

# Weariness in Well-Doing

by J.R. Miller

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*J.R. Miller's sermon emphasizes the importance of perseverance in well-doing despite weariness and discouragement, assuring that faithfulness will ultimately be rewarded by God.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:21, Romans 12:12, 1 Corinthians 15:58, Galatians 6:9, Philippians 3:14, 2 Thessalonians 3:13, 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Hebrews 12:1-2, James 1:12, Revelation 2:10

**Topics:** "Faithfulness in Service", "Perseverance"

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## Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes the importance of perseverance in the Christian life, arguing that while many start their journey with enthusiasm, it is the ability to endure through challenges that ultimately leads to success. He warns against becoming weary in well-doing, highlighting that discouragement can stem from both the struggles of service and the seeming lack of immediate results. Miller reassures believers that God sees their efforts and that true rewards come from faithfulness, even when results are not visible. He encourages Christians to remain steadfast, reminding them that their labor is not in vain and that God will honor their sacrifices in due time.

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## Transcript

"The beginning is half of the whole," said the ancient Greeks. And it is true--true whether the beginning is right or wrong. And yet a good beginning is not enough. It is the last step that wins in the race. It is the last stroke that fells the tree. It is the last grain of sand that turns the scales. One of the sterling virtues in practical life, is continuance; continuance through all obstacles, hindrances and discouragements. It is unconquerable persistence that wins. The paths of life are strewn with the skeletons of those who fainted and fell in the march. Life's prizes can be won only by those who will not fail. Success in every field, must be reached through antagonism and conflict.

In no sphere are these things truer than in the moral sphere. Many start well in the Christian life, with rich hope and glowing ardor--who soon fail. They become discouraged at the hardness and toilsomeness of the way--or at the little impression they are able to make on the world, and grow weary. Such faint-heartedness will never win the honors and crowns of immortal life. These are only for those who overcome.

There are two ways of becoming weary in well-doing. We may be weary in it or of it. And there is an immense difference in the two experiences. The best men may grow weary in their service. Human nature is frail. We are not angels with exhaustless powers of endurance. But we are to guard against growing

weary of our great work, as sometimes we are tempted even to be. There are discouragements that sorely try our faith--but, whatever they are, they should not be allowed to cause us to faint.

"What is the use of serving God?" cries one. "I have tried for years to be faithful to him and to live as he would have me to live--but somehow I do not succeed in life. I have no blessing on my work. My business does not prosper. There is my neighbor, who never prays, who disregards the precepts of God's Word, whose life is unjust, false and selfish. And yet he gets along far better than I do! What is the profit of serving God?" Many a good man has felt thus in his heart, even if he has not spoken his thoughts aloud.

To all this, it may be replied that God's years are long--and he is never in a hurry. As a good Christian man said to a scoffer who boasted that his crops were good, though he had never prayed for God to bless them; while the Christian's after all his praying, had failed, "The Lord does not always settle his accounts with men in the month of October!"

Besides, worldly prosperity is not always promised, nor is it always a blessing. There come many times in every man's life when trial is better than prosperity. A little with God's blessing--is better than great gains poisoned by the curse of God. Of this at least we may always be sure--that in the end well-doing will succeed; and ill-doing will bring sorrow and woe.

We may be tempted also to grow weary of doing good to others. There are things to discourage us--if we look no farther than the present. Attainments come slowly. The buds of spiritual growth open out languidly in the chill climate of this world. Men's faults cling tenaciously. Battles are tedious and victories come painfully, and only after long and fierce struggle. Everything about Christian life is difficult of attainment.

In the ardor of his youthful zeal and the glow of his yet untried and un baffled hope--the young Christian is apt to feel that everything is going to yield at once to his strokes. He looks for immediate results in every case. He has large hope and enthusiasm, but has not strong faith. He begins, and soon discovers his mistake. People are pleased with his earnestness, but their stubborn hearts do not yield. He finds himself beating against stone walls. Results do not appear. To him this is strange and discouraging, but it has always been so.

Many people reject the blessings which God is sending to their doors. We come to them laden with rich spiritual things--and they turn away to chase some vanishing illusion. We tell them of Christ--and they turn to listen to the siren song that would lure them on the rocks of ruin! That this is disheartening, cannot be denied.

But does not God behold our work? Does he not see our toil and our tears? Does he not witness our faithfulness in his service? Suppose the seed does fall partly on the hard-trodden roadway and yield no fruit; will the sower fail of his reward? Will he be forgotten in that day when God remembers his faithful ones? No! Though men may reject your message, if you have given it faithfully and with true motive--you shall be blessed.

"But men are ungrateful." Very true. You minister to those who are in need, taking the bread from your own plate to feed their hunger, denying yourself necessary things to give to them; you visit and care for them in sickness; you spend time and money to relieve them. Then, so soon as the trouble is past and they need your money or help no longer--they turn away from you as if you had wronged them. Almost the rarest of human virtues--is true gratitude. The one may return to thank the Savior for healing them, but the nine just turn and go away. Many a faithful Christian, having spent time and means in relieving distress,

only to be forgotten by, and perhaps even to receive wrong from, those he has aided, becomes weary, and says, "It is of no use! I will try it no more!"

I know how much sweeter it is to work for those who are grateful, who remember our kindness, who speak their thanks and return love for every favor shown. It lightens one's burdens. Grateful words are like cups of cold water to one who is weary and faint; and surely it is fit that men should be grateful.

But suppose they are not. Suppose years of kindness are forgotten in a moment! Suppose great sacrifices are never thought of again. Suppose deeds of love are rewarded with insult, injury, calumny, wrong, or with the stab of malice. Do these base returns rob you of those higher rewards which God promises to every self-denial made for his sake? Suppose one has to go through this world weary and lonely, giving out his life in unsparing measure for others--and receiving only neglect, ingratitude, even persecution. Suppose one is misunderstood, as so many good people are, his motives misrepresented, misconstrued, falsified. Suppose one is maligned, calumniated, abused. Because people misconstrue and misunderstand, will God? No! there is one place where men are understood and their work and worth appreciated. No good deed will be forgotten there. No lowly sacrifice will be overlooked. There will be commendation and reward there. We may not reap here--but we shall reap nevertheless.

Then many who appeal to us for aid, are utterly unworthy. Those who dispense charity have to resort to all manner of care and pains to protect themselves against imposition. A pitiful story is told--pitiful enough to melt the heart of a miser. You give money, and the treacherous recipient sneaks into the nearest tavern and spends it for alcohol. Or you ask where the applicant lives, and, being reluctantly informed, you travel miles--only to find that no such person ever lived there. The result of such discoveries, unless we are careful, is that the warmest hearts are closed against all appeals for help. The tendency is to chill and freeze the fountains of our charity, and to stop their outflow toward the needy. We are tempted to say, "Giving money is only throwing it away; it is charity wasted as utterly as fragrance in the desert."

It certainly is disheartening to labor for months to try to help someone, only to have him prove unworthy in the end. It seems like building a house of the costliest materials in a quagmire, only to sink away out of sight. Yet they are digging up in these days, buried palaces and cities in the Old World which have long been hidden out of sight. So work may seem to sink away and be lost, but God will let nothing be lost that is done for his name. It will reappear in the end. He is faithful, and will not forget your work and labor of love. You will be rewarded, even though your work has been expended on unworthy beneficiaries. Though the recipient of your charity turned out to be an impostor, yet, if it was bestowed in Christ's name and for his sake--he will say at the last, "You did it unto me."

Another is discouraged because there seems no blessing on his work. You are a parent, and you have been laboring and praying for years for your child's salvation, yet you do not see the hoped-for result. You are a teacher, and although you toil with all your might, you do not notice any impression on the lives of those you teach. Or you are a preacher, and you preach with all diligence and faithfulness, but men do not turn to the Lord, and you are heavy-hearted and sometimes tempted to give it all up in despair.

But do you really know that your work is not blessed? Do you know that there are no results? Things are not what they seem. The quickest, most evident successes, as they appear to us--are often in reality the worst failures. The least comes of them in the end. In Christian work, we have frequently to discount sudden and tropical growths, or at least to fear for their genuineness and permanence. The quiet and gradual growth is usually the truest.

Then we cannot measure spiritual results as we can those which are physical. The artist sees the picture growing upon his canvas as he works day by day. The builder sees the wall rising as he lays stone upon stone. But the spiritual builder is working with invisible blocks, is rearing a fabric whose walls he cannot see. The spiritual artist is painting away in the unseen. His eyes cannot behold the impressions, the touches of beauty he makes.

Sometimes the results of work on human lives may be seen in the expansion and beautifying of character, in the conversion of the ungodly, in the comforting of sorrow, in the uplifting and ennobling of the degraded. And yet much of our work must be done in simple faith, and perhaps in heaven it will be seen that the best results of our lives--have been from their unconscious influences; and our most fruitful efforts--those we considered in vain.

The old water-wheel turns round and round outside the wall. It seems to be idle work that it is doing. You see nothing accomplished. But its shaft runs through the mill-wall and turns a great system of machinery there, and makes bread to feed many a hungry mouth. So we toil away, many of us, and oftentimes see no rewards or fruits. But if we are true to God, we are making results somewhere for his glory and the good of others. The shaft runs through into the unseen and turns wheels there, preparing blessings and food for hungry lives. No true work for Christ can ever fail. Somewhere, some time, somehow--there will be results. We need not be discouraged or disheartened, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not. But what if we faint?

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