



CONTINUE...

by Vincent M. Newfield

Job has been there. Elijah has been there. Jonah has been there too. Where have all these men of God and many others like them been? The place is utter despair—a point in life where the circumstances are so devastating and dismal that the desire to quit is overwhelming. I've been there; maybe *you're* there right now. I believe the Lord has a word for you: CONTINUE.

Now, the word *continue* may not seem profound, but it actually carries a lot of weight. It means “to keep on, persist, maintain, remain, endure, or persevere.” Colossians 2:6,7 says, *So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, **continue** to live in him, rooted and built up in faith as you were taught...* (NIV). The Living Bible says, *...just as you trusted Christ to save you, trust him, too, for each day's problems; live **in vital union with him*** (verse 6).

I have been walking with the Lord for over thirty-five years. During that time, there have been many occasions when I wanted to quit—especially when the surrounding circumstances were overwhelming and made absolutely no sense whatsoever. From the years of financially struggling while self-employed, to the devastating disappointments of fighting and failing in my battle against lust... from the two miscarriages my precious wife and I experienced, to the multiple hurts and offenses inflicted on me from those in the church... the desire and opportunity to walk away from God has definitely knocked on my door many times.

What empowers us to *continue*? It's the power of God's Spirit living in us—nothing else. But in order to receive this life-giving strength and motivation to carry on, we must stay connected to Christ. Jesus says in John 15:5, *I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing.* Jesus is the Vine, we are the branches, and the supernatural “sap” that flows through the Vine giving life to us is His precious Holy Spirit.

If anyone serves Me, he must **continue** to follow Me [to cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying] and wherever I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

—John 12:26

Without question, there is no way I would still be serving the Lord today if it was not for Him loving me and drawing me to Himself by His Spirit. I don't know about you, but when I get battered again and again by a barrage of blows from the enemy, my faith is shaken to the core. I would love to tell you that I immediately sought the Lord in these situations, but the truth is I often became discouraged, depressed and even angry at God. It was God who pursued me *first*—it was the Holy Spirit who moved on me and melted the hardness of my heart by the intense heat of His unconditional love.

Are you struggling to *continue* in your walk with God? Don't listen to the enemy and pull away. To whom else will you go? Only the Lord has the words that give life (see John 6:68). Instead, get alone with God and tell Him how you feel. If you're angry at Him, tell Him. He will not be shocked and He will not push you away. On the contrary, He will love you and nurse you back to spiritual health.

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