



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



**CABOT WESTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1017 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. (Old Hwy. 367)  
 Cabot, AR 72023  
[cabotwestsidechurchofchrist.com](http://cabotwestsidechurchofchrist.com)  
[facebook.com/cabotwestside](https://facebook.com/cabotwestside)

**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

**How Do We Persevere?**

by Alex Hale

*“Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hard working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything” (2 Timothy 2:3-7, ESV).*

**1. FOCUS ON OUR SERVICE TO GOD**

Consider the image of the soldier. A soldier often lives apart from normal civilian pursuits. They wear a uniform, live in a barracks, and are frequently deployed to remote parts of the world. Such a life requires obedience. You cannot have an army full of soldiers heading out in twenty different directions, each declaring their own strategy in battle. They must be willing to take orders.

The Christian is called to focused service and obedience to the Lord. This involves the potential of sacrifice. It requires loyalty, even in the midst of difficulty.

**2. PRACTICE SELF-DENIAL & SELF-DISCIPLINE**

Consider the image of the athlete. An athlete is willing to discipline himself in order to achieve the goal (1 Cor 9:24-27). The successful athlete knows that he or she must stay in shape. We too must stay in spiritual shape, shedding attitudes and actions that would get in the way of successfully completing the race of life. An athlete is willing to endure the pain in order to better himself.

Spiritually speaking, enduring through the pain is often the best path to spiritual growth and maturity. Scripture teaches this repeatedly (Jas 1:4; Rom 5:4). Peter shows us how suffering can build our character.

**How can endurance through pain build our character?**

- Refines our faith, 1 Pet 1:6-7
- Trains us in holiness, 1 Pet 4:16-19
- Perfects our hope, 1 Pet 1:8-9, 21
- Keeps us from being ineffective, 2 Pet 1:8
- Keeps us from sin, 1 Pet 4:1-3
- Deepens our relationship with Jesus, 1 Pet 4:12-13

**3. LOOK TOWARD THE PRIZE**

The farmer cannot neglect his chores, and he is often at the mercy of the elements. The farmer is willing to go through that because he recognizes that at the end of his labors, he will reap a harvest (Gal 1:6-9).

For the Christian, there is also a prize to gain. Paul was able to succeed spiritually because he looked forward to that prize (Phil 3:12-13). We must remember this as we endure the hardship! Christ is the only way to the prize! As the old song says, “I must needs go home by the way of the cross, there’s no other way but this. I shall ne’er get sight of the gates of light if the way of the cross I miss. The way of the cross leads home! The way of the cross leads home! It is sweet to know as I onward go, the way of the cross leads home!”