



NINTH LAY TALK

TALK #14 PERSEVERANCE

Overview of All Talks

One message is delivered during The Walk to Emmaus 72-hour experience; it is communicated throughout the music, meals, clergy meditations, attitudes and actions of the team members, and the talks. You have been selected to deliver one of the 15 talks. In reality, you will deliver 1/15 of the Emmaus talk—one message, fifteen presenters.

Prepare your talk using the outlines provided. In general, 2/3 of your presentation will come from the outlines; the remaining 1/3 will come from your original insights and personal experience.

The talks are sequenced in a defined order; each builds on the next to provide pilgrims with the complete message of Emmaus. Do not try to cover more than your assigned topic. The expanded outline intends to provide a solid understanding of the material from which your talk will be developed. The abbreviated outline helps you see the progression of the main points. *Neither outline is a script*; you will need to add personal examples to give life to the content and make it real to the hearers. Use visual aids to help convey the main points.

The Holy Spirit, as well as feedback from the team after your talk preview, will provide additional guidance for your unique presentation of this talk. Once you incorporate the suggestions offered after your preview, your presentation no longer belongs just to you but to the team God is forming to deliver the Emmaus message.

This presentation is allotted a maximum of 20 to 25 minutes. Please honor the time limit out of a spirit of cooperation, charity, good stewardship of time, and consideration for the hearers.

Overview for Speaker

This talk presents the follow-up method that The Walk to Emmaus movement provides for members of the Emmaus family. It includes an explanation of the group reunion meeting and the group reunion cards.

This talk points out that each pilgrim has a responsibility to return to his or her local congregation and become involved in its ministry. In addition, the talk should emphasize that Emmaus has kindled a new desire in the pilgrims, and a definite plan is needed to keep the flame burning. The group reunion will provide this continuity to the pilgrim, since the objective of the group reunion is to increase members' idealism, self-surrender, and spirit of charity.

The unique flavor and style of the group reunion will grow out of the participants and the locale, but the simple format can provide a structure for helping each member grow spiritually and supporting one another in fruitful apostolic action. The group offers a structure for sharing Spirit, insight, and strength. The purpose of the group reunion is mutual support, encouragement, and accountability.

This talk is scheduled for Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

Expanded Outline: PERSEVERANCE

Begin by leading the Prayer to the Holy Spirit:

Please turn to page 48 in your Worshipbook and join me in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Opening Story (1–2 minutes)

Choose a story or experience from your own life that is brief, personal, and directly related to the main point of this talk. If you cannot think of an appropriate introduction, consult with the Community Lay Director or a Spiritual Director for assistance. A good introduction will engage the hearts, minds, and attention of pilgrims and move them into the theme of this talk. For example, you might do the following:

Option 1: Share a specific way your life has changed because you actively participate in a group reunion or some other form of small group for accountability and support. Feel free to name the fears or obstacles that had to be overcome.

Option 2: Share the life story of someone else that illustrates the main theme of the talk.

My name is _____, and the title of this talk is PERSEVERANCE.

I. Introduction

A. How can we persevere in the Christian life?

B. *Persevere* is defined as

1. continuing with an undertaking in spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement
2. remaining steadfast in purpose

C. We need to feed on spiritual food to grow, develop, and function as Christians. We need to persevere in the life of grace. Because we have shared in the Christian banquet, we see the need for a continued diet of God's grace. We must learn how to acquire it and keep it in our daily lives.

II. Why do we persevere?

A better life is possible. Whatever we experience in this three-day Emmaus event is possible to reexperience in our Fourth Day. The treasure of The Walk to Emmaus movement—life in grace—is ours to have. [*Compare the life of grace to the pearl of great price, Matt. 13:45-46.*] But it takes effort on our part to receive and maintain that life. Christians

cannot live in a vacuum but must maintain a relationship with God and others. To persevere involves maintaining:

A. Contact with Christ

1. Total security comes from encountering Christ, surrendering one's will to God, and accepting the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
2. This is a lifelong process, achieved through perseverance and the hard work of remaining open to God's persistent love.
3. There is a difference between the feeling of security and the state of being secure.
4. Only that which is absolute can give absolute security.
5. Jesus Christ is the source for divine life (eternal life) in us (John 15:1-11).
6. In a personal relationship with Jesus Christ we strengthen the life of God in us.
7. Contact with Jesus Christ is possible through prayer, meditation, the sacraments, and the living Word.
8. We grow and become more secure when we maintain contact with Christ using these sources of God's revelation.

B. Contact with other Christians

1. Group reunions are a way we help others live in grace. The groups provide mutual support, encouragement, and accountability.
2. We need mutual, Christ-centered sharing. The Greek word used in the New Testament to describe such sharing is *koinonia*.
3. The early church met together, shared fellowship, prayed, learned about God's will, and grew in the Christian life.
4. The early church provides a model for us of community and participation in the life of Christ. We cannot convert ourselves; neither can we keep on growing by ourselves.

III. What is the cost of perseverance?

No battle is ever won without cost. The more valuable the prize, the more costly the effort to achieve it. The weekly meeting of the group reunion is the premium we pay to persevere as disciples.

A. To be effective, a group reunion must be:

1. serious—you are dealing with things eternal.
2. sincere—you must be honest and open.

3. discreet—your group meeting is not a source for gossip; what is said in a group meeting remains in the group.
4. regular—weekly meetings are most important [*Speaker, emphasize this point.*].

B. Explanation of group reunion card

(This will vary, but should include the following important points.)

1. *Opening prayer*—Calling on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.
 2. *Piety*—Feeding on spiritual resources keeps us in closer contact with Christ. Sharing the moment when we felt closest to Christ helps us become more aware of Christ's activity in our lives and the lives of others.
 3. *Study*—A great way to learn more about the Christian life.
 4. *Action: Call to Discipleship*—Share at what moment this week you felt you responded to God's call to be a disciple.
 5. *Inaction: Discipleship Denied*—Failures are always areas for improvement. Where have we failed in our attempt to bring the world closer to Christ?
 6. *Plan*—What is your plan for next week? The best way to avoid apostolic disappointment and ensure apostolic success is to plan ahead and not let circumstances dictate the course of events. Group plans provide support and effectiveness.
 7. *Closing Prayer*—The Prayer of Thanksgiving reminds us that God constantly does wonderful things for us. Pray for those absent and for confidences shared.
- C. Monthly Gatherings—Gatherings provide opportunities for pilgrims to meet monthly to share and celebrate the presence of God in their lives. Perseverance should become our aim—to help one another continue the journey in the life of grace.
- D. Serving Emmaus—A special joy grows out of serving in Emmaus. Opportunities for service include board committees, behind-the-scenes work, and the conference room team.
- E. Local church—Your church is your primary Christian community. The Emmaus activities are meant to supplement and enliven, never to replace, your local church.

[Give a personal testimony of your perseverance.]

IV. Conclusion

What are the guarantees of your perseverance?

- A. Christ's presence—"Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matt. 18:20).
- B. Christian friends—Keep the love flowing through friendship and association with fellow seekers; participate in a group reunion and in your local church.

De Colores!

Abbreviated Outline:

PERSEVERANCE

Begin by leading the Prayer to the Holy Spirit:

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Opening Story (1-2 minutes)

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Option 1: Share a specific way your life has changed because you actively participate in a group reunion or some other form of small group for accountability and support. Feel free to name the fears or obstacles that had to be overcome.

Option 2: Share the life story of someone else that illustrates the main theme of the talk.

My name is _____, and the title of this talk is PERSEVERANCE.

I. Introduction

- A. How can we persevere in the Christian life?
- B. To persevere is to continue an undertaking in spite of difficulty, opposition, and discouragement; to be steadfast in purpose; to persist.
- C. We have shared in the Christian banquet, and now we see the need for a continued diet of God's grace.

II. Why do we persevere?

Whatever we experience in this three-day Emmaus event is possible to reexperience in our Fourth Day. To persevere involves maintaining:

- A. *Contact with Christ*—In a personal relationship with Jesus Christ we strengthen the life of God in us. Contact with Jesus Christ is possible through prayer, meditation, the sacraments, and the living Word.
- B. *Contact with other Christians*—Group reunions are a way we help one another live in grace. We cannot convert ourselves; neither can we keep growing by ourselves.

III. What is the cost of perseverance?

Participating in a weekly group reunion is the premium we pay to persevere as disciples.

- A. To be effective, a group reunion must be:
 - 1. Serious—You are dealing with things eternal.
 - 2. Sincere—You must be honest and open.
 - 3. Discreet—What is said in a group meeting remains there.
 - 4. Regular—Weekly meetings are important.
- B. Explanation of group reunion card
 - 1. Opening prayer
 - 2. Piety
 - 3. Study
 - 4. Action: Call to Discipleship
 - 5. Inaction: Discipleship Denied
 - 6. Plan
 - 7. Closing Prayer
- C. Monthly Gatherings—an opportunity for pilgrims to gather monthly to share and celebrate the presence of God in their lives
- D. Serving Emmaus—board committees, behind the scenes, conference room team
- E. Your local church

[Share a personal testimony of your own perseverance.]

IV. Conclusion

What are the guarantees of your perseverance?

- A. Christ's presence—"Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matt. 18:20).
- B. Christian friends—Keep the love flowing through friendship and association with fellow seekers; participate in a group reunion and in your local church.

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