let it drive you to God.

2) Children Are Not Born In Sin And Are Therefore Not In Need Of Baptism. In Samaria, the Bible reports *"both men and women"* were baptized (Acts 8:12). Assuredly, where men and women are gathered, there must be children. If, in

fact, children are born in sin and in need of baptism, this would have been the perfect place in the Bible to see it. Do we? No! In fact, the prophet of old cleared things up when writing, *"The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son"* (Eze. 18:20).

3) Once Saved, Always Saved Is A False Teaching. We know this as a result of Simon the Sorcerer's actions in Acts 8. He *"believed"* and was *"baptized"* (Acts 8:13). According to the Son of God, these actions bring about salvation (Mk. 16:16). However, not long after his conversion, Simon sought to purchase the ability to give the Holy Spirit to others though the laying on of hands (Acts 8:18-19). Peter commanded him to *"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee"* (Acts 8:22). If once saved, always saved is true, Peter knew nothing about it!

4) Morals And Ethics Are Not Sufficient For Salvation. People do not come much better than the Ethiopian eunuch. He was in charge of all the queen's money, a man of great authority, and had traveled hundreds of miles round-trip to worship in Jerusalem (Acts

8:27). He was reading the book of Isaiah (Acts 8:28) and later would display his humbleness by asking what amounted to simple questions (Acts 8:31,34). Yet, later he would come to realize his need for obedience to God's plan. Being moral and ethical is a great start, but not enough to gain salvation in and of itself.

5) Preaching Jesus Means Preaching Baptism. It is recorded twice in this chapter, Philip preached *"Christ"* (Acts 8:5) to the people of Samaria and preached *"Jesus"* to the eunuch (Acts 8:35). The eunuch began to immediately ask about being baptized in Acts 8:36, and indeed was baptized in Acts 8:38-39. One cannot preach Jesus without preaching the need for baptism. These two subjects are married, and are not to be put asunder. To preach Jesus without teaching about the need for baptism is to teach falsely.

6) Be Willing To Ask Needed Questions. Our souls are too valuable, and eternity is too long not to ask important questions, as did the eunuch (Acts 8:31,34). We must swallow our pride and exhibit humbleness if we are to do so. Remember, *"God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble"* (Jam. 4:6).

FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

MEETING AT HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

2720 Battery Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 672
Vincennes, IN 47591

Phone: 317.308.8288

Website: www.firstcitychurchofchrist.com

Email: firstcitychurchofchrist@gmail.com

MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm