

FOURTH QUARTER STRATEGIES – Saturday, January 3, 2015

Perseverance is a topic worth a good discussion. Throughout our lives we have a choice between persevering and taking a diversion. I've always enjoyed taking the road less travelled. That road is usually more challenging, but it's also more rewarding once you've reached your goal. Let me tell you about my friend Chris Hedges. I met Chris a few months ago while he was making his Left Coast swing on his first book tour. His book, [Average Joe's Story: Quest for Confidence](#), is inspirational but the author inspired me even more than his literary work. You see Chris has been battling cancer since he graduated from the University of Miami. Upon finishing his 20,000 mile book tour, Chris celebrated by spending ten days in a Florida hospital. He's already working on his second book and it won't surprise me if someone tags him with the appropriate moniker "Mr. Perseverance" one of these days. Perhaps I did just that!

I never had the pleasure of meeting Charles "Tremendous" Jones, yet the stories of this successful insurance agent turned motivational speaker are well-documented. In all, Charlie wrote nine motivational books and continued to speak into his eighties. He went to be with his Lord and Savior in 2008. One of his best known quotes about the insurance business goes, "No one has endurance like the man who sells insurance." Not all my colleagues in the insurance profession have the endurance to persevere, but I've witnessed some exceptional people in my thirty-plus years in the business. Actually I take it back. They were not exceptional - they were normal people like you and me - only they took on the task to never give up and continuously strive to reach one more person before calling it a night.

There's one person who truly stands out as the epitome of perseverance. His name is Christ Jesus! He is both Savior and Lord to many and all will one day bow down before Him. In Isaiah 50:7 this Messianic prophecy profoundly states, "Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know I will not be put to shame." (NIV) When I consider all the trials Jesus went through as the God man, I see the trials I face in life as inconsequential. He's more than the perfect example. He's the One who gives them power to persevere as the Holy Spirit encourages them daily as they muddle through life on this corrupted earth. It's not easy, but in my humble opinion life would be extremely difficult without His presence in our lives. Some of you reading this are attempting to get through life on your own and that's certainly your prerogative. However as a satisfied customer, let me simply say that there's great strength available in that most important relationship found in Jesus. I highly recommend you take that step of faith if you've been putting it off. He awaits your simple decision to follow Him this day forward!

Here to serve,

Jim Langley, CLU

Passages to Ponder: James 1:12; Hebrews 12:1; Hebrews 10:36-39; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; Philippians 3:14

Note: Jim Langley has been an agent with New York Life since 1983 and an active member of CBMC of Santa Barbara since 1987. These "Fourth Quarter Strategies" discussions are designed to "light a fire" under Christian business and professional men so we might be more effective in the marketplace for the sake of Christ, our Lord and Savior!

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James 1:12 New King James Version (NKJV)

Loving God Under Trials

¹² Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Hebrews 12:1 New King James Version (NKJV)

The Race of Faith

12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Hebrews 10:36-39 New King James Version (NKJV)

³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

³⁷ “For yet a little while,
And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith;
But if *anyone* draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him.”

³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁵ Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

Philippians 3:14 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.