

**DATE: November 27, 2011**

**TITLE: "PERSEVERE"**

**TEXT: I TIMOTHY 4:9-16**

**SERIES: "MADE FOR MORE" No. 10 – The Lifestyle of the Transformed**

**We are made for more than to give up and quit. We are made for more than to live a rollercoaster Christianity. We are made for more than just to survive or settle for less than God's best for us. We are made to persevere. The lifestyle of the transformed is a lifestyle of perseverance. It is a shift from inconsistency to consistency through His power and spirit.**

**INTRODUCTION: (\*Picture of Point Loma University)** I graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University in 1977. While I was there, Reuben Welch was one of my professors as well as the chaplain of the college for part of the time I was there. When I think of Reuben Welch and the impact he had on my life during my time there as a student, there is one word that rises to the top in my thinking. It is the word, persevere.

While I was there, he preached a sermon from Hebrews on the theme, perseverance.

**"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."**

**(Hebrews 12:1)**

Each of us has a race to run. That race is to be run with perseverance.

### **I. (vs. 9-10) PERSEVERE IN YOUR DEPENDENCE UPON GOD**

1. Paul is writing to Timothy, but his word speaks to all Christians, for we are all called to be servants or ministers of the Lord.
2. In earlier verses, Paul highlights the value of godliness.
3. True godliness is used in I Timothy to express genuine Christianity.
4. It is the life that flows out of a relationship with God.
5. It is valuable for both the present life and the life to come, as Paul says.
6. This is trustworthy, and you can depend upon it, for you can depend upon God.
7. Therefore, we are to make godliness a priority and train ourselves to become godly people.

**"Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly." (I Timothy 4:7)**

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*Author J. Oswald Sanders wrote, "We do not become more godly automatically. Becoming more godly rests in our own hands, and as Paul says, it involves training. Training involves regular strenuous effort, which will make demands on our time and activities."**

**(J. Oswald Sanders)**

8. Perseverance requires effort.
9. We are to labor and strive or make every possible effort, which suggests urgency.
10. We put our hope in the living God.

11. In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, he told them, "You have become a model to all believers and your faith in God has become known everywhere." **"They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." (I Thessalonians 1:9)**
12. God is a living God and you can depend upon Him.
13. **"...we have put our hope in the living God,.." (I Timothy 4:10)**
14. To put our hope in God is to depend upon Him and trust in Him.
15. Amidst all he is going through and all the pressures, he is sustained by his trust in the living God.
16. Depending upon God is a continual act of the will.
- EXAMPLE: II Chronicles 14 tells of Asa, the third king of Judah. He had an army of three hundred thousand men who were well equipped. Along with 280 thousand armed fighting men from Benjamin, they went out to battle Zerah the Cushite who had a vast army and three hundred chariots. Asa did not go to the battle alone. Asa relied upon the Lord while facing a vast army.**
- "Then Asa called to the Lord his God and said, "Lord, there is no one like you to help the powerless against the mighty. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this vast army. O Lord, you are our God; do not let man prevail against you." (II Chronicles 14:11)**
17. He put his trust in God and God helped him.
18. The Lord struck down the Cushites and they fled.
19. A prophet went out to meet Asa and said, **"The Lord is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you." (II Chronicles. 15:2)**
20. The sad story is that in his later years, he stopped depending on God.
21. He relied on the King of Aram instead of God.
22. He relied on his own solutions instead of God.
23. He forgot the God he once relied upon.
24. He was afflicted with a disease in his feet.
- "In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was severe, even in his illness he did not seek help from the Lord, but only from the physicians." (II Chronicles 16:12)**
25. He did not put his hope in the Lord.
26. Asa reminds us that we need to keep depending upon the Lord.
27. We need Him every day of our lives.
28. Put your hope in the Lord every day and depend upon Him.
- "Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." (Psalm 42:5-6)**
29. Our hope is in the living God who is the Savior.
30. Our hope is in the one worthy of all suffering, struggles, and effort.

**“...(and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.” (I Timothy 4:10)**

31. Our hope is in the God who is the Savior of all men, for He desires for all men to be saved.

**(John 3:16) “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”**

**(1 Timothy 2:4) “...who wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”**

32. God is the Savior of all men, for no one is saved but by Him.

33. He is the personal Savior of those who believe in Christ as Lord and Savior.

34. To believe in Him is to depend upon Him for salvation.

35. Put your hope in Him for salvation.

36. Depend upon the Lord.

37. Dependence upon Him for grace, strength, help, peace, comfort and guidance, for He is alive.

38. You can rely upon the Lord in all circumstances and at all times because He loves you.

**“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.” (I John 4:16)**

39. You can rely upon the Lord, for He is reliable.

**ILLUSTRATION: Not many people enjoy going to the doctor, but according to Reuters, in 1994, one London accountant took that to an extreme. The sixty-three-year-old man knew he needed bladder surgery but he could not overcome his fear of doctors and hospitals. So, he self-reliantly did what had to be done: he tried to perform the surgery on himself. Tragically, he got an infection from the self-surgery and later died. The coroner said, "Unfortunately, [his] drastic remedy went wrong. A simple operation would have solved the problem."**

40. Just as this man didn't trust doctors or hospitals, many people fail to trust God.

41. In their self-reliance, they take things into their own hands and mess things up.

42. Put your hope in the Lord.

43. Don't forget what the Lord has done for you.

44. Persevere in your dependence upon the living God every day.

## **II. (vs.11-12) PERSEVERE BY DEMONSTRATING THE TRANSFORMED LIFE**

**“Command and teach these things.” (I Timothy 4:11)**

1. Paul wants the church to know the living and saving God.

2. The pursuit of godliness is not just for Timothy but for the church.

3. Using a strong verb with decided military overtones, he instructs Timothy to command and teach these truths.

4. Not only is he to teach them, but he is to model them with his life.

5. Teaching is crucial, but more is often caught than is taught.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*As the old adage goes, “Your walk talks and your talk walks. But your walk talks further than your talk walks.” (Unknown)**

6. We are called to live an exemplary Christian lifestyle.

**“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.” (I Timothy 4:12)**

7. Timothy was to practice what he preached.

8. Paul is saying don’t let your age get in the way, for age is no excuse.

9. Some have commented that no Greek maxim was more familiar than the subordination of youth to age.

10. It seems his age was a hindrance, so Paul’s solution was to set an example that will silence your critics and win their support.

11. In other words, let your life speak for you.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*As E.F. Scott says, “Although a young man, he was to excel in those very qualities in which youth is wont to be deficient.”**

12. Regardless of his age, Timothy is to set an example for believers.

13. Don’t leave being an example to others.

14. The Christian life must be modeled.

15. Paul saw the importance of examples to follow.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*“No man is capable of self-improvement if he sees no other model but himself.” (Conrado I. Generoso)**

16. Jesus set an example for us to follow.

**“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.” (John 13:14-15)**

17. Paul lived to be a model of Christian ethics.

**“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” (I Corinthians 11:1)**

18. We are called to be an example for others to follow.

**“In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)**

19. Live so others can see Christ in us.

**ILLUSTRATION: “Lord, shine in me and so be in me that all with whom I come in contact may know thy presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me but only Jesus.” (John Henry Newman)**

20. We are being watched by others so we must watch our speech and life.

**21. Concerning speech, Paul said, “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Ephesians 4:29)**

**22. Concerning life, Paul wrote, “As a prisoner of the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.” (Ephesians 4:1)**

23. These two words refer to our conduct.

24. Conduct encompasses most of the observable life—the visible dimension of godliness.

25. Love, faith, and purity must be the marks of all we do.

26. Faith refers to the relationship with Christ and love to activity generated the indwelling of the Spirit of God within us.
27. Purity alludes to sexual conduct but also sincerity and blamelessness.
28. "Purity is unconquerable allegiance to the standards of Christ." (Barclay)
29. These inner graces of love, faith, and purity will have an outward expression.
30. We are to persevere in our example, for others need our example.
31. Mature Christians, young families and young people need your Christian example.
32. They need to see Christ in your lives.
33. Young people, your peers need your example,
34. Young families, your peers need your example.
35. Parents, your children need your example.
36. Christians, the community needs our example.
37. Be an example by talking like a transformed person talks.
38. Set an example by living like a transformed person lives.
39. Set an example by loving like a transformed person loves.
40. Set an example by believing like a transformed person believes.
41. Set an example by living a holy life like a transformed person lives.

**ILLUSTRATION: At the age of 23, Second Lieutenant Karl Marlantes was in charge of 40 marines during an intense battle in the Vietnam War. Marlantes had moved his men into the jungle as they waited for U.S. jets to bomb a hill that North Vietnamese soldiers had overtaken.**

**Unfortunately, the jets came and dropped their bombs on the wrong hill. So, when Marlantes led his men out of the jungle, they were instantly under fire from untouched machine-gun positions. Marlantes knew it would only take a few minutes before the enemy rockets and mortars found his troops. The entire mission ground to a halt as the U.S. soldiers ducked behind downed trees and huddled in shell holes. Marlantes knew what he had to do next. He writes: "If I didn't get up and lead, we'd get wiped out .... I did a lot of things that day ... but the one I'm most proud of is that I simply stood up, in the middle of that flying metal, and started up the hill .... I simply ran forward up the steep hill, zigzagging for the bunker, all by myself, hoping [my own soldiers] wouldn't hit me in the back. It's hard to zigzag while running uphill loaded down with ammunition and grenades." But then, in the midst of his solo charge up the hill to take out the enemy, Marlantes suddenly saw some movement in his peripheral vision: "It was a marine! He was about 15 meters below me, zigzagging, falling, up and running again. Immediately behind him, a long ragged line of Marines came moving and weaving up the hill behind me. Behind the line were spots of crumpled bodies, lying where they'd been hit. They'd all come with me .... Everyone was intermingled, weaving, rushing and covering, taking on each hole and bunker one at a time in groups .... We, the group, just rushed forward all at once. We couldn't be stopped. Just individuals among us were stopped ... but we couldn't be .... I was we, no longer**

me.” (Stewart Ruch, Wheaton, Illinois; source: Karl Marlantes, *The Wall Street Journal* (8-20-11))

42. Stand up in the midst of life and be an example for Jesus.
43. Lead the charge so others will follow.
44. Church, we must be an example so others will follow Christ.
45. Someone needs you to be an example.
46. Demonstrate what the transformed life looks like in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

### III. (v.13) PERSEVERE IN YOUR DEVOTION TO THE WORD OF GOD

**“Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.” (I Timothy 4:13)**

1. Paul instructs Timothy to give himself to three tasks that all center on the Word while he was gone.
2. They are the public reading, preaching and teaching of God’s Word.
3. Paul responds to the false teachers and godless myths by refocusing attention on God’s Word as the source of knowledge about God and the life of faith.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*In his book, *Enemies with Smiling Faces*, Donald Posterski quotes theologian, Michael Horban, who said, “Much of the phenomena associated with the present-day renewal movement is without any clear biblical foundation.”**

4. Paul wants the people to have God’s Word as their foundation.  
**“For the word of God is living 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.” (Hebrews 4:12)**

5. The Word of God is alive because the God of the Word is alive.
6. The Bible is not a dead book because of the living, breathing God who is working in our lives.
7. The Word of God is God’s revelatory gift to us, for it reveals Him.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*CARTOON: Can John Draw this? If so, second copy with words on it). Charles Schulz consistently provides helpful and humorous insights through his *Peanuts* comic strip. In a recent run, he showed Charlie Brown’s sister, Sally, struggling with her memory verse for Sunday. She was lost in her thoughts, trying to figure it out when she recalled, “Maybe it was something from the book of Reevaluation.” She never did find her memory verse, but she sure gave us something to remember when it comes to studying the Bible...we should always read it with the intent of reevaluating our attitudes and actions to make sure they are squaring up with the truth of God’s Word.**

8. He was to devote Himself to God’s Word.
9. The focus here is not so much on his duties of reading, preaching and teaching, but on the Word of God itself.
10. He was to minister the Word in all its forms, for the people needed to hear what God had to say.
11. The Word of God was to be central in their worship and in their lives.

**“Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” (Acts 17:11)**

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*Picture of our Bible Quizzers) I was watching and listening to the children on our Bible Quiz team as they were quizzing from the book of Matthew at their first meet this year in Klamath Falls. They had a bonus question concerning the synagogue. The question was, “What is a synagogue?” The answer the judges were looking for was, “A place where Jews meet to read scripture and to worship God.”**

12. Unlike the Temple, which centered on sacrifice, synagogue worship emphasized instruction and prayer.
13. First century Christian worship reflected the influence of the synagogue, particularly the centrality of the Scriptures.
14. The Word would have included the Old Testament, supplemented by reading of Christian documents, such as the letters of Paul.
15. We need to hear what God has to say.

**ILLUSTRATION: \**“The truest statements about your transformed relationship with God are what God says about you in his Word.” (Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell)***

16. We need to let the Word of God search our hearts.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*\*Is it possible to play a little of Star Trek music? – Old and new). (\*Pictures of old ship, USS Enterprise and of new Enterprise). Dan Boone is an author, pastor and president of Trevecca Nazarene University. In his book, *A Charitable Discourse*, he says he is a fan of Star Trek. He points out that in the older version, the *USS Enterprise* space ship was equipped with technology that allowed them to scan another vessel. The earlier *Enterprise*, with Captain Kirk, was a master at collecting information from another vessel without being detected. The more modern version of the *USS Enterprise* has a different type of technology. Captain Jean-Luc Picard knows when his vessel is being scanned by another. He knows others are discerning and knowing him. When we look at the Word, it is not just to gather more information. It is to be known by God. He suggests that when we read the Word of God, we are the ones being read. Let the Word get in and search our hearts.**

17. Study of the Word takes us deeper into God, but it also takes God deeper into us.
18. God’s Word is given to mold and shape our lives into the image of God.
19. It is given to transform our lives.
20. Continue to live in the Word so that the Word lives in you.
21. It is not about quoting scripture or using scriptures to stress our own points.
22. It is about letting God live out His Word in us.
23. Stay hungry for the Word and stay in the Word, don’t set it aside.
24. Persevere in your devotion to God’s Word.
25. Work out your devotion to know it and to live it out.

**IV. (v.14) PERSEVERE IN DOING WHAT GOD HAS GIFTED YOU TO DO**  
**“Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.” (I Timothy 4:14)**

1. Neglect can be very costly.
2. Neglect of a marriage can result in division and divorce.
3. Neglect of a house can result in loss of value and major repairs.
4. Neglect of your spiritual life can result in a spiritual life greatly in need of healing and repair.
5. Neglect of service robs others of your ministry and yourselves of the blessing of obedience.
6. God had given a gift so He could fulfill the ministry God had called them to do.
7. The word ‘gift’ means something like ‘gracious endowment.’
8. The gift then referred to here was that by which Timothy was qualified for the work of the ministry.
9. As commentator, Dr. Ryrie said, “A spiritual gift may be defined as ‘a God-given ability for service’”

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*\*“God never gives a person a task without also providing him with what’s necessary to perform the responsibility.” (Unknown)**

**ILLUSTRATION: W. W. Dawley, referring to this truth, says, “God gave Moses a rod, David a sling, Samson the jawbone of a donkey, Shamgar an oxgoad, Esther the beauty of person, Deborah the talent for poetry, Dorcas a needle, and Apollos an eloquent tongue—and to each the ability to use that gift. In so doing, every one of them did most effective works for the Lord.”**

10. The point is, he received a spiritual gift and he was to continue to use it and cultivate it so it would not be lost.
11. Paul wrote to him in Second Timothy. **“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” (II Timothy 1:6-7)**

12. Persevere in using the gifts God has given you.
13. Don’t give into intentional or unintentional neglect.

**ILLUSTRATION: I was sitting in my office in Wilmington, California. It was my first pastorate. A little church with some wonderful people, but that day, I was discouraged by too many negative notes, too many critical comments, too much felt lack of support in prayer, finances and involvement, too high of expectations, many from my own self. And, I was wrestling if I really wanted to stay in the ministry. I read a story. It has since been lost, but I remember how it impacted me. It was about a man who had been a preacher. He was tired of going without, the comments to and about his family, the pressures of his little church, etc., so He loaded up his U-Haul, with no one coming to help, and left. He not only left the church, but he left the ministry. He went back to**

**school and became a successful lawyer. His story was filled with regrets; nothing wrong with being a lawyer, but he left what he was called to do. He did not persevere through the hard times in using the gifts God had given him and fulfilling the call that was upon him.**

14. It renewed my commitment to persevere in using the gift God has laid upon me.
15. Persevere in the call he has given you.
16. God's gifts, like the parable of the talents, where the man buried it and did not invest or use what he was given, must not be neglected or left unused.
17. My heart hurts over those who have, for whatever reason, neglected to use the gifts God had given them to use.
18. Servants must persevere through the challenges, obstacles, and disappointments of ministry.
19. You are responsible to use the gifts and ministry shape God has given you.
20. Don't neglect the gifts God has given you.
21. Persevere in the ministry God has gifted you to do.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*\*Audrey Meier wrote:**

**To be used of God,  
to sing, to speak, to pray;  
to be used of God to show someone the way  
I long so much to feel the touch of His consuming fire;  
to be used of God is my desire."**

22. My prayer is God, don't let us loose the passion and desire to serve.
23. Persevere in doing what God has gifted you to do.

#### **V. (v.15-16) PERSEVERE WITH DILIGENCE AND DOCTRINE**

**"Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." (I Timothy 4:15-16)**

1. To be diligent is give yourself to them and to practice, cultivate and dwell on these matters.
2. To be diligent is to meditate or to let your mind be deeply impressed with these things; make them the subject of profound and serious thought.
3. To give yourself wholly to them is to be in these things, that is, to be absorbed in them.
4. In modern idiom, it would be to live and breathe these things.
5. There is no room for half-heartedness or qualified devotion in the transformed life.
6. By giving himself wholly to them, others will see the fruit of them in his life and the progress he is making.

**ILUSTRATION: \*\*One of the greatest things ever said concerning Dwight L. Moody was said by a neighbor. "Every time Mr. Moody comes home, you can just tell how much he's grown spiritually." (Said by a neighbor of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century famous evangelist, Dwight Moody)**

7. We are to be making progress and not remain stagnate in our spiritual life. **“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 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.” (II Peter 1:5-8)**

8. We cannot be content to remain the same spiritually.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*\*Picture of sapling and of the tree in front of our house today) When we first came here to Medford, we went to the fair. The forest department had little sapling trees they gave out. We took one home. I did not expect it to grow because I do not have a green thumb. I have more of a death thumb when it comes to planting. Nevertheless, we planted it. Now this is what it is today—(photo). The progress of the tree has been and is obvious. Where are you in your progress? (Point to trees in the display)**

9. Timothy was to ensure that what most impressed other people was his true Christian development and not some lesser thing such as brilliance of exposition or attractiveness of personality.

10. By Timothy being a faithful minister of the Word of the gospel, the people would be able to see the real thing.

11. To persevere with diligence, we must watch our own lives spiritually.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*\*“You cannot put straight in others what is warped in yourself.” —Athanasius of Alexandria, Patriarch of Alexandria and Church Father (c. 293-373)**

12. God cares about your life.

13. As Timothy was instructed, all Christians must keep a critical eye both upon our own life and on the teaching we give.

14. This doctrine is from the Latin, which means “teaching or instruction.”

15. What you believe matters.

**ILLUSTRATION: In 2000, an Illinois scientist named William Walsh studied strands of hair from the body of famous classical composer, Ludwig Van Beethoven. By studying those strands of hair, Dr. Walsh discovered that Beethoven's body had 100 times the normal amount of lead. He concluded that Beethoven's untimely death at the age of 57 was due to lead poisoning. What's interesting is that Beethoven's lead poisoning can be traced to the mineral spa that he went to in order to relax. Think about that: the very thing he thought was bringing him relief and relaxation was actually slowly poisoning him to death.**

**That's what spiritual poison is like, that as people engage in practices and embrace ideas that are spiritually poisonous; they think it is making them more spiritual. But, in reality, it's gradually killing them spiritually. (Tim Peck, "Deepening Your Life with God," PreachingToday.com)**

16. Make sure what you are believing in is scripturally sound and true.

17. Apply the Word of God to life and persevere in the teaching of scripture.

18. Bible translator, Moffat, translates the phrase 'persevere in them' as 'Stick to your work.'

**ILLUSTRATION:** I have heard the little quote on perseverance by Charles Spurgeon a hundred times, but it still speaks to me. He said, **"By perseverance the snail reached the ark."** (\*\*Check to see if John has drawn this before we use the cartoon again.)

**ILLUSTRATION:** (\*a tooth brush) (\*Picture of Amway products) My dad was a steel worker when I was in the home, but on the side, he did a variety of other jobs. One of those for awhile was selling Amway products. I remember the day that dad said we were going to stop using toothpaste and start using Amway to brush our teeth. Amway cofounder, Richard DeVos, described perseverance. He said, **"Perseverance is stubbornness with a purpose."**

19. The transformed life is a life that keeps on keeping on.

20. The Apostle Paul said **"I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."** (Philippians 3:14)

21. Don't be distracted from doing what God has called you to do and being who God has called you to be.

**EXAMPLE:** Nehemiah was a single-minded determinate who refused to be distracted, discouraged or dissuaded from the good work he was doing. While he was building the wall, others opposed him and tried to distract him from the work he was doing. He responded, **"I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?"** (Nehemiah 6:3)

22. How do you respond to all the distractions and things that get in the way? **"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."** (Galatians 6:9-10)

23. Persevere and don't be distracted from living the transformed life.

**"Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."** (I Timothy 4:16)

24. God is not suggesting self-salvation or salvation by works.

25. Salvation involves perseverance, and Timothy's task in Ephesus is to model and teach the gospel in such a fashion that it will lead the church to perseverance in faith and love.

26. In caring for the needs of others, Timothy must not neglect the inward prosperity of his own soul.

27. Each Christian must take care of himself spiritually.

**"No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize."** (I Corinthians 9:27)

28. Perseverance involves caring for your own spiritual soul.

29. Don't waste your life or miss out on your potential through His power.

30. It will make a difference for you and for others.

31. Both the verse we began with in this section and the one we end with conclude with the great concern of the gospel which is people's salvation.

**CONCLUSION:** Inspirational and motivational speaker, Og Mandino says one of the ten common causes of failure is “quitting too soon.” Mandino tells the story of Raphael Solano and his companions who were looking for diamonds in a dry river bed. Discouraged, Solano claimed he had picked up about 999,999 rocks and was quitting. His companions said, “Pick up one more and make it a million.” That “millionth” rock was “The Liberator,” the largest and purest diamond ever found. Mandino writes, “I think he [Solano] must have known a happiness that went beyond the financial. He had set his course; the odds were against him; he had persevered; he had won. He had not only done what he had set out to do – which is a reward in itself – but he had done it in the face of failure and obscurity.” (p. 44-45).

**\*Persevere regardless of what’s going on around you because of what the Spirit of God is doing within you. “Spirit of the Living God fall fresh on me”**

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