

# The Road / Dealing with Resistance

## Illustration: "The Road"

Imagine a scenario with me. There many cars on the road. Each person has a destination that they have been assigned (called) to go. The results of these journeys vary... Others are temporarily stopped. They are tired and in need of rest. Still others have been stopped for a long time. They are frustrated and confused. They have been driving for a long time and they just feel like they can't go on. Other drivers are on the road, but they feel lost but instead of resting and getting reoriented they just keep driving. Some others are way off course. They turned off the path on the way to their destination long ago to pursue other interests and now they just don't care. Others are just temporarily lost. They are looking for a way to get back on track. A few are just traveling in circles because moving is better than standing still. Others have crashed. Some were able make repairs and get back on the road, others just gave up, unable to continue, now they live in the wreckage. Others have discovered huge highways packed with cars. They are flying down the road in the company of many others who are speeding off in the wrong direction. Finally, there are a few cars are passionately pursuing their destination with joy and purpose. When they get tired, they stop, when they get off track or even lost, they quickly find their way to get back on track. They are the ones who will find and enjoy the destination – in fact, many destinations that are far beyond their imagination to conceive.

- Do you know people who are crashed! (just don't know where they are going and can't go on)
- Do you know people who are driving in circles? (just keep making the same mistakes over and over)
- What about someone who is on the mega-highway following the flow of traffic with an unknown destination?
- Perhaps you know people who are just tired, or just temporarily off course?
  - o Maybe that someone is you?

There is nothing more satisfying than a purposeful journey. The journey may be long and hard but there is purpose and adventure in joyful pursuit... In meeting and overcoming tremendous obstacles. The goal in fact is not arrival only but it is discovering new places and experiencing the amazing journey that we are called to experience.

What are the most important things for in getting to your destination in this scenario?

- Staying focused (on the destination)
- Not getting too tired
- Not losing heart (not getting discouraged)
- Travelling light (not taking unnecessary things with us)
- Removing obstacles in the way

**This is the what the Bible tells us about THE ROAD... (the race marked out for us..)**

## The Road

Heb 12:1-11 (NIV) *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off (weight) that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, [2] fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. [3] Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. [4] In your 1. struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. [5] And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, "My son, do not make light of 2. the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, [6] because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son." [7] Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? [8] If you*

*are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. [9] Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! [10] They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; **but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness.** [11] No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, **it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.***

- Preparation for “the Road”
  - o Get rid of the things that weigh us down – throw off resistance
  - o Get free from what is keeping us restricted - untangled from patterns of sin
- Run with Perseverance (means “Cheerful constancy”) the race laid out before us
- Focus on the Goal and follow our example
  - o Focus on the PRACTICES & TEACHINGS OF JESUS (WWJD!)
    - Notice and follow His perseverance
    - See how He endured hardships
    - Notice how He was disciplined (not punished but “self-controlled”)
- THE MAIN THING
  - o Do not grow weary (leads to quitting)
  - o Do not lose heart (forget the value of the journey)
- **What must we deal with on the journey..**
  - o Hardship is necessary
    - Lord’s “Discipline” (training) like weight training = **makes us strong**
    - Lord’s training = **ALLOWS US TO SHARE IN HIS HOLINESS** (Set-apartness)
- **WE WILL REAP A HARVEST OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IF WE PERSEVERE – Don’t turn aside from the journey**
  - o **Perseverance is TRAINING & PREPARATION to REIGN WITH CHRIST**

**The life and the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles reveal a worldview that is quite different than the worldview that surrounds us.**

- **What is Perseverance**
  - o Our definition of patience: “Perseverance is the ability to endure difficult circumstances.”
- **What is Endurance**
  - o Our definition of endurance: “The act, quality, or power of withstanding hardship or stress.”

**THERE ARE MANY BENEFITS TO LEARNING WHAT IS TAUGHT AND DEMONSTRATED IN THE SCRIPTURE ABOUT PERSEVERANCE AND ENDURANCE!**

**Let’s look at what Scripture teaches about navigating “the road”**

- We must have the disciplines of PERSEVERANCE and ENDURANCE...

**Perseverance** – is the spiritual discipline that means “Being constant under resistance”

- The Greek word for perseverance is made up from two roots: “**under**” and “**being constant**”
- Simply put: “Continuing to do what God has called us to do regardless of resistance or hardship”
  - o **It is the EXACT SAME WORD for “patience” in the New Testament**

**Endurance** = is a spiritual discipline that means to “Abide in God under resistance”

- The Greek word for endurance is made up from two root words: “**under**” and “**abiding**”
- Simply put: “Abiding in the love and purposes of God regardless of resistance or hardship”

- It is the EXACT SAME WORD for “suffer” in the New Testament

## We must remain constant in our journey of obedience and abiding in God

### - Examples of Perseverance:

- **Moses** – persevered in obedience to God
  - Was called to save his nation...
    - 40 years in Pharaoh’s house – persisted in following God
    - 40 years in the wilderness – persisted in following God
    - When Moses was 80 – the resistance against His calling were removed...
      - FINALLY, he was led by God to do what He was called to do
- **Joseph** – persevered in obedience to God
  - Had dreams of grandeur – family bowing down,
    - Sold into slavery
    - Falsely accused & thrown in prison
    - IN JAIL – Serving a prison sentence, the resistance against his calling was removed...
      - Joseph was led by God to SAVE THE WHOLE CIVILIZED WORLD..

## IS PERSEVERANCE NECESSARY?

### The Teaching & Example of Paul to new disciples...

Act 14:19-22 (NIV) *Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. [20] But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe. [21] They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. **Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, [22] strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.***

- **Paul was stoned to death**
  - They prayed for Paul
- He was healed (stood up and went back into the city)
  - He went to a different city
- **PERSISTED IN PREACHING**
  - Taught the principle of following Jesus:
- **“WE MUST GO THROUGH MANY HARDSHIPS TO ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD”**

## The teachings and examples in BOTH old and New Testaments reveal

- **PERSEVERANCE IS NECESSARY...**
  - To mature our character
  - To keep us from being ineffective and unproductive in our knowledge of God
  - To allow God to reward us
  - To reveal the love and purposes of God to those around us
  - To sow spiritual seed... Seed that will bear fruit on the earth!

## WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF PERSEVERANCE IN OUR LIVES?

### 1. It gives us the character needed to live the abundant life

Rom 5:3-5 (NIV) *Not only so, but **we also glory in our sufferings**, because we know that **suffering produces perseverance**; [4] **perseverance, character**; and **character, hope**. [5] *And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.**

- WE MUST VIEW RESISTANCE WITH GREAT HOPE AND EXPECTATION (glory in suffering)

- Resistance causes us to PERSEVERE
- PERSEVERANCE causes us to GROW IN CHARACTER
- CHARACTER (Strength) rises above doubt and discouragement to produce HOPE
- **PERSEVERANCE (hope) allows us to engage in the LIFE THAT GOD HAS FOR US**
  - **Because we LOOK FOR GOD – We long for GOD!!**

Heb. 10:34-39 (NIV) *You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. [35] So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. [36] **You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will be able to receive what he has promised.***

- Perseverance creates the character
- **This Character enables us to receive ALL THAT HE HAS PROMISED**

## 2. It keeps us from being INEFFECTIVE and UNPRODUCTIVE

2Pe 1:5-8 (NIV) For this very reason, make every effort to add to your **faith goodness**; and to **goodness, knowledge**; [6] and to **knowledge, self-control**; and to **self-control, perseverance**; and to **perseverance, godliness**; [7] and to **godliness, mutual affection**; and to **mutual affection, love**. [8] For **if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

- PERSEVERANCE gives us the ability to be godly, love others
- **THE PATTERN OF GROWING THROUGH PERSEVERANCE KEEPS US FROM BEING INEFFECTIVE AND UNPRODUCTIVE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS! (knowledge of Jesus)**

## 3. It allows God to reward us... The crown of life

Jas 1:2-4,12 (NIV) Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever **you face trials of many kinds**, [3] because you know that **the testing of your faith produces perseverance**. [4] **Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.** (*describes “double mindedness” = produces “instability” in every aspect of life... (the opposite of what perseverance produces)*)

[12] **Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.**

- We all face trials – we must accept that life is full of trials
  - The trials can break us – cause us to give up following God - OR
  - The trials can make us mature – complete not lacking anything
    - LET PERSEVERANCE DO IT'S PERFECT WORK
    - SO THAT YOU CAN BE MATURE AND COMPLETE
  - **PERSEVERANCE GIVES US THE CROWN OF LIFE**
    - **THIS IS WHAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM**

## 4. It produces a witness for those around us..

1 Tim. 4:16 (NIV) Watch your life and doctrine closely. **Persevere in them**, because if you do, **you will save both yourself and your hearers.**

## PERSEVERANCE IS “SOWING TO THE SPIRIT” = Spiritual Fruit

Gal 6:8-9 (NIV) **sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.** [9] **Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.**

- **By perseverance in “doing good” we sow spiritual seeds that produce a spiritual harvest**
  - We cannot sow the spiritual seeds given to us without experiencing resistance!

### **What has God been giving to you to persist in?**

- **God shows us His ways and calls us to partner with Him in what he is doing...**
- **Sometimes the road is full of resistance, distractions, weights and obstacle...**
  - **What calling, gifts and direction has God given you?**
    - **Are their callings, purposes plans that you have “lost heart” in doing?**
    - **Maybe you are tired... You have pulled off the road.. Is it time to continue now?**
  - **How are you going to run this race “keeping your eyes of Jesus”?**
    - **How are you going to reset your direction?**
      - **What weights are their in your life to get rid of?**