

The Hot/Cold Syndrome

Dub McClish

An eight-year-old had been pestering his father for a watch. Finally, his father ordered him to say no more about it, for he was tired of it. At the supper table, each member of the family always recited a verse of scripture, of their own choosing. The little boy quoted Mark 13:37: "And what I say unto you I say to all, Watch." He made his point and got his watch.

Persistence is among those commendable human traits that remains forever in short supply. There is hardly any limit to what one can accomplish if he perseveres in a pre-determined course. One may be of mediocre education or average intellect and yet accomplish many times more than the more "advantaged" individual, simply by sticking to the job until it is finished.

I once visited a lady with several small children because the family reportedly needed some help to buy groceries. She told me that her husband was an excellent professional photographer and could earn a better-than-average income if he would stay with his profession. But as she put it, "He approaches life like it was a thirty-day leave." I couldn't resist thinking of how that description characterizes the way some in the Lord's family approach His work. Perhaps the best way to describe their spiritual "condition" is to call it the "hot/cold syndrome." The religion of such can be measured in "spells," There will be a "spell" where they won't miss a Bible class or worship meeting for two months, but then they'll lay out for three. Start a new program of work and they may be the first to volunteer. For the first few weeks they are "on fire," but soon the fire goes out. What began as an exciting work has turned into dutiful drudgery and they make up an excuse to drop out. The work falters or even fails.

The one guiding principle of God's judgment of us is our **faithfulness**. Here is a trait required of all because it is attainable by all. The most common meaning of the word "patience" in our New Testament is endurance, continuance, steadfastness. Thus, we are urged to "...run with **patience** the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1b). Let us make steadfastness our badge and dependability our trademark.

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