

INTRODUCTION

1. Please take your Bible and turn with me to Revelation chapter 13.
2. For the last three weeks, we have addressed the question of whether we are at the end of the world or not.
3. We looked at 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 and said there were three things that have to happen before Jesus returns and the Day of the Lord begins.
4. There has to be a worldwide falling away from the faith, the revealing of the Antichrist, and the removal of the restrainer.

5. Now as we look at Revelation 13, I want us to see verse 10 which speaks of “Persevering to the End.”
6. Revelation 13:10 says, “If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.”
7. The context to this chapter has to do with the Beast, who is the Antichrist, and the authority that has been given to him by God “to make war with the saints and to overcome them” (v.7).
8. Those whose names have “not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb” (v.8) will worship him.

9. But verse 10 says, “If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.”
10. During this horrible time, known as “Great tribulation” the saints will need to demonstrate “the perseverance of the faith.”
11. Some are “destined for captivity (imprisonment),” and some “must be killed.”
12. Charles Cooper said, “Since the Great persecution has God’s sanction in that He will allow it, fighting or fleeing will prove poor options to sustain one’s life. The biblically mandated option is faith.”¹

¹ Charles Cooper, How to Survive the Great Tribulation: Fight, Flight or Faith, p.39.

13. Fighting or fleeing is a natural reaction to fear.
14. It is survival but “If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword he must be killed” (Rev.13:10).
15. William Barclay notes that verse 10 is made up of two quotations.
16. It begins by quoting from Jeremiah 15:2, where Jeremiah is told to tell the people that such as are for death will go forth to death; such as are for the sword will go forth to the sword; such as are for famine will go forth to famine; and such as are for captivity will go forth to captivity.

17. The idea there is that there is no escaping the decree of God.
18. The verse then goes to quote the saying of Jesus in Matthew 26:52.
19. In the Garden of Gethsemane, when the mob has come to arrest Jesus and Peter draws his sword to defend him, Jesus says: “Put your sword back into its place: for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.”
20. There are three things here.
21. (i) If the Christian faith means imprisonment, the Christian must uncomplainingly accept it. Whatever is involved in following Christ, the Christian must accept.

22. (ii) Christianity can never be defended by force; the man who takes the sword perishes with the sword.
23. When the Roman government began persecuting, the Christians could be numbered perhaps by the hundred thousand; and yet it never occurred to them to use force to resist.
24. It is an intolerable paradox to defend the gospel of the love of God by using the violence of man.
25. (iii) There are weapons which the Christian can use and these are steadfastness and loyalty.²

² Barclay, William, ed. The Revelation of John. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: The Westminster John Knox Press, 1976. Print. The Daily Study Bible Series.

26. God's people must not retaliate against their persecutors.
27. There is no place now, and there will be no place then, for militant, aggressive, violent believers terrorizing their persecutors.
28. "Those also who suffer according to the will of God," wrote Peter, "shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right" (1 Pet. 4:19).
29. Instead of reacting violently, believers must exemplify the perseverance and the faith of the saints.
30. They must be like the Lord Jesus Christ, who "while being reviled ... did not revile in return; while suffering ... uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who

judges righteously” (1 Pet. 2:23).

31. When believers follow Christ’s example, noted Peter, “those who revile [their] good behavior in Christ will be put to shame” (1 Pet. 3:16).
32. Those who are “reviled for the name of Christ ... are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on [them]” (1 Pet. 4:14).
33. The message of this passage is clear. Let the monstrous beast from the abyss do his worst.
34. Let Satan and his demon hosts have their hour.
35. God controls the future and believers belong to Him. “In all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who

loved us” (Rom. 8:37), and we will triumph on that glorious day when “The kingdom of the world [becomes] the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15).³

36. God’s people, though spiritually protected, cannot be immune from suffering. If imprisonment and even martyrdom are required by their prophetic calling, so be it.⁴

37. Paul said in Philippians 1:29-30 (NASB) For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

³ MacArthur, John F., Jr. Revelation 12–22. Chicago: Moody Press, 2000. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

⁴ Boxall, Ian. The Revelation of Saint John. London: Continuum, 2006. Print. Black’s New Testament Commentary.

38. Suffering for our faith in Jesus Christ is God's will.
39. 2 Timothy 3:12 (NASB) Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
40. And during this period of history will be no different other than the persecution is coming from the Antichrist himself.
41. He will "make war with the saints and...overcome them" (Rev.13:7).
42. What is needed during this time and any time of persecution is at the end of verse 10:
43. He says, "Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints."

44. “Perseverance and...faith.”
45. The word that John uses here for “perseverance” is the Greek word hupomone.
46. The preposition hupo means “under” and used with mone it means to “bear up under.”
47. It’s bearing up under difficult circumstances.
48. It’s “to remain, to not be moved, to hold one’s ground.”⁵
49. This is passively enduring but courageously accepting the worst that life can do and turning it into glory.⁶

⁵ Louw-Nida

⁶ Ibid., Barclay.

50. When used with faith (pistis) it means “that fidelity which will never waver in its devotion to its Master.”⁷

51. Perseverance is of the faith.

52. In fact, it is...

LESSON

I. Perseverance is the Evidence of True Saving Faith

A. It is the Common Thread that Runs Throughout Scripture

1. It is continuing in the word and knowing the truth

John 8:31-32 (NASB) So Jesus was saying

⁷ Ibid., Barclay.

to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

2. It is holding fast to the gospel

1 Corinthians 15:1-2 (NASB) Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

3. It is “continuing in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the

gospel that you have heard” (Col.1:23).

4. It is “not drift[ing] away” from “what we have heard” (Heb.2:1).
5. It is “hold[ing] fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end” because “we have become partakers of Christ” (Heb.3:14).
6. It is “hold[ing] fast our confession” in “Jesus the Son of God” (Heb.4:14).
7. Hebrews 10:39 (NASB) But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.
8. Therefore, we “pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification” according

to Hebrews 12:14.

9. The parable in Luke 8:4-15 sums it up

True, genuine believers persevere. They hold steadfastly to the faith regardless of the persecution they experience.

They hold fast to what they believe in the Word of God.

It is their hope.

They need it now and then when persecution arises, especially under the Antichrist, who is given “authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation” (Rev.13:7).

So perseverance is the evidence of true saving faith...but as believers we also need to understand that...

II. Perseverance Comes Through Trials (James 1:2-12)

James says...

- A. Everyone “encounters various trials” (v.2)
- B. Trials are the “testing of your faith” (v.3)
- C. “Testing of your faith produces endurance” (v.3)
- D. “Endurance [has to] have its perfect result” (v.4)
- E. Trials force us to pray for wisdom (vv.5-8)

F. Trials put everyone on the same level
(vv.9-11)

G. Persevering under trials brings blessing and
the crown of life (v.12)

To do what James is talking about here is not
human but spiritual.

This is the result of what Galatians 5:16 says.

This is in essence the fruit of the Spirit.

III. Perseverance Comes from God

Romans 15:5-6 (NASB) Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one

accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

1. The perseverance of the saints is what every saint possesses.
2. We are able to persevere under trials and persecutions, even from the Antichrist.
3. We are able to “persevere to the end” because we have Jesus and His Spirit.
4. Jesus told His disciples.
5. Let’s close with hearing His words from John 16:1-11.
6. Let’s pray.

