



New Life Renewal

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL MINISTRY

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PERSISTENCE

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Persistence: per · sist'ence to continue firmly in some course despite opposition or difficulties; to persevere

Have you ever tried telling someone about your new life in Jesus and the Holy Spirit, or about your involvement in the Charismatic Renewal, but only feel like your words were falling on dead ears? What did you do? Did you try telling that same person again, maybe at a different time, or did you just shrug your shoulders and walk away, never telling them again? How persistent were you in your testimony to others?

I'm sure we have all heard of the popular saying, "**If at first you don't succeed, try, try again!**" Have you ever applied this concept in telling of your experiences in the Charismatic Renewal? This may sound a little radical and maybe a little obnoxious to some, but I can tell you from a personal experience, **persistence pays off!**

When I first became a "born again" Christian back in 1972, I had heard about an evangelistic movement in the United States to spread the word that Jesus is Lord. It was called "**Key '73**" and was a yearlong thrust in 1973 to evangelize the Name of Jesus across America. When I asked my pastor about it, he admitted he had not heard of it and knew nothing about it. I continued to

ask him about "**Key '73**", and if our parish would be involved. Finally, he said he would find out more of what it was about. Weeks later, he told me it was mainly a Protestant movement involving mostly all Protestant denominations. I persisted to ask him why we Catholics could not be involved, "**after all, we're Christians too!**" A few weeks later my pastor called me, asking me to come to a meeting at the church. When I arrived at the meeting, I was amazed to see 29 other Protestant pastors from neighboring churches around the area. After a few months of discussions, we finalized on visiting 10,000 homes giving each home a copy of Scriptures containing Luke's gospel and Acts of the Apostles. It involved going door to door, two by two, with Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Evangelicals. This resulted in an ecumenical weekly prayer meeting. **Persistence paid off!**

**PERSISTENCE
PAYS OFF**

We read in Scripture where the blind man, Bartimaeus, was persistent in his calling out to Jesus to have pity on him. Bartimaeus had taken up his usual spot along the roadside near the city, spreading out his cloak begging for a few shekels from those who passed by. When he heard that Jesus was passing by, he called out to Him **“Son of David, have pity on me.”** But the people nearby scolded him telling him to be quiet. But Bartimaeus called out louder, **“SON OF DAVID, HAVE PITY ON ME!”** At that, Jesus called him over and asked **“What do you want me to do for you?”** The blind man replied, **“I want to see.”** Jesus said in reply, **“Be on your way, your faith has healed you.”** Immediately, Bartimaeus saw Jesus for the first time and began to follow him up the road. (Mark 10:46-52)

Bartimaeus was no one special. He was just an ordinary beggar along the roadside. His daily routine was begging for a few shekels to live on. When he heard it was Jesus who was passing by, he persisted in calling out to Jesus. Even when the crowd tried to quiet him down, Bartimaeus persisted in calling out louder. If he had listened to the crowd, he probably would never have been healed and never had seen Jesus face to face. **His persistence paid off!**

How persistent are you in telling others about Jesus and about Charismatic Renewal? Those who are persistent usually get results. Listen to the parable Jesus tells about the woman and the corrupt judge. *“A widow in that town kept coming to the judge asking for her rights against her opponent. For a while the judge refused, but finally he thought, ‘I care little for God or man, but this woman is wearing me out. I am going to settle in her favor, or she will end in doing me violence’”.* (Luke 18:1-5) The woman finally got what she wanted from the judge,

Her persistence paid off!

Or take the story Jesus tells of the man who continues to knock on a neighbor’s door asking for some loaves to feed a friend from his journey. The neighbor refuses because it is late and he is already in bed. Jesus says about the neighbor, **“even though he does not get up and take care of the man because of friendship, he will do so because of the man’s persistence!”** (Luke 11:8)

The man’s persistence paid off!

These are just a few examples taken from Scripture that show what can be accomplished when you are persistent. The Scripture is full of other examples telling of those seeking out Jesus for healing for themselves as well as for others. It continued after the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost and it continues today.

JUNK MAIL & TELEMARETERS Now, there’s E-Mail

You may have noticed of the continuing “junk” mail you receive almost daily of how you are “pre-approved” to receive a credit card for thousands of dollars at low interest rates. Or also those constant telemarketing phone calls at supertime telling you that you’ve been selected to go on a cruise. Have you ever noticed how persistent the caller will be, no matter how many times you say no? Why do they continue calling even after you hang up on them? They are persistent because they know that eventually someone will finally say yes, even if it’s just to get them to quit calling. You will accept their offer and once they get their credit card in your hands, you will eventually use it. Soon you will use it more than you can afford. **And then, their persistence will pay off!**

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Now there's e-mail. Those of you, who have computers, know exactly what I mean. The continuous "junk" mail now comes daily by computer as well. I receive my daily dose of junk emails for insurance, prescriptions, travel, college degrees, etc. However, I also receive an abundance of "religious" e-mails from friends who know of my Christian involvement. They send me stories and humorous articles about God and religion.

Maybe, we should take a lesson from the telemarketers and become more persistent in telling people about our new life in the Holy Spirit and our involvement in Charismatic Renewal. If we persist, then they may just give in like the judge Jesus spoke about. They may eventually consent to coming to a prayer meeting, just to come and see what it is you are talking about. And once they come, they will be "spiritually hooked". A personal invitation once or twice a month might be just the nudge they need and finally say 'yes'. Once there, leave it up to Jesus and the Holy Spirit to change their lives. Believe me, **your persistence will pay off!**

I was invited to speak at a prayer meeting a few years ago. Before the meeting I had dinner with one of the group's leaders. For the past several months, they had been trying to get their adult 19-year-old son to attend the meetings. He said that he wasn't much interested in that sort of thing. They tried once more before we left to go to the

church. Again he said no. That night, during my talk, I happened to notice the young man come in and take a seat in the back row, unbeknown to his parents. When I finished my talk, I was asked if I would pray with the members, for any healings and release of the Holy Spirit. As I did so, many of those I prayed with were "slain in the Spirit". To my surprise, as I went down the line, there was this young man standing there firmly saying, "***I don't believe in this stuff, but do whatever it is you do!***" As I laid my hands on his shoulders and before I could even utter a word, he began to sway backwards into the arms of some ushers standing behind him. That night he received the Baptism in the Spirit. I later learned that he was attending the prayer meeting regularly and encouraging other people to be Baptized in the Spirit. **His parents continuing persistence paid off!**

In closing, I leave you with the words of St. Paul to Timothy, "*I charge you to preach the word, to stay with this task whether convenient or inconvenient --- correcting, reproofing, appealing --- constantly teaching and never losing patience.*" (2 Timothy 4:2)

MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY WITH HIS NEW LIFE!

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Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and in petitions full of Thanksgiving! Then God's own grace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus! (Philippians 4:6)

Happy



Holidays