

# The CAPACITY to ENDURE

When we see how men and women of God throughout the ages have stood faithfully on God's Word, we can apply the same principles which these people used so effectively.

Victor Paul Wierwille

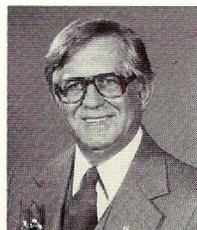
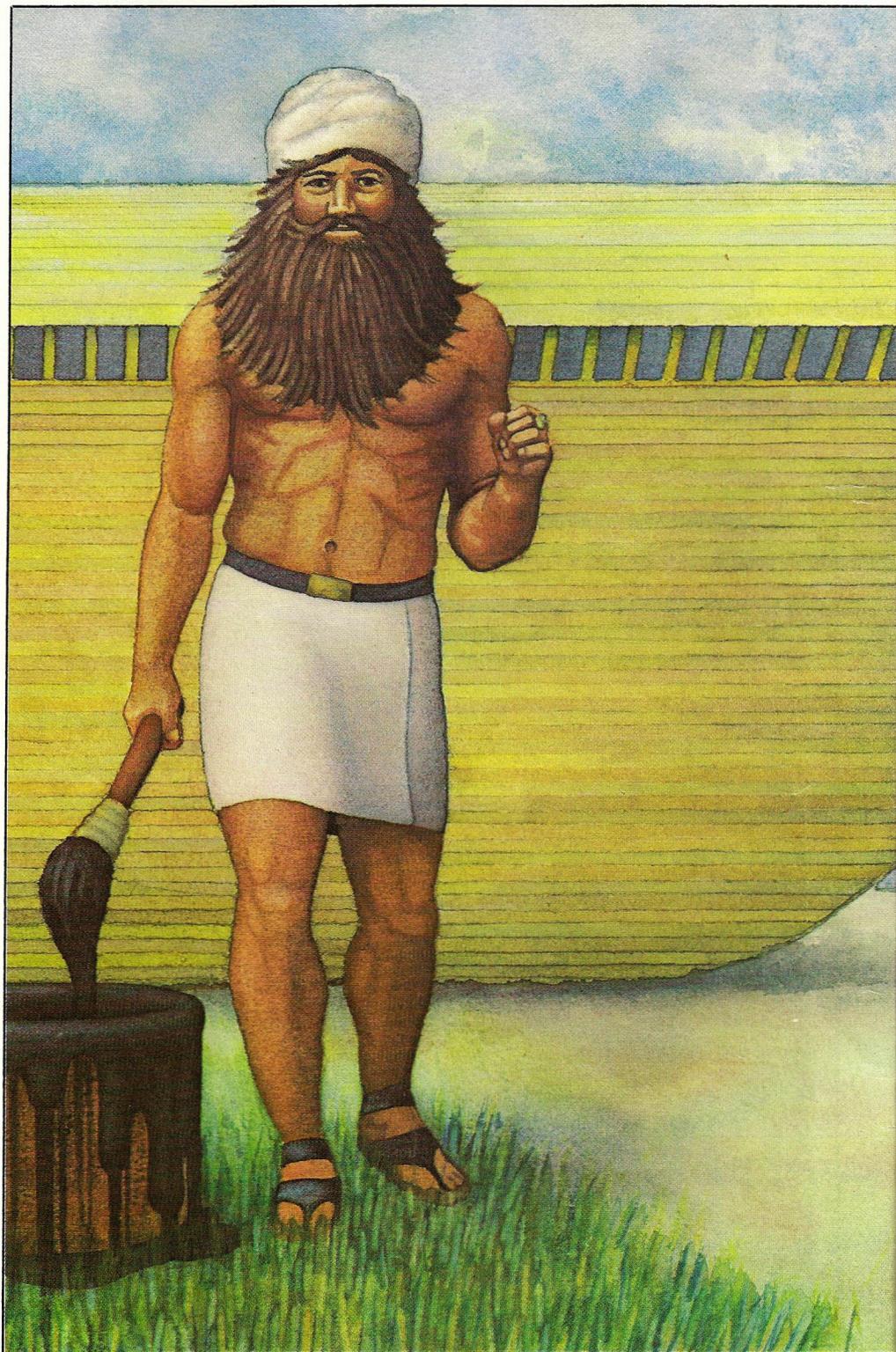
One particular aspect of our lives must be developed if we are going to stand on the Word of God for a lifetime, and that is *the capacity to endure*. In the history of the world, whenever the knowledge of God's Word and its integrity has taken root and borne fruit, it has taken root and been fruitful because men and women have had the capacity to endure. Without the capacity to face every circumstance and remain steadfast on God's Word, there is little or no outreach—God's Word is not carried to those who have not yet believed.

This capacity to endure embodies the outreach commitment of the believer. I want to set before you this area of life from the Word of God, so that you may see how men and women of God throughout the ages have stood faithfully on God's Word and so that we can learn and apply the principles which these people used so effectively.

A great record of believing and the capacity to endure is found in the Book of Hebrews.

*Hebrews 11:1, 2, 6, 7:*

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. [Now believing is the title deed to things prayed for, the evidence they are*



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yours before they are seen.]  
*For by it [believing] the elders obtained a good report [were made witnesses; the witnesses are the believing lives of those who have lived in believing]. But without faith [believing] it is impossible to please him [God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is [becomes] a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

*By faith [the manifestation of believing] Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear [reverence], prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world [Noah gave sentence against the world, choosing to adhere to God's revelation to him], and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith [believing].*

In the Old Testament God told Noah to build an ark to save himself, his family, and the animals from the destruction that was to come. The ark was to be 300 cubits by 50 cubits by 30 cubits. And in Noah's time, the cubit was about 21 inches! It was a massive project, but Noah obeyed God's instructions and for years worked faithfully to build that ark.

Naturally, every person of Noah's day was looking at him, wondering if he wasn't more than a little mentally unstable. Can you imagine the persecution Noah endured, the ridicule, the laughter? I have known people who have been embarrassed to carry a Bible, yet Noah had a huge ship to build. He endured persecution and suffering. Noah witnessed to people continually but did not win one soul or see one heart change in all the years it took to build the ark.

People sometimes have difficulty staying faithful to God's Word for one day; some even for one hour. The men and women of Hebrews 11 were committed. They had the capacity to endure because they renewed their minds to the truth that God's Word would come to pass, and they declared, "Thus saith the Lord. If nobody believes it, it is still God's Word."

*Verse 8:*

*By faith [the manifestation of believing] Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive [lambanō, receive into manifestation] for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

Abraham knew the general direction he was to go, but he did not know the specifics concerning the case. This is also the very essence of the record of the Macedonian call to Paul in Acts 16. Paul traveled many

miles without knowing exactly what God wanted him to do. He knew it was the Word of God for him to go to Macedonia, and that the Word of God was the will of God. As both Abraham and Paul moved forward, the details began to unfold and manifest the reality of God's revelation to them.

Likewise, Joshua and the children of Israel acted on God's Word to cross the Jordan and take over Canaan, as recorded in Joshua 3. God gave Joshua instructions to have Israel pick up their belongings and walk across the Jordan River. The Jordan at that time was at flood level, and the challenge of crossing the flooded river was very obvious to the children of Israel. But in obedience to Jehovah, they moved ahead toward the Jordan. The priests led the procession with the ark of the covenant on their shoulders. The waters didn't recede one inch until the feet of the priests touched the brink of the water. But then the Jordan River parted, just as the Red Sea had parted for the Prophet Moses.

Sometimes people pray in the essence of, "Well, Lord, if you'll show me, then I'll do it." In other words, "If you'll part the Jordan so that I can see the blacktop path, then I'll prepare for the walk." That just doesn't work. When we believe God's promises to the point of acting, then we see the results.

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### Can you imagine the persecution Noah endured, the ridicule, the laughter?

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The believing men and women of Hebrews 11, whose lives stand above the crowd, are among those who dared to believe the integrity of God's Word and simply started walking. Abraham was such a man.  
*Hebrews 11:9-13:*

*By faith [the manifestation of believing] he [Abraham] sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he [Abraham] looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

*Through faith [the manifestation of believing] also Sara herself received [lambanō,*

*received into manifestation] strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age [ninety years old], because she judged him faithful who had promised.*

*Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead [Abraham was ninety-nine when Sara conceived], so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.*

*These all died in faith [believing], not having received [lambanō, received into manifestation] the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them [they were convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt of those promises], and embraced them [they took to themselves those promises], and [yet they] confessed that they were [simply] strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

All of these men and women who died didn't *lambanō* the promise. They died before the first coming of the lord, the Messiah; but they saw his coming afar off, like you and I see the return of our wonderful lord and savior afar off. The joy and rejoicing in our walk is in the hope of the return of Christ. We look forward to the day when he shall return to gather us together with him in the air.

*Verses 23-25:*

*By faith [the manifestation of believing] Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they [his believing parents] were not afraid of the king's commandment.*

*By faith [the manifestation of believing] Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;*

*Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.*

What a man of God! That's the capacity to endure. Moses was educated in the finest schools of learning of his time. He could have lived on what the world would call "Easy Street." He was part of the power structure and the money structure of Egypt. But he refused it because he chose to suffer affliction with the children of God, if necessary, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of the sins of Egypt for even one season. What a man! He had that capacity to endure.  
*Verses 26-30:*

*Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward [of that which is promised in*

the coming of the Messiah].

*By faith* [the manifestation of believing] *he* [Moses] *forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him* [God] *who is invisible.*

*Through faith* [the manifestation of believing] *he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.*

*By faith* [the manifestation of believing] *they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do* [endeavoring to do] *were drowned.*

*By faith* [the manifestation of believing] *the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.*

God had told the children of Israel, led by Joshua, to march around the massive walls of Jericho once a day for six days. Those walls would easily have measured thirty-five to fifty feet high, and they would have been very wide. How utterly ridiculous to have a bunch of people march around the city once a day for six days. On the seventh day God said, "You march around it seven times." And then He said the most ridiculous thing: "Take your little pie pans and your biscuit pans and clang them together, and get your New Year's horns out and give a little blow." So they marched around that city seven times that day. When Joshua said, "Blow," they took their New Year's horns and blew them, and their pie pans and hit them together. And those great walls came tumbling down. The record of the destruction of the walls of Jericho has been archaeologically established for years.

*Verses 31-35:*

*By faith* [believing] *the harlot* [innkeeper] *Rahab perished not with them* [the rest of the people of Jericho] *that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.*

*And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:*

*Who through faith* [the manifestation of believing] *subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,*

*Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens* [the unbelievers].

*Women received* [lambanō, received into manifestation] *their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance. . . .*

Could these "others" have been delivered? Definitely—they just did not choose to accept deliverance. They had come to the place in life that they didn't want to live any longer. They just got tired of living. But did they die as believers? They sure did. Look at the end of that verse.

*Verse 35:*

*. . . that they might obtain a better resurrection.*

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**If we want to move fast  
and far, we have to  
travel light. We cannot  
bear the weight of fear,  
worry, anxiety,  
frustration . . . .**

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This verse has caused people great confusion. They assume it means that those who did not accept deliverance were going to have a better resurrection than those who believed to be delivered. That is erroneous. There are two resurrections told of in the Bible: the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the unjust. ". . . That they might obtain a better resurrection." Which resurrection is this? The resurrection of the just. That's the better resurrection. That's where all these Old Testament believers will be, including those who did not accept deliverance.

*Verse 39:*

*And these all, having obtained a good report through faith* [believing], *received not the promise.*

They looked forward to the promise. Those who believed accomplished all those great feats, expecting and anticipating the coming of the Christ. Yet they never received him, they didn't live to see his coming. They were never born-again sons of God, filled with the power of the holy spirit, as we believers are.

Yet, just think of what they did. If those believers could accomplish what they did before the coming of Christ and the outpouring of the power of the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, then, ladies and gentlemen, surely you and I can do a greater work with the more that He has given us. But we have to have an outreach commitment in our lives. We have to have the capacity to endure. We are to be so totally sold out, so totally committed, so totally giv-

ing of ourselves by the freedom of our will to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the integrity of God's Word, that we will never have one iota of doubt in following God's revelation to us. We are fully persuaded that what God has promised, He is not only able, but He is also willing to perform.

*Hebrews 11:40—12:1:*

*God having provided some better thing for us, that they* [without Christ, but with believing for his day] *without us should not be made perfect.*

*Wherefore seeing we* [who have the greater promise of Christ in us] *also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight. . . .*

We must lay aside every weight. If we want to move fast and far, we have to travel light. We cannot bear the weight of fear, worry, anxiety, frustration, family arguments, money problems, property problems—lay aside every weight.

*Verse 1:*

*. . . and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*

It's not just a walk, it's a race. It's not a stumbling, it's a run. Run it with patience. Perfection is never in an individual; perfection is in the Lord. You only become more perfect as you walk in the light of the revelation that God has given. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

*Verse 2:*

*Looking unto Jesus the author* [the pioneer] *and finisher* [perfecter] *of our faith* [believing]. . . .

It says "looking unto Jesus," not looking unto some celebrity or the neighbors or the unbelieving Christians or a church building. We look unto one and only one—Jesus, the humiliated one, who in his life paid it all. He who knew no sin became sin, so you and I could become the righteousness of God in him.

In Hebrews 12:2, the word "our" is improperly supplied. Jesus is not the author and finisher of *my* believing. He is the author and finisher of *all* believing, for no man has ever risen up to the believing greatness of the Lord Jesus Christ. He in all things believed God. He in all things accepted God's Word literally and walked on it literally. He believed to the uttermost. He is the pioneer and the perfecter of all believing.

*Verse 2:*

*. . . who* [Jesus] *for the joy that was set*

before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Joy is an inside job; happiness is dependent upon the circumstances with which we are surrounded. Joy is an inner knowingness, an inner awareness. It does not say "who for the happiness that was set before him." There is no happiness in having a crown of thorns stuck on your head and having your body beaten beyond recognition as our suffering lord and our savior did. There is no happiness in being nailed to a tree and being made a total mockery.

But the man Jesus Christ endured the suffering and the mockery—he had the capacity to endure—because he saw beyond the moment of his suffering and death. You, too, must see far beyond the immediate present; otherwise you won't be able to endure. You've got to have an inner joy which comes from knowing God's Word, acting on it, and looking forward to the return of God's Son to gather us together.

What could that joy that was set before Jesus Christ have been? He saw that someday people would rise up to believe, and that in that day the works he had done they would do. He saw that they would do even greater works after he went to his Father in heaven. He saw all that and more. That was the joy which caused him to endure. He despised the shame, but because of the joy he had in understanding what his perfect sacrifice would accomplish, he had the capacity to endure and to obediently do the Father's will.

*Verse 3:*

*For consider him that endured such contradiction [opposition] of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

This is not referring to fainting in your body and passing out. It's talking about mental exhaustion—"faint in your minds." At those moments when people speak against you because of your efforts to carry out God's will, consider what our lord and savior endured. He was the ultimate example of keeping his eye on the goal.

*Verse 4:*

*Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.*

You and I have not yet resisted unto the shedding of our blood in our opposing sin. God's Word hasn't really cost us anything. It cost Jesus Christ his life. Jesus Christ endured the mocking, the scourging, the death of a criminal because he loved you and he loved me, and because he saw our day.

He was in all things tempted as I am and as you are, yet he remained sinless. There is no temptation that has ever overtaken you that he did not conquer, for he was tempted with the same temptations. Yet in all things he never sinned. He walked with the renewed mind and the perfection of the love of God. This Word of God was so absolutely the will of God for him that he always did the Father's will. What an example to put in our minds and to follow after! Jesus Christ was the perfect example of the joy of endurance.

*Romans 8:31:*

*What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

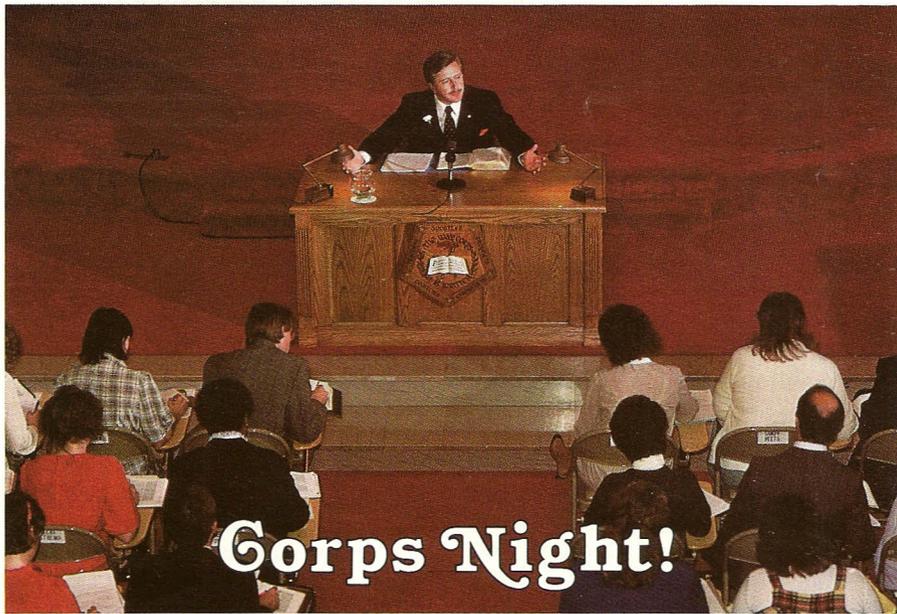
If God be for us, who can be against us? Ladies and gentlemen, God is for His people. God is for His children. God is for you. Then who can be against you? A little bit of persecution from the community—so what? You must have the capacity to endure because you see "him [God] who is invisible," because you know that Jesus Christ was resurrected, because you speak in tongues, and

because you know Christ is coming back. If he was resurrected and is seated at God's right hand, then he's coming back to gather us together. And then, one day, he's coming back as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Jesus Christ was the ultimate example of "The Capacity to Endure—The Outreach Commitment." That's the commitment that a man and a woman must make in order to remain steadfast to God and His Word for a lifetime. This is our day and our time. We cannot recapture yesterday. We cannot live tomorrow. But this is the day which the Lord has made, and we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Ladies and gentlemen, you are among God's greatest people. Dedicate yourself to making your life a life that's exemplary of a man or woman who represents God. Let the world see what it's like to behold the beauty of God in Christ in manifestation in the life of a believer. Build that endurance and make that commitment: Live life the way God means it to be lived. ☑

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