

the Vision

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SHALLOTTE
JANUARY 2023

• HAPPY •

NEW YEAR

BLESSINGS IN 2023

EVENTS

- Jan 1—Worship at 10:30am
(No Sunday School)
- Jan 2—Church Office Closed
- Jan 4—Disciple Life, Youth, Fusion,
and D6 Resume
- Jan 10—Men's Ministry Meeting at 6:30pm
- Jan 15—Quarterly Ministry Meeting at 6pm
- Jan 22—Gospel Project Rally Point at 6pm

Cultivating Perseverance in

On December 17, 1903, at 10:35 AM, two brothers made history and changed the way the world travels. And it took only 12 seconds.

Well, sort of.

Wilbur Wright stood on the sandy shore of Kitty Hawk, NC, and watched his brother, Orville, launch into the air, and for the first time a man flew a powered, heavier-than-air machine with controlled and sustained flight.

Glider flights were common. Even the Wright brothers had flown gliders more than 700 times. But the goal was powered, manned, sustained, controlled flight. And 12 seconds later, they had done it.

But here's the thing. To achieve 12 seconds of sustained flight wasn't easy. And it didn't happen overnight.

Historian David McCullough writes, "It had taken four years. They had endured violent storms, accidents, one disappointment after another, public indifference or ridicule, and clouds of demon mosquitoes. To get to and from their remote sand dune testing ground they had made five round-trips from Dayton... a total of seven thousand miles by train, all to fly little more than a half mile. No matter. They had done it."

"They had done it"

Last summer I read McCullough's amazing biography, *The Wright Brothers*. I expected an interesting story about the achievement of flight. I expected to learn some things about history that I didn't know. But what I didn't expect was an enthralling account of the tenacity, humility, character, bravery, and perseverance of two of the most important inventors in human history.

In their lives, both men nearly died more than once from either sickness or accident. They suffered loss, endured ridicule, and refused to permit inconvenience and hardship to alter their course. They were patient, curious, studious, persistent, and remarkably focused.

Through the hardships and setbacks, they persevered. And for that, they were rewarded with history's most illustrious compliment: Twelve seconds later, "They had done it."

The promise of perseverance

Our culture coddles the young. We teach each succeeding generation that they are entitled to a life of ease, and when life gets tough the proper response is to whine and complain.

So, our children fail to cultivate life's most important character traits, including perseverance.

Perseverance is forged on the anvil of hardship and stoked by the vision of something greater than the present provides. Perseverance is more than simply the ability to keep going when times are tough. It is the fortitude to keep achieving, to keep growing, and to keep working even when the goal is a distant speck on the horizon.

Perseverance thrives in the person who is willing to forgo immediate gratification and who refuses to abandon the promise of a greater good.



And that's why perseverance is a key attribute of the Christian life. The Bible teaches that we endure hardship so that we can see God work and so that we can finish our lives well, honoring God and glorifying Christ in what we do and in who we are (James 1:12).

How to cultivate perseverance in 2023

So in the grand scheme of life, perseverance matters. But perseverance also matters when you struggle just to get through the day. The ability to persevere tomorrow is built on persevering today.

Maybe 2023 is starting out with hardship in your life. Maybe you are facing yet another year with the same unfulfilled dreams, the same unbalanced checkbook, the same unhealed suffering, or the same unsolved problems.

The Bible doesn't teach that perseverance is the answer to everything. But the Bible does teach that perseverance is a character trait necessary for Christians to see the outcome of God's work in their lives. If you want to see what God is doing up ahead, you must practice perseverance today.

So as you launch into 2023, remember these truths about perseverance in your life:

- **Cultivating perseverance requires faith**

Christians cultivate perseverance when they know the outcome is greater than the struggle they endure. Trust God for what you cannot see, and He will help you persevere in tough times.

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us" (Rom. 8:18).

That's why cultivating perseverance is an act of faith. When you trust God, He helps you endure, mature, and grow in your faith. You foster endurance when you believe that God is greater than your struggle and He will never leave you or forsake you (John 16:33).

Perseverance fuels faith and anticipates God's provision. You endure through this struggle to see what He has provided. As you cultivate perseverance, you are also cultivating a relationship with God that includes patience in prayer and the

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.....Cultivating Perseverance in 2023 continued

expectation that God is at work (Rom. 12:12, 1 Chron. 16:11).

- **Cultivating perseverance requires hardship**

I know. I don't like that either. But it's true.

Perseverance cannot be attained without some kind of struggle to endure. Even so, that doesn't mean that the struggles that cultivate perseverance must always be intense and severe. Nor does it mean we all face the same kinds of struggles.

Maybe it is failed attempts at a great goal. Maybe it is heartache for that person who consistently disappoints. Maybe it is sickness or a debilitating infirmity or an unanswered prayer.

But in each case, you learn to endure when you have something you must endure. Perseverance is a character trait that can only be forged in tough times.

Don't ask for hardship, and don't yearn for struggle. But when it comes, acknowledge that because of the struggle God can grow you in ways you would not have grown if everything was easy.

“And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Rom. 5:3-5).

- **Cultivating perseverance requires time**

It takes time to cultivate perseverance. Perseverance includes a sense of anticipation and the prospect that this hardship we face will either go away or give way to better days.

But those days might be in the future, so we endure the struggle of today as we anticipate the better days ahead.

So what do you do in the meantime? Work on the small things. Do the right things. Avoid the temptation to focus only on the hardship. Instead, ask God to provide you with ministry opportunities as you persevere through the hardship you face.

“Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up” (Gal. 6:9, 2 Thess. 3:13).

Remember, it's what you do next that matters.

With Love in Christ,

Pastor Bob

New to Our Family



*Dennis & Sheri Rushing
Joined Nov 6*



*Leighanna Forneydural
Joined Nov 20*

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SHALLOTTE

LOVE GOD. LOVE ONE ANOTHER. LOVE THE WORLD.

4486 Main Street
Shallotte, NC 28470

910.754.4048
fbcshallotte.org

Office Hours:

M-Th 9am—3pm

Closed Friday

Sunday School—9:45am

Worship—11:00am



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Shallotte, NC

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.

READ WITH FAMILY

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READ IN SECRET

READ WITH FAMILY

DAY

READ IN SECRET

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