

HOW YOU CAN “BY NO MEANS EVER FAIL”

Note to the circuit overseer:

Use this outline for the Tuesday evening service talk from September 2018 through February 2019. This talk includes two videos that will be made available to you in the “Event Media” section of the “Documents” tab on jw.org. You will need to prepare your own 30-minute service talk for use after the *Watchtower Study*

OUR PART IN CULTIVATING CHRISTIAN QUALITIES (2 min.)

Is it possible to remain in the truth all one’s life, never returning to the world or lapsing into a temporary period of inactivity?

The answer is yes, according to **2 Peter 1:5-8, 10 [Read]**

Verse 8: Cultivating the qualities mentioned will prevent our becoming “inactive or unfruitful”

Although we cannot reflect these qualities perfectly, our goal should be to cultivate them to the point of overflowing

Verse 10: Peter exhorted anointed Christians to “be all the more diligent” to make their “calling and choosing sure” for themselves

All Christians who put forth such diligent effort can remain active and make their hope sure

Just as “earnest effort” is needed to cultivate faith, virtue, knowledge, and self-control, the remaining four qualities likewise require “earnest effort”

EARNEST EFFORT NEEDED TO CULTIVATE ENDURANCE (5 min.)

“Endurance” is not merely putting up with adversity but doing so with the right attitude (Jas 1:2, 3; cf 67-68 ¶4-6)

Because we know that trials can produce good fruitage, including endurance, we bear up “with patience and joy” (Col 1:11)

To help us endure, Jehovah provides “power beyond what is normal” **[Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-9, 16]**

Does relying on Jehovah for strength mean that we do not need to put forth effort?

No, Jehovah provides “power *beyond* what is normal,” so we must put forth “all earnest effort” within our power

Jehovah’s power reinforces our efforts, and as a result, “we do not give up,” even when we are severely tried

As you watch the following dramatization, notice how Rachel’s father put forth effort to strengthen his endurance

<<**PLAY VIDEO [3 min. 5 sec.]**>>

TO YOUR ENDURANCE, SUPPLY GODLY DEVOTION (5 min.)

As we saw depicted in the video, we can strengthen our endurance by: (1) study, (2) meditation, and (3) putting into practice what we learn

These steps will also help us to cultivate the remaining qualities mentioned at 2 Peter 1:5-7

“Godly devotion” is a deep reverence for Jehovah that moves us to do what is pleasing to him

It also includes loyalty to Jehovah’s sovereignty

A person devoted to Jehovah is, not content simply to be “in the truth” in a perfunctory way, but impelled to express heartfelt love in worship and service (2Pe 3:11)

Such a person maintains a full spiritual routine commensurate with his circumstances

The apostle Paul experienced changing circumstances that affected what he could do in Jehovah's service, but in every situation, he displayed full godly devotion

At times, he was able to work at his ministry full-time, such as when traveling on missionary journeys

At other times, Paul worked secularly but still preached regularly (Ac 18:3, 4)

Under house arrest for two years, Paul could only write letters and witness to visitors, so he did that (Ac 28:30, 31)

Modern-day servants of Jehovah have a variety of circumstances

Some have the health and circumstances to be in full-time service

Others cannot serve full-time, but they maintain a healthy spiritual routine of study, meetings, and service

Some with health limitations are confined to home, where they tie in to meetings and witness by telephone, by letter, and informally

In every circumstance, Jehovah supplies power to those fully devoted to him [**Read Isaiah 40:31**]

All his servants can figuratively “soar on wings like eagles” and “run and not grow weary”

Whatever our circumstances, we can supply godly devotion to our endurance

What can help you cultivate and strengthen your godly devotion?

(1) Study to increase your knowledge of Jehovah's ways; (2) meditate to stir your desire to serve and to determine the extent to which you can do so; and (3) put into practice your godly devotion by creating and maintaining a schedule that makes worship, service, and other “deeds of godly devotion” your priority

TO YOUR GODLY DEVOTION, SUPPLY BROTHERLY AFFECTION (4 min.)

We do not merely put up with our brothers and sisters, but we have tender affection for each one [**Read 1 Peter 1:22**, and isolate the following expressions:]

“Now that you have purified yourselves by your obedience to the truth”: We had to clean up our lives to qualify for baptism

“With unhyprocritical brotherly affection as the result”: Our baptism made us a part of a worldwide brotherhood

Sincere affection for our brothers is not an option but a part of our obedience to Jehovah

How can you cultivate and strengthen your brotherly affection?

(1) Study to develop conviction that brotherly affection is a nonnegotiable requirement; (2) meditate on each one's good qualities; and (3) make it your practice to spend time with others (Lu 14:12-14; w93 10/15 15-16 ¶16-21; w88 10/1 14 ¶18)

TO YOUR BROTHERLY AFFECTION, SUPPLY LOVE (4 min.)

What is the difference between love and brotherly affection?

Like brotherly affection, love (*a·ga'pe*) may include feelings of affection and warmth

Often, though, *a·ga'pe* has more to do with the mind and the will; it is based on the principle of unselfishness

Such love “does not look for its own interests” (1Co 13:5)

Although we may not feel disposed to show love to those who do not love us, we do so because it is Jehovah's way and it is right

Unselfish love enables us to preach to strangers, to forgive those who have hurt us, to do good to those who seem undeserving

What can help you cultivate and strengthen your love?

- (1) Study to grasp the distinction between affection that comes naturally and *a-ga'pe* love;
- (2) meditate on the examples of Jehovah and Jesus, who showed great love “while we were yet sinners” (Ro 5:8); and (3) above all, practice love by regularly engaging in loving acts, and your heart will follow

“YOU WILL BY NO MEANS EVER FAIL” (10 min.)

Remaining in the truth is a reachable goal

While we cannot reflect perfectly the qualities mentioned at 2 Peter 1:5-7, we can continue to cultivate and refine them

If you see the need to give special attention to one of these qualities, then study it, meditate on it, and put it into practice

With persistence, showing these qualities can become easier (w16.05 21 ¶16; w93 3/1 17 ¶14)

As a result, whatever our present level of spiritual progress, we will remain spiritually active, in line for the reward; we “will by no means ever fail” (2Pe 1:10)

Note how this is pointed out in the following dramatization

<<**PLAY VIDEO [3 min. 16 sec.]**>>

Our “earnest effort” to grow in Christian qualities will keep us active and fruitful in Jehovah’s service

We will *remain* in the truth as we eagerly await God’s promised new world

[Based on your review of the records, relate positive works the congregation has accomplished since your last visit. Promote enthusiasm for the ministry this week]