

**The Discipline of Spiritual Tenacity (Be still and know that I am God. Psalm 46:10)
Oswald Chambers, "My Utmost for His Highest", February 22nd**

Tenacity is more than endurance, it is endurance combined with the absolute certainty that what we are looking for is going to transpire.

The thing that stands in the way of tenacity is doubt. But doubting is specifically addressed in Scripture as the very thing that can, and will, frustrate the results we seek from God.

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does. (Jas 1:5-7)

Jesus is very clear on the all inclusive dynamic when it comes to the requests we make of Him.

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. ²² If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." (Matt 21:21-22)

Matthew Henry offers some great commentary on this:

Faith is the soul, prayer is the body; both together make a complete man for any service. Faith, if it be right, will excite prayer; and prayer is not right, if it do not spring from faith. This is the condition of our receiving—we must ask in prayer, believing. The requests of prayer shall not be denied; the expectations of faith shall not be frustrated. We have many promises to this purport from the mouth of our Lord Jesus, and all to encourage faith, the principal grace, and prayer, the principal duty, of a Christian. It is but ask and have, believe and receive; and what would we more? Observe, How comprehensive the promise is— all things whatsoever ye shall ask; this is like all and every the premises in a conveyance. All things, in general; whatsoever, brings it to particulars; though generals include particulars, yet such is the folly of our unbelief, that, though we think we assent to promises in the general, yet we fly off when it comes to particulars, and therefore, that we might have strong consolation, it is thus copiously expressed, All things whatsoever.

This is not a blank check. James 4:3 identifies the reason that we sometimes don't get what we ask for because we ask with wrong motives. "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." It is effective because it's coming from a man whose faith is pure and his motives are noble.

Provided those dynamics are in place, one should be confident that God will come through as requested.

Tenacity is more than hanging on, which may be but the weakness of being too afraid to fall off. Tenacity is the supreme effort of a man refusing to believe that his hero is going to be conquered. The greatest fear a man has is not that he will be damned, but that Jesus Christ will be worsted, that the things He stood for – love and justice and forgiveness and kindness among men – will not win out in the end; the things He stands for look like will-o'-the-wisps. Then comes the call to spiritual tenacity, not to hang on and do nothing, but to work deliberately on the certainty that God is not going to be worsted.

As was mentioned by Matthew Henry, prayer is faith in action. It is not inactivity, but spiritual activity that is needed when waiting on God. While it may not manifest itself in physical action, it is nevertheless an aggressive posture to be actively engaged in praying and seeking God's Hand and Provision.

Consider Luke 11:8:

I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs. (Lk 11:8)

The word "boldness" can also be translated as "persistence." You see that same kind of dynamic in Matthew 7:7-8. Matthew Henry elaborates:

Here is a precept in three words to the same purport, *Ask, Seek, Knock* ([v. 7](#)); that is, in one word, "Pray; pray often; pray with sincerity and seriousness; pray, and pray again; make conscience of prayer, and be constant in it; make a business of prayer, and be earnest in it. *Ask*, as a beggar asks alms." Those that would be rich in grace, must betake themselves to the poor trade of begging, and they shall find it a thriving trade. "*Ask*; represent your wants and burthens to God, and refer yourselves to him for support and supply, according to his promise. *Ask* as a traveller asks the way; to pray is to *enquire of God*, [Eze. 36:37](#) . *Seek*, as for a thing of value that we have lost, or as the merchantman that *seeks goodly pearls*. *Seek by prayer*, [Dan. 9:3](#) . *Knock*, as he that desires to enter into the house knocks at the door." We would be admitted to converse with God, would be taken into his love, and favour, and kingdom; sin has shut and barred the door against us; by prayer, we knock; *Lord, Lord, open to us*. Christ knocks at our door ([Rev. 3:20](#) ; [Cant. 5:2](#)); and allows us to knock at his, which is a favour we do not allow to common beggars. Seeking and knocking imply something more than asking and praying. 1. We must not only *ask* but *seek*; we must second our prayers with our endeavors; we must, in the use of the appointed means, *seek* for that which we *ask* for, else we tempt God. When the dresser of the vineyard asked for a year's respite for the barren fig-tree, he added, *I will dig about it*, [Lu. 13:7](#), [Lu. 13:8](#) . God gives knowledge and grace to those that search the scriptures, and wait at Wisdom's gates; and power against sin to those that avoid the occasions of it. 2. We must not only *ask*, but *knock*; we must come to God's door, must *ask* importunately; not only pray, but plead and wrestle with God; we must *seek* diligently; we must continue knocking; must persevere in prayer, and in the use of means; must endure to the end in the duty. II. Here is a promised annexed: *our labour* in prayer, if indeed we do labour in it, *shall not be in vain*: where God finds a praying heart, he will be found a prayer-hearing God; *he shall give thee an answer of peace*. The precept is threefold, *ask, seek, knock*; there is *precept upon precept*; but the promise is sixfold, *line upon line*, for our encouragement; because a firm belief of the promise would make us cheerful and constant in our obedience.

If our hopes are being disappointed just now, it means that they are being purified. There is nothing noble the human mind has ever hoped for or dreamed of that will not be fulfilled. One of the greatest strains in life is the strain of waiting for God. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience."

Remain spiritually tenacious.

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience" is Revelation 3:10 where Jesus is commending the church at Philadelphia for the way they've endured. And it's because of their endurance that God is going to prevent them from coming to harm. In the same way, we need to endure in the context of seeking God and asking Him for His provision. And it's not just God's Hand that we need to be looking for, rather we need to be looking for God Himself. The verse immediately following Christ's admonishment to pray in Matthew 7 uses the illustration of a parent responding to their child's request. Jesus makes the point of how God, who is Perfect, can certainly match and exceed the response of a loving parent who is, by default, imperfect.

So stay the course. Don't stop praying and asking (see 1 Thess 5:16-18) and know that God hears and know that God will answer and know that His answer is well worth waiting for (Eph 3:20-21; 1 John 5:14-15)!