PERSEVERANCE
IS REQUIRED
RMPP EVENT 48

SCHEDULE

Welcome and Zoom Etiquette

Opening Prayer

Speaker Introduction
Christian Lenty

Message
Perseverance is Required

Q&A and Discussion

Breakout Rooms

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PERSEVERANCE IS REQUIRED

SYNOPSIS

When it comes to our faith, several requirements are necessary if we hope to develop, grow, and mature in our walk with Christ and witness for God. One of those requirements is perseverance. What can you learn about the importance of persevering not only in life, but in your faith, as well?

| *Event Messages and Devotional Booklets*

You can find RMPP messages and devotional booklets from events past and present at: https://themstproject.com/events

| *Scripture Reflection*

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. - *James 1:12 (NIV)*

EVENT 48

| *Questions to Consider*

What might keep you from persevering through difficult circumstances?

How can you persevere when you feel tired and hopeless?

What are several steps you can take today to grow in perseverance?

What is one reward for perseverance?

| *Recommended Reading*

Perseverance: A Long Obedience in the Same Direction
Eugene Peterson

Joyful Perseverance
Ajith Fernando

Christians Are Forever!: The Doctrine of the Saints' Perseverance Explained and Confirmed
John Owen

NOTES

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

DEVOTIONAL 1

What does the Bible have to say when it comes to persevering, and who are some of the men and women in God's Word who can show us how to persevere well?

"Since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith... (Hebrews 12:1–2 NLT)."

Living the Christian life is much like the sport of cross country running. It is not a sprint - it is more like a marathon. I ran cross country when I was in school. We would run miles and miles and miles around our hometown during the week, just so we could run a two-mile race on the weekend. If you wanted to do well in the race, you needed to put in the miles! Walking in life with Jesus is much like running a long-distance race.

The Importance of Perseverance

"We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because He has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His love (Romans 5:3-5)."

"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up (Galatians 6:9)."

"Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that He has promised (Hebrews 10:36)."

"Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing (James 1:2-4)."

"God blesses those who patiently endure testing and

temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him (James 1:12)."

Examples of Perseverance

Noah labored day after day for close to 100 years(!) in building a boat nowhere near a large body of water (Genesis 6-7). Ruth showed unwavering loyalty to her mother-in-law and faith in God when she became a widow at a young age (Ruth 1).

Jeremiah re-wrote an entire scroll, after the king had torn up and burned the original (Jeremiah 36). Jesus, "because of the joy awaiting Him, endured the cross, disregarding its shame… (Hebrews 12:2)." Mary Magdalene faithfully followed Jesus to the cross, and was the first to witness His resurrection (John 19-20). Paul "fought the good fight" and "finished the race," remaining faithful to God, despite suffering unimaginable hardships (2 Corinthians 11:23, 2 Timothy 4:7).

How to Run the Race of Perseverance

By reflecting upon the above verses from God's Word, you can come up with a training plan for running God's race of life effectively and victoriously. Be encouraged by those who have gone before you. If they succeeded in running the race, so can you. Strip off those things which slow you down or "trip you up" - whatever is preventing you from running God's race effectively.

Fix your eyes on Jesus. He created you to run your race, and He is perfecting you to run your race well. How do you think this difficulty is related to God's love for you? How might you prevent yourself from losing heart and giving up? How might this difficulty be related to God's will for your life? How can you be joyful as you persevere?

You are not running your race alone! Jesus, who ran the race before you, knows your struggles best and what you are dealing with. With these things in mind, know that He is interceding for you. You can do everything through Christ who gives you strength (Philippians 4:13). The Holy Spirit, your coach and trainer, is also running with you. He gives you the strength you need to run your race. He is also guiding you along the way. He will keep you on the right course. And you are running with brothers and sisters, some ahead of you and some behind you, but you are running together! So, encourage one another. Support one another. Pray for one another. Hold each other accountable. Praise and thank God together as you run your race towards the finish line.

So loosen up, take off your sweats, and let's run!

Roger is retired and living in Bangkok, Thailand, with his wife Siri. They are members of Evangelical Church of Bangkok, and both are involved in discipleship ministry.

| *Discussion Questions*

1. What are the difficulties you are currently facing in your life which are challenging your perseverance?
2. In your situation, how might you better "fix your eyes on Jesus"?
3. In your situation, what might be the "joy set before you"?

| *Read*

Philippians 4:13

| *Reflect on This*

"Great works are performed not by strength, but perseverance."

- *Samuel Johnson*

WHAT PERSEVERE ISN'T...

DEVOTIONAL 2

Does persevering mean we try harder and harder until a breakthrough occurs? Or is persevering an action motivated by a feeling of inspiration? To truly understand what perseverance is, we first need to know what it is not.

"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved." - Matthew 24:9-13

Perseverance is one of the most important aspects of our faith. Ultimately, this is what our faith is all about: to persevere in the midst of challenges and not give up, for we "walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)." Jesus constantly challenges us in our faith and perseverance. He gave us a parable of a widow who kept going to an unjust

judge asking for justice "to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart (Luke 18:1)." Or consider the entire book of Job, wasn't it written to be an encouragement for us to persevere in dire circumstances (James 5:11)? There are many times in this life when you will be faced with a challenge to persevere through, and our faith is the center of all perseverance in this life as we look not ultimately to this life, but to the next.

First, before we evaluate what perseverance is and how to attain it, what is it not? Christian perseverance, contrary to what many may think, is not gritting your teeth and trying harder and harder to achieve your goals in the faith. This is especially true in our sexual purity, as many of us experience that "trying harder" only leads to failure and disappointment. Christian perseverance is not seeking worldly inspiration to give you the motivation you need to power through whatever circumstances you are experiencing. Ultimately, this is rooted in nothing but attempting to manipulate your emotions. Christian perseverance is unique in that it is rooted in a confident assurance "in things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1)." Our perseverance is not achieved by trying harder or attempting to inspire ourselves. It is achieved by trusting the precious promises that our Savior gave to us.

As our opening verse says, we were promised that things will not be easy. Many of us will face opposition for our faith. And many Christians around us will plateau in their faith and quit pursuing Jesus as a precious jewel because their eyes were distracted by the many other cares of this life. But Jesus has promised a glorious eternity with him for those who persevere (Ephesians 1:18), and he has promised that he will "never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5)."

Jesus has told us to "take heart, for I have overcome the world (John 16:33)." And since we will face many trials and tribulations in this life, as many of us in RMPP may be facing now, we need to cling to the hope of the resurrection, the promise that Jesus will come for us again, and he will redeem us from all trials and deliver us into a perfect eternity with him. This is very personal to me. I have experienced unexplained and sudden severe respiratory problems for the past four years. If I am to be transparent, at times they have been totally and completely agonizing, and it was only the hope of eternity with Jesus sustaining me. And as I write this devotional, I have just come home from driving a friend who is experiencing severe agony and relentless pain from a disease for the last 5 years. Their condition often makes me wonder if they will survive the night. We must remember that this world is not the end, and that very often, in the thick of

our circumstances, our trials do very often come to an end. 1 Peter 5:10 reminds us that "after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ will himself restore…"

Whether you are experiencing challenges to persevere through that are from the natural world, natural man, or our battle with sin, "fix your eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen, for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal (2 Corinthians 4:18)." Refrain from "trying harder" to press through your circumstances, and fix your heart on the very real and rock-solid truth that Jesus will come and make all things new (Revelation 21:5). Refrain from desperation and becoming miserable, and remember the hope that we have been called to. And remember, Jesus has said "Surely, I am coming soon. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! (Revelation

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Peter has been a part of the RMPP ministry since 2019 after six months of serving with The MST Project in Bangkok as part of a college internship. He currently works on his family farm in Alberta, Canada, continuing to serve the Lord where he is at.

| *Discussion Questions*

1. What is the root of our perseverance?
2. What situation(s) are you persevering through right now?
3. What promises does Jesus have for your situation?

| *Read*

Galatians 6:9

| *Reflect on This*

"The saints prove their conversion by their perseverance, and that perseverance comes from a continual supply of divine grace to their souls." - *Charles Spurgeon*

PERSEVERING ISN'T MEANT TO BE EASY

DEVOTIONAL 3

Whether you need to persevere in a marriage, any kind of relationship, or at work, more often than not, persevering doesn't feel easy, and that's because it isn't. But does that mean we shouldn't do it?

"God knows our situation; He will not judge us as if we had no difficulties to overcome. What matters is the sincerity and perseverance of our will to overcome them." - *C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity*

Scripture Passage, Luke 9:23 (ESV): "And he said to all, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.' "

Life is full of ups and downs. For one person, it's the daily struggle with finances. For another, it's health issues. For some, temptation creeps into the mind and tries to overtake us. No matter what the issue is, one thing is common among us all: the failure to deal with whatever it is we are facing that

leads to destruction. Just because we ignore the issue does not make it go away.

As Christian men, we are called to action. James 1:12 tells us, "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 (NIV)." When life gets hard, it's time to stand firm in our faith, knowing that through the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us as believers in Jesus Christ, we will be victorious. Perseverance is required!

Last summer, my wife and I attended a concert at Red Rocks Amphitheater near Denver, Colorado. On the walk into the venue, I kept running out of breath, often stopping along the way. I figured it was just the altitude, no big deal. But my wife insisted that I see my doctor when we got home just to make sure everything was alright. He ordered a stress test for my heart and I failed…miserably! The very next day, I did an angiogram to see if there was a blockage. Sure enough, there was a 99% blockage on the left side. This condition is called the "Widow Maker" and the doctor running the test was amazed that I wasn't falling over yet. Less than 24 hours later, it was open heart surgery and a quadruple bypass for me. But before I went into surgery, a friend and coworker gave me some advice. He told me that the next few days were going to be very hard.

I would feel like giving up. “This will be the hardest thing you’ve ever done. But no matter how bad you feel, keep doing the hard things.” I’m over 4 months post-surgery. If it weren’t for my faith in God to sustain me through this hard time in life, I would have surely given up. My daily praise is one of gratitude. I have another breath in my lungs because God has given it to me, not because of anything I have done to deserve it. Perseverance is required!

In my life, there have been struggles that have knocked me to my knees. I’m sure anyone reading these words can say the same. But what kept me going was my faith in God to get me through. During a season when I was actively addicted to porn, it was only through perseverance and prayer that my marriage was restored. When I recommitted to following Christ and fully turned from my sins, I began to see that my life was not ruined, but was actually full of hope. I was living out what Paul wrote in Romans 12:12, “Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer” (NIV). Perseverance is required!

God is not looking for perfection in any of us. He’s looking for obedience to His Word. We stay active in our pursuit of being Christlike by studying the Bible. This needs to be a daily activity and is to be done with a willing and open mind to what God’s Word is telling us. When we are daily directing our whole life to God, we are living out obedience in our faith.

By maintaining our faith with study, we reap the benefits that God has for us as believers. The Scriptures are God's way of directing our lives, along with the prompting of the Holy Spirit. If we aren't looking for direction by studying God's Word, we will get exactly what we're looking for…nothing! In all things and in all times, rely on your faith in God to carry you through the difficult times of life. God is faithful to His promises. He will never leave you or forsake you. His love for you is persistent. Remember: perseverance is required!

Shannon is the husband of one and father of 5, serving as an elder in his local church. His desire is to share his life in ministry with other men by mentoring and discipling them as they pursue purity and Christlikeness. Together with his wife Karen, they also coach married couples through the hard times in life. They live life together in Western Colorado.

| *Discussion Questions*

1.What difficulties in life have threatened to cripple you or break you?

2. Are you taking your needs to God in prayer?t?

3. Are you daily denying yourself and picking up your cross to follow Christ?

| *Read*

Romans 5:3-4

| *Reflect on This*

"In His infinite wisdom, God allows trials in order to develop perseverance in us and to cause us to fix our hopes on the glory that is yet to be revealed. Our faith and perseverance can grow only under the pain of trial." - *Jerry Bridges*

PERSEVERING DOESN'T FEEL COMFORTABLE

DEVOTIONAL 4

To persevere in any given situation or relationship will challenge our desire for comfort and non-confrontation. So should we settle for our comfort, or for the potential benefits and blessings of perseverance?

I don't always feel like pushing through. Frankly, I don't think many of us do. Instead, I can be a bit too focused on my personal needs being met. I like clarity. I like progress. I like when things move forward seamlessly. I like teamwork. I like feeling like I accomplished something meaningful. The thing is, though, life rarely feels this way. Life requires perseverance when things don't go my way. Perseverance can feel slow. I hate slow. At times, perseverance feels stretching. And, in the most challenging cases, having to persevere can feel like silence from heaven when you were hoping for a much more immediate breakthrough.

The crazy thing is that, despite how annoying it might seem, perseverance is not optional in the Christian life. It is required.

There have been many seasons in my ministry where I was convinced that obedience would produce quick and visible fruit. Many times, I have preached my heart out, led to the best of my ability, and prayed earnestly only to watch people walk away, misunderstand my motives, and resist the changes God insisted we make. These seasons require grit. Perseverance.

When I encounter challenges like these, I can lose heart, and the temptation isn't outward. I don't like giving up right away. But sometimes I retreat. When confronted with opposition I am tempted sometimes to pull back. Soften the edge. Avoid the hard conversation. Protect my comfort. But comfort has never produced maturity. Comfort doesn't often, if ever, bring us to completion or to holiness. Instead, it is perseverance that moves the ship forward. A commitment to continuing faithfully in the direction God has called me to always confronts my flesh. Opposition, discomfort, and challenge seem to expose whether or not we are serving Christ or serving ourselves.

Our culture seems to coin some people as more resilient or having more perseverance than others, but scripture does not present it this way. Rather, the Bible presents perseverance as a mark of genuine faith.

“Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” - Romans 5:3–4; ESV

Endurance does not appear in our lives accidentally. It is produced. The production of endurance requires discipline or training. Any person who spends time in the gym knows that you do not simply grab the heaviest weight in the building and start working out. You must work your way up to it. You have to train your muscles to be able to handle more as time goes on, slowly adding more weight as you can bear it. In the same way, we train ourselves in the discipline of endurance and perseverance in order that it might produce in us the desired result: godliness.

Recently I had to confront a group of families within our community who were exhibiting patterns that could become damaging to the church. Of course, it would have been easier to maintain my comforts by simply avoiding the issue. After all, confrontation risks relationship. It risks criticism. It creates tension. And I just don’t like it. But avoiding it would have meant settling for shallow unity instead of true health. As we train ourselves to push through at God’s pass, we move toward true health rather than shallow results.

Persevering in that moment meant long meetings, difficult

conversations, and many nights praying through my own insecurities. I had to ask myself: Am I willing to endure temporary discomfort for long-term spiritual fruit both for me and my community? That question still confronts me. I ask it over and over when I need to persevere: Am I willing to endure temporary discomfort for lasting godliness, holiness, and peace? We often romanticize perseverance after the fact. We celebrate the testimonies of the resilient around us. We applaud the breakthrough. But I can testify that in the messy middle, perseverance is challenging. But necessary. It looks like showing up when you don't feel like it. It looks like loving someone who isn't responding to you. It looks like pushing through in prayer even when answers seem delayed.

Hebrews tells us to "run with endurance the race that is set before us (Heb. 12:1)." Again, this requires training. It requires practice. A race implies straining. It implies resistance. It means pushing through when your flesh doesn't want to. Perseverance is not passive. It is active. It is continuing to move in the direction God called you, no matter what comes your way! And perseverance looks different in the many different spheres of our lives. In relationships, perseverance can mean refusing to withdraw when conflict surfaces. In leadership, it can mean holding conviction when pressure mounts and people disapprove.

In our personal walk with Jesus, it can mean opening the Bible even when you feel spiritually dry or kneeling in prayer when distractions keep coming. The unfortunate truth is that many of us try to disguise our comfort as wisdom. We justify avoidance as peacekeeping. We label withdrawal as being discerning. When in reality, we are wimping out. We are choosing comfort over Christlikeness, and self over sacrifice.

When we persevere, our character is refined. Our motives are clarified. Our dependence on Christ is strengthened. And godliness grows. We discover that our stability has never come from outcomes, but from obedience. A.W. Tozer once wrote, "It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply." In other words, blessing often travels through obedience in the face of diffculty. If we want to grow in maturity, we cannot skip over our need to persevere. If we want our witness to carry weight, we must be willing to remain faithful when faithfulness costs us something.

Enduring in hardship is the way of Jesus. Jesus endured the cross "for the joy that was set before him (Hebrews 12:2)." He did not give into immediate relief though He could have (he was God, remember?). Instead, Jesus endured for a greater glory. Similarly, our endurance yields a great benefit.

Mike is a pastor and ministry leader committed to strengthening the Church through Biblical preaching, courageous leadership, and cultural engagement. He is passionate about equipping believers to live with conviction, grow in spiritual maturity, and remain faithful in an ever-shifting culture. Mike resides in British Columbia, Canada with his wife and their three children.

| *Discussion Questions*

1. Where in your life are you currently tempted to choose comfort over perseverance?
2. What is one step of uncomfortable obedience you can take today?
3. How might God be using your present discomfort to refine your character and deepen your hope?

| *Read*

James 1:12

| *Reflect on This*

"Your faith will not fail while God sustains it; you are not strong enough to fall away while God is resolved to hold you."
- J.I. Packer

PERSEVERING CAN'T BE DONE ALONE

DEVOTIONAL 5

To truly persevere through the ups and downs of life, whether through trials, disappointments, or unmet expectations, you can't do it alone - you'll need others. Whom will you trust to come alongside you?

Are you in the thick of persevering right now? If so, I can relate. It's hard. My wife and I are currently separated going on five months now. I desperately want mutual healing, reconciliation, and a new incredible thriving marriage with my wife but the time is not yet right for that to happen. While this period of waiting is tough, I must persevere. I will trust God and those He sends my way.

The Bible gives us many examples where God uses others to help someone persevere. For example, Aaron helped Moses, Mordecai encouraged Esther, and many prayed for Peter while he was in prison. Remember, we are not alone as Jesus promises to never leave us nor forsake us. From my own personal experience during these past painful months, I have

been part of all the following ten plus ways to not be alone. I can declare to you that trusting and pressing into Jesus is by far the number one thing to do. To persevere we must trust and press into:

Jesus: We are overcomers by faith in Jesus. (1 John 5:5) As disciples of Jesus, He is our first go-to. In fact, the entire Godhead (Trinity) lives in us! (John 14:23) Think about that. Let your mind consume who you are in Christ. 1 Peter 5:7 says, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." Daily surrender every area of your life to Jesus. Pick up your cross. Die to yourself. Follow Jesus. Obey his commands. Do what he says to do. Be doers of the word and not hearers only. Visualize handing Jesus all your concerns, burdens, and problems. Let God fight your battles. God is faithful to work it all together for good to those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose.

Prayer: Talk to God. Spend time with your Heavenly Father. He will withhold no good gift from us. He has our best interest in mind. Pray like Jesus' example. For His will to be done, not ours. Forgive those who need it and ask for forgiveness. Ask God to keep you from temptation and deliver you from the evil one. Pray Scripture over yourself and those you are praying for. Philippians 4:6 says "Do not be anxious about anything, but

in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

God's Word: Read the Bible. Let God talk with you. Listen to it. Consume it. Meditate on it. Memorize it. Put it on the walls of your dwelling place. Hebrews 4:12 says "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

Church: Attend church every week. Be around the Body of Christ in the sanctuary. Hear what the pastor has to say. I promise that there is something for you in the sermon! And there is nothing like being surrounded by a multitude of other Christians praising and worshipping our Savior in song and music. Hebrews 10:25 says "not giving up meeting together… but encouraging one another…"

Your Pastor / Deacon / Elder: Reach out to church leadership. Go up for prayer. Email or visit in person for counsel, advice, and encouragement. Ask them for help. That is their job so let them help! Speaking of an overseer in God's household, we read in Titus 1:9 that "He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it."

Your Small Group / Bible Study / Discipleship Community: Get involved with other men in your local church community. Meet in person and group chats so you can learn, fellowship, encourage one another and build each other up! (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Your Mentor / Counselor / Coach: Expand your team. Reach out to those (and more than just one!) with experience and with Scriptural advice who can help us persevere in our paths. Proverbs 11:14 says "Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety."

Biblically Sound Resources: Feed your mind on all things Jesus relative to your situation with related books, YouTube channels, podcasts, and music. Do it whether sitting on your couch, out for a walk, at the gym, or while driving.

Family & Friends: A word of caution: guard your heart! And your ears. Do not let corrupt company deter you. Don't let others discourage you from what you know God's Word is saying to you. As Jesus said, "According to your faith let it be done to you. (Matthew 9:29)" Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. (Romans 5:3-4)

Programs / Courses / Seminars: Join a 12 Step program such as Celebrate Recovery. Through godly counsel and appropriate teachings, learn about the spiritual battle that we are all in as believers, and how to fight against it according to God's Word. Or take a Biblical healing course that is true to God's Word. By applying the steps listed above, you can find yourself strengthened by God and others to keep persevering!

Paul is an international airline pilot whose childhood dream came true! (Psalm 37:4) He grew up in Indonesia as a missionary kid. He longs to serve the Lord by helping men overcome as he has seen the Lord do in his own life. He is new to MST and is delighted to make this contribution!

| *Discussion Questions*

1. Reflect on how you are spending your time. Are you persevering towards your goal while walking worthy of Jesus?
2. Of the ten bold face points listed in the devotional, what are some that you feel God is leading you to pursue? Set a time. Plan for it. Be specific. Make them happen!
3. To be successful in your pursuit, I challenge you to the Lord's Prayer. Read it. Read it again. Is it hard to ask for His will be done? Do you have any unforgiveness in your heart? If so, it's time to fix it.

| *Read*

Hebrews 12:1-3

| *Reflect on This*

"Jesus taught that perseverance is the essential element of prayer. Men must be in earnest when they kneel at God's footstool. Too often we get faint-hearted and quit praying at the point where we ought to begin. We let go at the very point where we should hold on strongest. Our prayers are weak because they are not impassioned by an unfailing and resistless will." - *E.M. Bounds*

PERSEVERING IS MEANT TO BE TRANSFORMATIVE

DEVOTIONAL 6

There is a purpose to persevering, and it has everything to do with God's desire to work in you and through you. A willingness to persevere is a willingness to be transformed.

"But David said to Abishai, 'Do not kill him, for who can reach out with his hand against the Lord's anointed and remain innocent?'"
- 1 Samuel 26:9

Perseverance is essential to become the individual that God desires us to be. It requires perseverance to remain steadfast, to accomplish remarkable and significant deeds for Him. If we endure, we will ultimately receive positive outcomes at the appropriate time. Perseverance transcends being just a praiseworthy characteristic; it is a vital and foundational element of the Christian life. This attribute of perseverance is meant to facilitate transformation in our personal lives while also serving as a model to assist and inspire others. When we delve into the discipline of perseverance, we find the ability to attain godly purpose, despite facing challenges, failures, or opposition.

Perseverance is characterized by determination and the resolve to continue, even when the situation appears insurmountable. It necessitates patience and tenacity to navigate through setbacks and hurdles. The quality of perseverance is maintained through both personal and professional resilience, even when challenges stem from individual decisions or those that emerge from external sources along life's journey. While we might experience a desire for an immediate solution, focusing on God's purpose and design for our lives allows us to discover significance in our daily pursuit for purity. Exploring different aspects of David's life prior to and along with his ascension as King of Israel, it becomes evident that his determination not only contributed to his individual development but also had a profound impact on a whole nation. When examining David's life, it becomes evident that he faced numerous challenging issues that required perseverance. He experienced early success and quickly gained favor with God. As a man after God's own heart, David could have rightfully demanded, and seemingly anticipated, that God would fulfill His promises swiftly and decisively. However, David had to choose the path of perseverance. David's narrative was filled with patience, humility, and determination. Perseverance allows us to be significantly empowered by God.

However, when we prioritize immediate gratification or temporary fixes, adverse consequences will emerge in our

life. Perseverance embodies the highest form of faith and trust in God's plan for our lives. It signifies the dedication and testimony of following Jesus with a steadfast trust and unmovable commitment. David gained considerable fame after defeating Goliath. He could have felt a sense of entitlement. However, David continued to show humility and patience, embodying a journey of resilience. When Saul intensified his threats and negative actions against him, he could have surrendered to weakness and impatience. David could have retaliated right away. Yet, David maintained his patience, humility, and commitment to doing the right thing.

In my own personal journey, I have experienced trials needing the discipline of perseverance. While I have managed to conquer numerous challenges in life, I have sadly experienced the pain and repercussions that come from a lack of humility, and patience. David struggles; an individual who was supposed to be on his team wanted him dead. I'm sure he had the urge to retaliate, but he persevered with the knowledge that God had things in control. I feel these same struggles as well. Perseverance is seeking purity with humility, patience, and the resolve to let God take charge of the situation. If we continue to persevere, we will eventually reap a harvest in due time.
Men followed David, and they accomplished great feats. These same men wanted David to kill King Saul. However, the example that David set was immeasurable. He knew he would

ascend to the throne according to God's timing, and not of his own doing. Unfortunately, at the peak of his reign, King David made a terrible decision that led to significant suffering for him and his family. His failure to persevere resulted in immense pain for many. His lack of perseverance betrayed the trust of an entire nation. While our own lack of perseverance may not lead to such severe consequences, it can still affect an organization, a community, or our family, ultimately preventing you from becoming the person God intended for you to be. It will damage your relationship with Almighty God - the most important and meaningful pursuit we can undertake.

In conclusion, perseverance is a choice we make every day. It will be uncomfortable! However, when we feel the urge to indulge in ungodly desires simply because they bring us pleasure, we are lacking in perseverance. When we feel justified in retaliating because we believe we are right and the other person is wrong, we are lacking in perseverance. When we respond with impatience and a lack of self-control, we are lacking our commitment. Begin to cultivate perseverance in your life today.

Rich is a teacher, coach, and investigator in Southeast Asia. He is educated in Biblical Studies, Historical Studies, and Political Science.

| *Discussion Questions*

1. Think back to the last time you were challenged to persevere through a difficult situation. (Reflect upon the results)
2. In your life, or family life, your professional life, or your ministry, what will it cost you, and those around you, if you stop persevering?
3. In order to persevere, we must have godly discipline. What are you doing daily to build these disciplines in your life?

| *Read*

1 Samuel 22:1-2

| *Reflect on This*

"With Jesus in your boat, the storms may still rock you, but you won't sink." - *Craig Groeschel*

LOOKING BACK...

DEVOTIONALS 1-6

During this connect group cycle, we pray that you have been challenged, encouraged, and inspired as you pursue greater sexual purity, spiritual wholeness, and Christlike maturity in your life. We want to encourage you to now take some time to reflect on the last six devotionals and see how you can consistently apply the many truths that have been shared and that you have learned in your life.

Devotional 1

What are 1-2 truths from this devotional that you would like to reflect on from time to time? What is one aspect from this devotional that you will commit to applying in your life? Invite one other person to hold you accountable in this area.

Devotional 2

What are 1-2 truths from this devotional that you would like to reflect on from time to time? What is one aspect from this devotional that you will commit to applying in your life? Invite one other person to hold you accountable in this area.

Devotional 3

What are 1-2 truths from this devotional that you would like to reflect on from time to time? What is one aspect from this devotional that you will commit to applying in your life? Invite one other person to hold you accountable in this area.

Devotional 4

What are 1-2 truths from this devotional that you would like to reflect on from time to time? What is one aspect from this devotional that you will commit to applying in your life? Invite one other person to hold you accountable in this area.

Devotional 5

What are 1-2 truths from this devotional that you would like to reflect on from time to time? What is one aspect from this devotional that you will commit to applying in your life? Invite one other person to hold you accountable in this area.

Devotional 6

What are 1-2 truths from this devotional that you would like to reflect on from time to time? What is one aspect from this devotional that you will commit to applying in your life? Invite one other person to hold you accountable in this area.

FAST AND PRAY FOR YOUR WIFE

Each month, we encourage you to set aside a time to fast and pray for your wife (or future wife) for one or all of the following points. As husbands (or future husbands) commit to praying and fasting for their wives, we will see a significant spiritual breakthrough and a spiritual legacy created.

Serve Her

My wife is not a project I need to work on or change; instead, I want to serve her better as her husband, lover, and friend.

Love Her

I want to love and support my wife better so that our marriage reflects Christ's love for the Church.

Honor Her

I want to honor my wife's emotions better by being a safe place where she can freely share her feelings without my trying to solve every problem.

Respect Her

I want to respect my wife better by learning to appreciate the unique talents, gifts, and perspectives she has. Couples should complement one another and not compete with each other.

Listen to Her

I want to be a better listener. I want to listen to my wife with my heart and not just my ears.

INTRODUCING RMPP

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

| *What Is RMPP?*

Real Men Pursuing Purity (RMPP) is a community of men who are committed to growing in integrity, purity and wholeness through relevant teachings, accountability, mentoring and honest dialogue. You might not be sure that you really need to be part of a community like this because you don't struggle with compulsive addictions or sexual sin. While it is very important for many men to focus primarily on resisting sexual temptation and sin, we want to inspire and challenge you to pursue more. Although growing in purity is a big part of the vision for RMPP, it's much more than that. It's also learning about deep-rooted insecurities, developing proper work boundaries, embracing our identity in Christ, confronting fears and anxiety, expressing ourselves emotionally in a healthy way, and pursuing holiness in a safe environment with like-minded brothers. We believe that when we invite Him into these areas, He will extend His healing hand and bring about wholeness. Max Lucado says this very well.

EST. 2014

"Our Savior kneels down and gazes upon the darkest acts of our lives. But rather than recoil in horror, he reaches out in kindness and says, "I can clean that if you want."

We are men who are not willing to settle for a life of spiritual mediocrity. We choose to relentlessly pursue greater depths of purity and wholeness for ourselves and for our families. Welcome to the RMPP community.

| *How does RMPP support the local church?*

RMPP does not intend to replace or represent a church; it only creates a safe place for men who want to stay active in their own church community. When a man joins the RMPP community he joins other like-minded men who desire to pursue greater spiritual growth and Christ-likeness. He is choosing to walk out in greater honesty and vulnerability. He is choosing to pursue purity in all aspects of his life. Aspects such as deep-rooted insecurities, developing proper work

boundaries, embracing our identity in Christ, confronting fears and anxiety, expressing ourselves emotionally in a healthy way, and pursuing holiness in a safe environment.

We then pray that as these men grow in greater maturity that they would influence their families. That they would impact their communities and their work places, and that they would be an example for other men in their home church. We believe that as men take hold of the awesome and holy call to live lives that reflect Christ, that the church will be inspired and the world will take notice.

| *What happens next?*

If you have ever attended a men's retreat, you probably remember being deeply impacted by worship, challenged by teaching, and being in community with many men who shared your excitement and enthusiasm for growth and change. A few weeks or months down the road, the gathering became a distant memory as you settled back into the routines of daily life. We don't want to create just another mountain top experience. We are committed to creating a long-term mentoring relationship for everyone who attends an event. That is why you are holding this devotional book in your hands. As you flip through these pages you will see that there devotionals with corresponding

questions. Each devotional is meant to solidify the teaching of the event by encouraging and challenging you, as well as helping to stimulate discussion through thought provoking questions, verses and quotes.

| *Who writes the devotionals?*

Christian men from around the world have written these devotionals and have overcome real issues in their life through God's grace, goodness, mercy and love. We hope and pray that their testimonies and stories inspire, challenge and point you to Christ.

| *What are RMPP connect groups?*

RMPP connect groups are a safe place for men to pursue both purity and wholeness within an environment of peer support and encouragement. The journey to greater purity and wholeness is a journey that involves inviting other men to walk alongside of you. It is a place where you can share your prayer requests, victories, and struggles and where you can be heard, prayed for and challenged to grow in all areas of life. A connect group is designed to be a support system for you for as long as you want.

During your time in a connect group you will be:

***Challenged*:** You will be challenged to grow in your love for Biblical truth. The men in your group will challenge you to grow in your knowledge and application of God's Word thereby enabling you to stand firm in the midst of life's trials.

***Encouraged*:** You will be encouraged to persevere when life, work, and numerous responsibilities may seem overwhelming. The men in your group will support you through prayer, encouragement and a listening ear.

***Inspired*:** You will be inspired to pursue greater spiritual growth and Christ-likeness. While pursuing Christ-likeness may not always be easy, it will also be worth it. The men in your group will be there to inspire you on that journey.

***Accountable*:** The men in your group, as well as your group leader, will support you and hold you accountable as you pursue greater freedom and victory. Be assured that whatever you share in your group will be strictly confidential.

| *When are the events held?*

RMPP events are held online 4x a year in February, May, August, and November.

| *Who can attend?*

RMPP events are open to all men worldwide.

| *What about privacy?*

Because of the sensitive nature of RMPP events, video or audio recording by participants is not allowed. Also, details of personal testimonies are not to be published via email, social media, or in any other form. Thank you for contributing to a safe and secure environment that helps build honesty and vulnerability.

| *Who started RMPP?*

Real Men Pursuing Purity was founded in 2014 and is an initiative of The MST Project.

MEET THE TEAM

THE MST GLOBAL BOARD

Christian Lenty is the founder and director of The MST Project, a ministry that seeks to mentor men into a pursuit of sexual purity, spiritual wholeness, and Christlike maturity. Christian has lived in Thailand for over 21 years and resides in Bangkok with his wife.

Rex DeKoning is the 60-year old husband and father of a large family. A former nurse and pastor, he now works in Thailand with New Counseling Service as a counselor. Rex has experienced great healing of addictive behaviors after he confessed everything and began to live an accountable life. Rex is highly motivated to inspire other men to seek out a mentor, as it has helped him to walk freely, build honesty and vulnerability.

Nick Chilver is married and is part of a blended family containing 6 children. He is grateful for the people God has brought into his life and across his path. And as he continues to learn to better reflect Him, it is his prayer that God will grant

him the privilege of helping others on the path to freedom and into the Light. He resides in Thailand with his wife.

Mike B. Wood is married to his wonderful wife of 28 years. He is a Pastoral Counselor in the area of sexual recovery therapy. He is a man in process, passionate about bringing men together to share life together. This is where we study God's Word together and share the challenges we face. This inspires us to accept what God has freely given us: His love, mercy, grace and acceptance. He and his wife have lived in Thailand for 18 years.

Steve Odera has been happily married to Liz for the last 43 years and they have two wonderful adult children. After serving as a pastor in Bangkok, Thailand, for seven years, Steve returned to his native Kenya in 2023, where he and Liz are involved in the family enrichment ministry – their sweet spot - in their local church.

EVENT DATES AND RESOURCES

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

| *2026 Event Dates and Zoom ID*

Mark your calendars, plan to attend, and invite a friend to one or all of the events below.

Event 49: May 16
Event 50: August 22
Event 51: November 21

Zoom ID for all events: 561 433 8821

| *The Pursuit of Purity*

The book, The Pursuit of Purity, is meant to transform the way you think and live, putting you on a lifetime path of purity and wholeness leading to consistent victory.

***W*:** themstproject.com/pathway-to-purity
***E*:** hello@themstproject.com

THANK YOU

| *With Gratitude*

We would like say thank you to the following for their contribution to RMPP.

Financial Donors

Thank you for generously providing funding that allows for RMPP events, seminars, and translation of materials.

Devotional Authors

Thank you for writing devotionals that inspire, encourage and challenge each of us to pursue greater sexual purity, spiritual wholeness and Christlike maturity.

| *Scriptural Oversight Team*

RMPP has a Scriptural Oversight Team consisting of several pastors from local churches that review all devotionals for theological integrity.

CONNECT GROUPS

RMPP connect groups are a safe place for men to pursue sexual purity, spiritual wholeness, and Christlike maturity within an environment of peer support, encouragement, and accountability.

Connect groups are held worldwide on a weekly basis. To inquire about joining a group or to find out more information please email **hello@themstproject.com**.

If you are interested in starting an RMPP connect group at your church, men's ministry, Bible study, college group, etc., please contact us. We'd love to support you and have the resources to help you.

JOIN ONE TODAY!

FEBRUARY 2026