

Dear Friends

Again it is always so good to have the privilege of writing to you. I trust that this letter finds you in good health and walking by faith and not by sight, 2 Cor.5:7.

The new year is already well underway, I can hardly believe it, people are already talking about Easter! I know one thing for sure, Jesus Christ is coming very, very soon. I trust that you are persevering with your walk with God. That is exactly what I am doing at the moment as I have stepped out the boat and have managed to get us on to ETV (terrestrial television) six times a week. I can assure you that it is a challenge like I have never undertaken before. It almost feels to me like a MMC every single week! I am sure that I am speaking to a hundred times more people than those that came to MMC, but it always comes at a price. It is the same with you. Always ask yourself the question, 'why aren't other people doing it?' Maybe it is because they don't have the perseverance that you have.

I looked up the word 'perseverance' in the Oxford Concise Dictionary and it means: 'Continue in a course of action in spite of difficulty or with little or no indication of success'. In other words, pressing through to victory, even though you can't see anything in front of you. The Latin meaning of the word perseverance is to 'abide by strictly' or 'very strict'.

In other words it is discipline of the utmost. The comparison between the words perseverance and endurance is very interesting. To endure is to suffer patiently and to tolerate, which is also very important in the walk we have with God, but to persevere is to continue in a course of action, in spite of the difficulty. The one is aggressive and the other is defensive.

In the recent Australian Open men's singles tennis final, the one player Djokovic, who eventually won, was always aggressive and inside his court and the other player, Nadal, was often defending a clear two metres behind the baseline. We cannot get into that defensive mode. Like never before, God is looking for men and women who are prepared to persevere, irrespective of the cost.

Jerry Bridges said: 'Endurance is to stand up under adversity; perseverance is the ability to progress in spite of it.'

That is what God is looking for from you and me this year. In Phil.3:12 the Lord says very clearly that we need to take hold of the 'that' for which Jesus Christ took hold of us for. My dear friend, he died for you and me, not just so that we can have a life of pleasure, peace and security - no, it is because He wants us to pursue the salvation that He has available for every man, woman, boy and girl and not to keep it to ourselves, but indeed to share it with others.

Perseverance is the hallmark of a genuine interest in Christ. If you really love the Lord you need to persevere to the end and God will honour you with those beautiful words: 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into your rest'.

May God bless you as you persevere with the Comrades Marathon of your life for 2012 and I know that you are going to end up with a gold medal. Remember the best form of defence is attack and the way to do that is by using the word of God, believing the word of God and acting out the word of God.

Yours in Christ  
Angus & Jill Buchan