

"ABOVE ALL ELSE"**Date:** April 7, 2019**Speaker:** Pastor Danny Clinton

The passage this series is built on is... (Vs) 2nd Peter 1:3-9. 2nd Peter is Peter's "Farewell speech" – At this point he knew he was nearing the end of his life.

- These are the things he felt that we as future Christ followers should embrace...

"Jesus's followers are to be people who never stop growing in the character traits that mark God's own divine nature."

- (Vs) 2nd Peter 1:6b – "... and to self-control, perseverance;" NIV
- "Steadfastness, Endurance, or Patience"
- Def: To persevere means that one may "continue in a course of action even in the face of difficulty or with little to no prospect of success."
- This often denotes the action of "experiencing victory" in the continuance of one's unceasing efforts no matter what the odds or actual outcome...In the simplest of terms... "Persevering means to keep going through a hard time without giving up..."

(Vs) Gal. 6:9 – "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

Among the great stories of perseverance within the Bible, The One told of Moses versus Pharaoh is a beautiful example.

- Impossible Sacrifice – "Leave everything you know!"
- Impossible Asks – "Go and be the Leader of an enslaved nation."
- Impossible Challenges – "Free them from a hate filled relative of yours."
- Impossible Outcomes – "Rebuild them into a people worthy of My name."
- This story had such an impact that even Biblical authors referred to this example as one of great perseverance and endurance...

(Vs) Heb. 11:27 – "By faith, he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

This idea that Moses endurance was tied to his "seeing Him who is invisible", is a profound announcement!

- In the book of Hebrews, this "Seeing" is described as Moses's very Faith...
- It's used three times to describe Moses's life, four if you include his Mother's life...

(Vs) Heb. 11:23-28 – *"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them."*

- It seems whatever they're "Seeing" is what brings them so much willingness to persevere and endure...
- Another angle... (Vs) Heb. 10:36 – *"For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what is promised."*
- It's this "Promise," above all else, that is the foundation for true perseverance...

(Vs) James 1:12 – *"Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him."*

- This "Crown of Life" is the all-important motivation for perseverance...

(Vs) Rev. 2:10 – *"Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."*

- It is once again the name of Jesus that holds all the answers...

It is only Christ's eternal promise that is so powerful, it's worthy of persevering through both the day to day trials pressing from the outside, and the incredibly painful ones that lay close within.

(Vs) Heb. 12:1 – *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."*

- People who learn to endure this way discover a fierce desire to reach a head toward the Crown of Life, no matter the cost.

"By perseverance, the snail reached the Ark." – Spurgeon

Today, I want to give you a straight-forward and simple way in which you can measure your own perseverance... Both from without and within...

Title: Four Stages of Spiritual Perseverance

- Clean Up: Recognize and transform the shadow side of ourselves.
- Wake Up: To the true nature of Spirit and the relation Spirit has with us.
- Grow Up: Don't check your brains at the door when you enter to pray or worship. The first three all have to do with our "inner work," the often-grueling personal work we do within our own consciousness and closest relationships.
- Show Up: This is where the fruits of our labor truly begin to ripen. This is where all of our accumulated knowledge, personal growth, spiritual practice, and shadow work become a limitless source of strength, presence, and wisdom, allowing us to engage the many dimensions and challenges of our world in a far more meaningful and impactful way... from becoming a better parent, to becoming a better leader, to becoming a better citizen of the world.

"In this way you cannot only persevere through difficult external circumstance, but endure the always intense process of God breathed transformation moving from within to without."