



MONDAY MANNA

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THE UNPARALLELED POWER OF PERSEVERANCE

By Robert J. Tamasy

Perseverance. We could cite many ingredients that contribute to success, for individuals as well as businesses and organizations, but one common contributing factor is perseverance. Whether for acquiring skills for a specific job, building a career, developing a product or service, or receiving recognition that results in promotions and pay increases, perseverance is invaluable.

We might cite other traits like patience and endurance, but perseverance is different. Sometimes in life we need to cultivate patience, willingness to bide our time and wait until the desired opportunity or outcome arrives. At other times – whether a crisis at work, in the home, or in one’s personal life – endurance is the best we can muster. Hanging on until the very end, fearing what might happen if we decided to let go.

However, perseverance is a more active response to circumstances. Writing within a spiritual context, beloved devotional writer Oswald Chambers observed, “A saint’s life is in the hands of God like a bow and arrow in the hands of an archer. God is aiming at something the saint cannot see, but our Lord continues to stretch and strain, and every once in a while the saint says, ‘I can’t take any more.’ Yet God pays no attention; He goes on stretching until His purpose is in sight, and then He lets the arrow fly. Entrust yourself to God’s hands.”

Can you relate to this description? Have you ever been stretched to what seemed to be the breaking point, not certain you could survive? Times like that are when perseverance is most critical, especially for those of us who desire to effectively integrate our faith into what we do in the marketplace. We do not know what God is doing with us or where He is pointing us, but we press on, trusting in His plan.

As this *Monday Manna* is published, my wife and I are celebrating 52 years of marriage. We are proud of this milestone, one that relatively few couples achieve. If someone were to ask us what our “secret” is, we could point to our mutual love and commitment. But more than anything, perseverance is what has allowed our marriage to not just survive, but to thrive despite challenges of all kinds. In the Bible we find many teachings about the value of perseverance. Here are some examples:

Recognize the products of perseverance. During times of adversity all we can see are the present problems. However, God is using our circumstances as part of His process for molding and shaping us into the people He wants us to become. “...we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character hope” (Romans 5:3-4).

Understand perseverance develops us. We all would like to achieve maturity and experience instantly, without any effort. However, many of life’s best lessons are learned as we persevere when encountering trials and difficulties. “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:2-4).

Maintain focus on the goal. The path to accomplishments is rarely a straight line. It involves many twists and turns, persevering because we confidently keep our objectives and goals in sight. “Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. How would you distinguish between patience, endurance, and perseverance? How are they similar – and how are they different?
2. Think of an example of a time when you were required to practice perseverance, when problems were not quickly resolved and the outcome was uncertain. What was that situation – and how did you respond to it?
3. In what ways can trust in God and His plans for your life help you in persevering through times of hardship, having faith that the outcome will be even greater than you could hope?
4. Why is suffering, whether it is physical, emotional, relational or mental, a part of life that often causes us to question God's kindness and goodness? What do you think the world would be like if there were no suffering, no difficult circumstances to work through, no need to call upon the Lord for His wisdom and direction?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages: Deuteronomy 31:8; Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 40:31, 41:10; Jeremiah 33:3; Ephesians 3:20

Challenge for This Week

Is there something in your life – or work – that is demanding perseverance right now? If so, it might be helpful to share what you are going through with some trusted friends, a mentor or advisor, even your CBMC group.

Ask them to support you in prayer. Also, invite them to offer their perspectives based on what you have explained to them.