



WOW: Word Of the Week

Persevering*
October 9, 2024

We are so accustomed to it that it is an unthinking habitual response. How are you? Fine. OK. That is what is expected. We do not want to go beyond the norm. Do those asking the question really want to know? Perhaps not, perhaps yes. But we have learned to answer superficially.

An acquaintance was undergoing chemotherapy. She shared something I find helpful. When people asked her, "How are you?" it was difficult (and not totally true) simply to say, "Fine," or "OK." But neither did it seem appropriate to burden those asking with long explanations of all that was going on. She began saying, "I am persevering!"

My mother described perseverance as stick-to-it-tiveness. The writer of Hebrews urges Christians "to run with patience the race before us." The word used is stronger than patience. Run with endurance. Or perhaps, run with perseverance. Paul writes about God's comfort helping us when we are enduring suffering (2 Cor. 1:6). That verse could as easily be translated, "comfort in our persevering."

Stick-to-it-tiveness. Perseverance. Perseverance is a step toward faithfulness. Peter includes patience in the list of Christian virtues. The reference in James 5: 11, Job's patience is better understood as endurance or perseverance. Job was persevering in faith. In Romans 5:3, we read that suffering produces perseverance. Returning to the reference in Hebrew, as we imitate Jesus, we are called to perseverance (Heb. 12:1-4). We are to run with perseverance, as Jesus persevered.

Perhaps the next time you see me and ask how I am, I will respond by saying "I am persevering." Not an inaccurate description some days!

Listen to Oswald Chambers: "There is a call to spiritual perseverance. A call not to hang on and do nothing, but to work deliberately, knowing with certainty that God will never be defeated."

[*Adapted from *Power for Today*, Sunday, June 25, 2023, by Susan Giboney]