

HALFWAY THERE

SHARE

Is there something that you are trying to get through? Something you're waiting to be fulfilled, completed, and/or perfected?

SEEK

God Is There

When you think about it, everyone is waiting for the completion, fulfillment, and/or perfection of something. It seems like not everything in this life is perfect or complete; if it was, it would be heaven! Christians for centuries have recognized that since the fall of all creation, that is, with the entrance of sin in the world, things will not be perfect until Christ returns and restores all things once and for all.

What this means is that life will always have a certain dissatisfaction to it. Time and time again we will see that things are not as they should be, and we will long for their fixing. What is needed then is perseverance. How do Christians continue in times of dissatisfaction? When we are feeling down or longing for something, when we need to hold on but feel as though we are slipping...how do we “get a grasp” on things? Genesis 15 provides a unique response.

There, Abram is given a promise from God that he will have a biological child in his old age from which the blessings of God will come. Abram believes God, and the two make a covenant together. At the end of the covenant God says: “To your seed I have given this land...” The phrase “I have given” is in the perfect tense, meaning that the promise has *already* been given, and that it will *continue* to unfold. The interesting tidbit here is that, as scholar Robert Alter has pointed out, the more definite God's promises become, the more implausible they seem to Abram.

What we know, then, is that in times of perseverance we must continuously take shelter in the God who is always there; He is “Immanuel,” meaning, “God is with us.” We must remind ourselves of this truth and never grow tired of it. We must cling to what philosopher G.K. Chesterton said: “Just because truth ceases to be fashion does not mean it has ceased to be truth!”

SEE

GOD IS THERE

CHRISTIAN TRADITION SAYS THAT SINCE THE FALL OF CREATION AND THE ENTRANCE OF SIN IN THE WORLD, THINGS HAVE NOT BEEN PERFECT. DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS IS THE REASON FOR THE IMPERFECTIONS OF THE WORLD TODAY? WHAT DO OTHER PEOPLE SAY ABOUT WHY THE WORLD IS NOT AS IT SHOULD BE?

THE ABOVE-MENTIONED REALITY OF SIN IN THE WORLD SEEMS TO BE A BIG REASON FOR OUR NEED TO PERSEVERE. WHAT IS PERSEVERANCE TO YOU? PERSEVERANCE IMPLIES HOLDING ON FOR SOMETHING; IT LOOKS FORWARD TO A FULFILLED GOAL. DOES THIS IMPLY THAT THE WORLD IS NOT AS IT SHOULD BE? HOW CAN THIS LEAD US TO LOOK TO CHRIST?

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE USE OF THE PERFECT TENSE IN GENESIS 15 WHEN GOD SAYS, "I HAVE GIVEN"? (SEE GENESIS 15.18). THIS IMPLIES SOMETHING THAT IS FULFILLED (THE PROMISE HAS NOW BEEN GIVEN), AND ITS EFFECTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE FELT INTO THE FUTURE (ABRAM WILL CONTINUE TO SEE THE UNFOLDING OF THIS PROMISE AND ALL THAT IT ENTAILS). DOES THIS TELL YOU THAT ABRAM WILL HAVE TO PERSEVERE?

LEARNING WHAT YOU HAVE ABOUT GOD IN GENESIS 15, HOW DOES THIS HELP YOU TO PERSEVERE IN TIMES OF DULLNESS OR UNFULFILLMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE?

Please take a few moments to pray with and for one another