

Persistence Pays Off

Ready:

“Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who searches finds, and to the man who knocks, the door will be opened.”

-Matthew 7:7-8

Set

We've all seen it. The superstar athlete comes out of the tunnel after a game, or he is spotted in somewhere public and a crowd begins to swarm him. People begin pushing and shoving, all jarring each other for a chance to get an autograph or picture with the one who made the unbelievable play, won the championship or was inducted into the hall of fame.

This scene is all too familiar. Understandably, the individual receiving all of the attention eventually gets annoyed at the persistence of complete strangers and tries to move on and continue with his day. Most of the time when this happens, the majority of people allow the athlete to walk away, but there is always one fan who refuses to leave without an autograph. So the quarterback, point guard, pitcher or whomever pauses, grabs a pen and gives the fan a signature.

In this situation, aside from leaving the famous athlete exasperated, something else is achieved. The fan is rewarded; their persistence has paid off.

The frenzy surrounding today's most famous individuals, whether they are athletes, actors or politicians, is similar to what Jesus faced during His ministry. Crowds followed Him everywhere. Some even became so overbearing that He was forced to teach people on land from a boat anchored just off shore. At times, the crowds surrounding Jesus were so thick that individuals in desperate need of healing couldn't be carried to Him. At one such time, a group of people carried their lame friend on top of the house where Jesus was teaching and lowered him down through the roof into Jesus' presence (Mark 2:1-12). Their persistence was incredible! And perhaps the most striking aspect of the entire scene was that Jesus did not become annoyed. Instead of becoming irritated, He was filled with compassion. Jesus rewarded their persistence and healed their lame friend, giving him the ability to walk.

Throughout the Bible, we find similar stories of persistence. There was the woman who suffered from bleeding for years and fought through a crowd just to touch the fringe of Jesus' robe (Luke 8:43-44). There was the blind man who cried out over and over, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me," even when others tried to quiet him and drown out his pleas (Luke 18:35-43; Mark 10:46-52). There were the 10 lepers (Luke 17:11-19), the Roman centurion (Luke 7:1-10), and Jairus (Luke 8:41-42), the father who fell at Jesus' feet and begged for Him to come and save his only daughter. In all of these stories, men and women were persistent and refused to allow their opportunities for healing and restoration to pass them by.

Elsewhere in the Bible, Jesus Himself extolled the benefits of persistence. He told us to keep asking, to keep seeking and to keep knocking because, in the end, persistence would be rewarded. That's not to say that we will receive everything we ask for, but rather that Jesus will see our faith and give us what we truly need—what is truly best for us.

When aligned with His will and power, our persistence can have awesome results. Today, I encourage you to be persistent. Like the obnoxious fan who will not leave without an autograph, or like the individuals in the Bible that did everything they could to get Jesus' attention, don't let your opportunity with the Savior pass you by. Give Him your cares and your desires. Lay yourself at the feet of Jesus. He is waiting to do great and wonderful things in you and through you.

Go

1. Are you persistent?
2. When was the last time you just wouldn't let something go?
3. Are you willing to be persistent with Christ and allow Him to do great things for you? (Be mindful that what you are asking for must be according to His will.)

Workout

Matthew 7:7-8
Luke 11:5-13
Luke 18:1-8

(I also encourage you to check out the stories mentioned above.)

Bible Reference:

Luke 18



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