



“I shall always be ready to remind you of these things...”
2 Peter 1:21



CABOT WESTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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When We Meet

Sunday

Bible Classes – 9:00 am
Worship – 10:00 am, 5:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Classes – 7:00 pm

Our Elders

R.D. Hopper
Norman Kemper

Our Deacons

Troy Hunter
Kelly Kendall
Tony Ramick

Our Preacher

Alex Hale

Hindrances to Perseverance

by Alex Hale

1. **Fear.** Think about the Israelites who were forced to wander in the wilderness because of their fear. God had promised them the land of Canaan. Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, said that they could defeat the enemy and take the land. However, the people would not enter and conquer the land because they were afraid. We, too, often let fear stop us. We are told not to fear (Rev 1:17-18; Matt 10:28). We are told to trust in the Lord (Prov 29:25).

2. **Distractions.** Distractions carry with them the idea of being pulled in multiple directions. As disciples, we know that we have a mission. However, far too often we allow things of this world to get in our way (Luke 8:14). Distractions also have a tendency to turn something simple into something very difficult. Students at college basketball games have unique ways of distracting free throw shooters. Athletes often miss the shot due to the distractions, even though the free throw should be the easiest shot in the game because it is uncontested. We have to be able to set aside those things which serve as a distraction to us, recognizing that they are tools of Satan (Heb 12:1; Prov 4:25-27).

3. **Weariness.** Think about the Christians to whom Peter is writing. In his book *Hidden in Plain Sight*, Mark Buchanan writes of these brethren, “They had a cartload of reasons to quit. These people were not having just a bad day, but a bad decade or two. Some of this ‘badness’ was due to life itself: the usual round of upsets and hardships, sicknesses and setbacks, the sheer brokenness of creation. But most of their bad was due to one thing: these people had said ‘yes’ to God. They were Christians at a time when – and a place where – that was a dangerous and costly thing to be.” If you were to count in 1 Peter, the apostle mentions suffering seventeen times in that epistle alone. Here are some examples that Peter mentions in both letters to these brethren.

- 1 Peter 1:1 – they lived like refugees, like strangers in the world, scattered throughout the earth
- 1 Peter 1:6 – they suffered in all kinds of trials
- 1 Peter 2:12 – they were falsely accused; blamed for things they never did
- 1 Peter 2:18-19 – they were subjected to brutal working conditions
- 1 Peter 3:13 – they were punished for doing good
- 1 Peter 4:4 – they were abused and insulted when they would not participate in the sins of others
- 1 Peter 4:12 – they were punished for following Jesus
- 1 Peter 5:8 – there were being directly attacked by Satan, who sought to devour them as a “roaring lion”
- 2 Peter 2:1 – they were surrounded by false teachers trying to mislead them
- 2 Peter 3:3 – they were mocked by neighbors for their faith
- 2 Peter 3:9 – they were struggling to understand God who seemed to be slow in keeping His promises

You could argue that many of their earthly problems would have gone away if they had simply quit. They could have abandoned the faith. They could have stopped sharing their faith. They could have quit obeying God when it put them at odds with their culture. They could have quit trying to live pure and holy lives. They could have given up hope that Jesus would return. They could have stopped worshipping God. However, Peter encourages them not to give up but to persevere. Through *our* trials and tribulations, the Holy Spirit encourages us to persevere as well.