In reading a novel titled *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail*, a novel authored by Bill Bryson, I came across some very interesting information, information regarding a catastrophic fate that can befall anyone in the out-of-doors. The catastrophic fate is that of hypothermia and there is scarcely an incident of hypothermic death that isn’t in some way mysterious and isn’t in some way even improbable.

Hypothermia is a gradual and insidious sort of trauma. It overtakes you literally by degrees as your body temperature falls and your natural responses grow sluggish and your natural responses become disoriented. Most everyone associates hypothermia with snow, ice, freezing temperature, and/or freezing water. But that’s not necessarily the case, as we will see in today’s message.

Now you might be asking yourself, “Why am I speaking on hypothermia here in mid-October, in the early weeks of autumn?” There’s no snow yet. No ice. No freezing temperatures. Well, in my research, what I have found interesting is that hypothermia is not necessarily an event of winter. Nor is hypothermia an event of harsh or freezing weather conditions.

As a lead-in to today’s sermon, I want each of us to consider the following short story about hypothermia. The following is taken from Mr. Bill Bryson’s writings. I referenced that just a moment ago and this quote begins in chapter 17, page 312. Mr. Bryson writes:

> Consider a small story related by David Quammen in his book *Natural Acts*.

> In the late summer of 1982 …

Now I would consider today “late summer.” We’re certainly in the early weeks of autumn. I understand that, but at least here in the Wenatchee, Washington area or north central Washington area, we’ve had some wonderful, fantastic weather. You might want to refer to it a little bit as an Indian summer—mid to high 60s, beautiful blue skies for a number of days now. But:

> In the late summer of 1982, four youths and two men were on a canoeing holiday in Canada in Banff National Park when they failed to return to their base-camp at the end of a particular day. The next morning a search party went out looking for them. The search party found the missing canoeists, but they found them floating dead in their life jackets on the lake. All were face up and all were very composed. Nothing about them indicated distress. Nothing about them
indicated panic. One of the men was still wearing his hat, one of the men still wearing his eyeglasses.

Their canoes, drifting nearby, were sound. And the weather overnight had been calm. And the weather overnight had been very mild. For some unknowable reason, the six had carefully left their canoes with life preservers intact and lowered themselves fully dressed into the cold water of the lake where they peacefully perished. In other words, one of the members of the search party stated, “It was like they had gone to sleep.” In a sense they had.

Well, we have a story here of six individuals peaceably perishing. Canoes were intact. Paddles were on board. Life jackets were on. Weather was calm and weather was mild. Yet for some unknown reason, these individuals perished.

Popular impressions to the contrary, relatively few victims of hypothermia die in extreme conditions—stumbling through blizzards, or fighting the bite of Arctic winds. To begin with. relatively few people go out in that kind of weather and those that do generally are very prepared.

Most victims of hypothermia die in a much more dopey (by that I simply mean foolish), in a more foolish kind of way in temperate seasons and with the air temperature nowhere near freezing. Typically, they are caught by an unforeseen change in conditions or a combination of changes—a sudden drop in temperature, a cold pelting rain, the realization that they are lost—for which they are emotionally or physically unprepared, under-equipped.

Nearly always they compound the problem by doing something fool-heartedly like leaving a well marked path in search of a shortcut, blundering deeper and deeper into the woods, they would have been better off just staying on the path instead of striving to forge a stream which only gets them deeper and deeper into trouble as they get wetter and colder.

Such was the unfortunate fate of Richard Salinas.

Now this is still part of the introduction into today’s message.

Richard Salinas, who in 1990, went hiking with a friend in Pisgah National Forest in North Carolina. Caught by fading light, they headed back to the car, but somehow they became separated. Salinas was an experienced hiker and all he had to do was follow the well-defined trail down the mountain to the parking lot. He never made it.

Three days later his jacket and knapsack were found abandoned miles and miles into the woods. His body was discovered two months later snagged on branches in the Little Linville River.
As far as anyone can surmise, he had left the trail in search of a shortcut, became lost, plunged deeper and deeper into the woods, panicked and plunged deeper still until at last hypothermia finally robbed him of his senses. Salinas had abandoned his possessions and soon after made a desperate and irrational decision to try to cross a rain swollen river.

On the night he got lost (now listen to this), the weather was dry and the temperatures were in the high 40s. Had he kept his jacket on, had he stayed out of the water, he would have had an uncomfortably chilly night, but he would have had a story to tell. Instead, he died.

A person suffering from hypothermia experiences several progressive stages. I'm going to take a moment and for those of you taking notes, I would like you to go ahead and write down these progressive stages of hypothermia because we’re going to come back and reference them in a moment and we’re going to tie them to some spiritual applications. So, please write these down.

And once again, a person suffering hypothermia experiences eight specific progressive stages: (1) mild shivering followed by increasing violent shivering, (2) profound weariness, (3) heaviness of movement (4) a distorted sense of time and distance leading to mental confusion and illogical decisions, (5) thorough disorientation (and I stress the word “thorough”), (6) hallucinations, (7) a sense of burning up rather than freezing, and actually to the point where most victims begin to tear off clothing. They take off gloves. They even find them crawling out of sleeping bags, and (8) the last stage of hypothermia, at this point heart rates fall, brain waves begin to flat line and ultimately death occurs.

When one reaches the point of falling heart rate and less brain wave activity, even if the victim is found, the shock of revival may be more than the body can actually bear. Case in point—and I find this just astonishing!

In the January 1997 issue of “Outside Magazine” it was reported that in 1980 sixteen Danish seamen issued a mayday call. The sixteen seamen donned their life jackets and they jumped into the North Sea as their vessel sank beneath them. There they bobbed in the cold icy waters of the North Sea for ninety minutes before a rescue ship was able to lift them from the water. So the survival of all sixteen men was a cause of joy. They were ecstatic that they saved the lives of these sixteen men.

The men were wrapped in blankets and guided below deck where each was given a hot drink. Abruptly, instantaneously, all sixteen dropped dead. Hypothermia can be deadly, especially if one reaches a certain stage. Upon rescue, he or she may seem on the surface to be fine, but abrupt death can still take place.

The main cause of death from hypothermia is loss of body heat. Normal body temperature is somewhere between 98 and 100° Fahrenheit. That’s approximately 37 to 38° Celsius. A body temperature of anything less than 95° Fahrenheit/35° Celsius,
can lead to hypothermia and as the body continues to loose heat, and as the core temperature continues to drop, one reaches a point where revival is really questionable and death most likely does occur.

In this message today, we’re going to see that the physical characteristics of hypothermia can teach each and every one of spiritual lessons. Today in this sermon, we will address certain Christian attributes that will keep us from falling prey to spiritual hypothermia, a condition of lukewarmness, a condition of our spiritual core losing heat, a condition that can lead to spiritual death. In this message today, we will look at four Christian characteristics, four Christian attributes manifested as signs of faith. Four Christian attributes that, if active in one’s life, will keep us from experiencing the eight progressive stages of spiritual hypothermia, which by the way, mirror the eight stages of physical hypothermia.

Now before reviewing the four Christian attributes, we’re going to take a moment and view the eight stages of hypothermia from a spiritual perspective because these eight stages do indeed mirror those of physical hypothermia.

Stage number one of spiritual hypothermia mirrors that of physical hypothermia: mild shivering.

When a Christian begins to experience spiritual hypothermia, he or she will spiritual shiver as they begin to pray less, study less, fast less. Turn, if you would please, to Revelation chapter 3, I’m going to begin to read in verse 15. Once again we’re referencing the spiritual stages of hypothermia—the first stage of mild shivering.

Revelation 3:15. “I know your works, that you are neither cold [or] hot. … (NKJV)

Here we find a Christian in kind of a shivering mode if you will—not cold, not hot. This Christian finds other things that are more important than allotting time for the basics of their calling—basics, such as: prayer, Bible study, fasting, meditation; needed basics, if we are to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Mild spiritual shivering then increases to violent spiritual shivering. But spiritually, those experiencing this stage are not aware of it. And much like physical hypothermia, because they believe they are okay spiritually, when in actuality their spiritual core is beginning to lose its heat as lukewarmness sets in as we just read in verse 15 of Revelation 3.

The second stage of spiritual hypothermia is profound weariness.

Spiritually speaking profound weariness sets in because the lukewarm Christian becomes lethargic. They begin to see themselves as being in “need of nothing.” Revelation 3:17.

Revelation 3:17. “Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ … (NKJV)
The third stage of spiritual hypothermia is that of heaviness of movement.

Spiritual heaviness of movement begins as a Christian see him or herself as rich and wealthy. No need to work on our calling. No need to work on the basics.

The fourth stage of spiritual hypothermia is a distorted sense of time and distance leading to mental confusion and illogical decisions.

Once again, this stage mirrors that of the fourth stage of physical hypothermia, a distorted sense of time. These four tie together: distorted sense of time, distorted sense of distance, mental confusion, illogical decisions. These four tie together as spiritual hypothermia begins to take its toll as the Christian has a distorted view of him or herself because they become blind as to what is actually occurring to them.

The fifth stage of spiritual hypothermia (and, again, it mirrors that of physical) is thorough disorientation.

And again, because a spiritual blindness is taking hold. The lethargic Christian here is losing their spiritual vision. They “cast off restraint” as we find in Proverbs 29:18.

The sixth stage of spiritual hypothermia is that of hallucinations.

Those suffering from this stage of spiritual hypothermia have Revelation 3:17’s distorted view of themselves. They believe (emphasis on “believe”) they are “rich and have become wealthy and have need of nothing.” They’re hallucinating as they have no idea that they are actually “wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.” They are illogical in their thinking. Spiritual blindness has set in.

The seventh stage of spiritual hypothermia is a sense of burning up rather than freezing.

And understand that with physical hypothermia, this gets to the point (we mentioned it moments ago) where most victims begin to tear off clothing. Tear off their gloves. They even crawl out of their sleeping bags.

Well, as spiritual hypothermia begins to reach a critical stage in the lukewarm Christian, the lukewarm Christian senses that he or she is fine spiritually. They continue their spiral of lack of study and prayer life. What’s actually occurring is that the whole armor of God, which they may have worn at one time, begins to be removed, one item at a time until the Christian finds him or herself defenseless from a spiritual perspective.

The eighth stage and the final stage of spiritual hypothermia is that spiritually, one finds a falling heart rate; spiritually, brain waves begin to flat line until finally one reaches spiritual death.
These last three bring about the final stages of spiritual hypothermia. If repentance of one’s ways does not take place, the final stage can take place. And, of course, that final stage can be spiritual death.

At this point in today’s message, let’s begin to look at four Christian attributes, manifested as signs of faith. Four attributes, which, if active in one’s life, will keep us from experiencing the eight progressive stages of spiritual hypothermia that we just reviewed. Now as I introduce these four Christian attributes, we’re going to take a high level overview of each and, then, we’re going to go back and review and go deeper as we get further into the message.

**Christian attribute number one is that of obedience.**

Let’s turn over to Philippians 2:12, if you would please. And, again, these are Christian attributes manifested as signs of faith (and I really stress that portion). But this Christian attribute number one is that of obedience. I’ll be reading from the New Living Translation as it gives a somewhat different perspective on working out our own salvation. Philippians chapter two beginning in verse 12:

**Philippians 2:12.** *Dearest friends, you were always so careful to follow my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, you must be even more careful to put into action God’s saving work in your lives, obeying God with deep reverence and obeying God with deep fear.*

13) *For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey Him and the power to do what pleases Him.* (NLT)

As I’ve said, we’re just going to do a quick overview on these. We’ll go deeper into them in a moment.

**Christian attribute number two (and this goes hand in hand with obedience) is fruitfulness.**

Turn to the Gospel of John if you would please. Begin reading in John 15:1. We’re very familiar with these verses. These verses tie to Christian attribute number two that of fruitfulness.

**John 15:1.** *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.*

2) *Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.*

3) *You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.*

4) *Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in Me.*

5) *I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

6) *If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.* (NJKV)
We must bear fruit in our lives and we do so by obedience to God, by obedience to His ways and His commandments. Bearing righteous fruit in our lives (attribute number two) gives us the ability for spiritual growth, which is:

**Christian attribute number three is spiritual growth.**

Turn 2 Peter 3, we will read verses 17 and 18. And once again, Christian attribute number three is that of spiritual growth. So here in 2 Peter 3:17, we read:

> 2 Peter 3:17. You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;
> 18) But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

If needed, get back to the basics of our calling. If we’ve not been following the lead of God’s spirit, begin to do so. Remember what is stated in Philippians 2:5. “Let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus.” Having the mind of Christ, following the lead of the spirit allows for spiritual growth.

**Christian attribute number four is perseverance.**

In 1 Corinthians 15:58, we read:

> 1 Corinthians 15:58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (NKJV)

In other words, don’t become weary in well-doing. And I’m not one to say that war is well-doing. I don’t mean it that way, but we heard in the sermonette of men who did not become weary. With all the stress of being at war and all that that brings, they did not become weary.

Well, now that we’ve identified these four attributes, we’ll spend a few minutes on each. And we’ll see how obedience, fruitfulness, spiritual growth, and perseverance, how these four can help protect us from experiencing spiritual hypothermia.

So, number one again is obedience. Let’s turn over to Romans chapter 6 and we’ll read verses 17 through 23.

> Romans 6:17. But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. (NKJV)

It’s through God’s calling of each of us that we (you and I), that we were delivered from once living a lifestyle of the world about us. Actually—and I guess maybe I’m speaking
for myself here—we were entrenched in the ways of the world. Thus, we were slaves, if you will, to the ways of the world—slaves to sin.

But we responded to God’s calling. We repented of our worldly ways and chose from our heart to walk in a path of obedience. Verse 18:

*Romans 6:18.* And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. (NKJV)

In other words, upon repentance, being baptized and receiving God’s spirit, we were no longer slaves of sin. We were free from sin and became slaves of obedience, slaves of righteousness, pursuing the lives of Christians.

Verse 19:

*Romans 6:19.* I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. (NKJV)

Brethren, we must change. Even though our flesh is weak, we must change. We must follow the lead of the spirit as we seek obedience, as we strive our best to put on the mind of Christ, and to become obedient to His ways. Verse 20:

*Romans 6:20.* For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. (NKJV)

There was a time in all of our lives that we lived the world’s ways when sin was our master. Verse 21:

*Romans 6:21.* What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. (NKJV)


*Romans 6:22.* But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. (NKJV)

Being free from sin allows us to follow God’s lead. He becomes our master. And a benefit of that is that we become holy. 1 Peter chapter 1 verses 15 and 16 state that we are to be holy in all our conduct. Why? Because God is holy. And being holy requires what? Being holy requires obedience.

Verse 23, which we’re all very familiar with, it’s a memory scripture.
**Romans 6:23.** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NKJV)

Obedience, following the way, the path of righteousness, keeps us from the last stage of spiritual hypothermia—that of eternal death.

Christian attribute number two is that of fruitfulness. Turn if you would please, to 2 Peter chapter 1. We'll begin reading in verse 5.

**2 Peter 1:5.** But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith … (NKJV)

We're going to get into this a little bit deeper in a moment, but it's interesting how this is worded.

**2 Peter 1:5.** But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,
6) to knowledge self-control, to self-control, perseverance, to perseverance godliness.
7) to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.
8) For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9) For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. (NKJV)

What do we find here in these five verses? We find fruitful growth. There's no doubt about it. But more importantly what we find here is fruitful growth in our faith. Verse 5 once again:

**2 Peter 1:5.** But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith … (NKJV)

We are to add to our faith. We are to have faith to begin with, but we are to add to that faith virtue. We are to add to that faith knowledge. We are to add to our faith self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness. And we are to add to our faith which should already be established. Yes, we are continuing to grow in the faith, but we are to add to our faith love.

Verse 10:

**2 Peter 1:10.** Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things [emphasis, “for if you do these things,”] you will never stumble. (NKJV)

If we do these things… Question: If we do what things? Well, those “what things” are if we add to our faith the seven attributes listed in verses 5, 6, and 7—virtue, knowledge,
self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. If we add to our faith the seven attributes listed in these verses, then we will not fall prey to spiritual hypothermia.

Look here in verse 11. If we do these things as we’re admonished to do in verse 10, we find in verse 11:

**2 Peter 1:11.** for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

We will be supplied with everything we need to enter into the family of God, if we do what we’re admonished to do in these verses.

To embellish on this, turn over, if you would please, to the Gospel of Matthew. To Matthew chapter 25 and we’ll read verse 21. We’re breaking into a context here. I think we’ll understand where we are as we go through this.

**Matthew 25:21.** His Lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter … the joy of [our] lord. (NKJV)

Bearing fruitfulness in our faith assures admission into the Kingdom of God.

Attribute number three is spiritual growth. Now this goes right hand-in-hand with fruitfulness, but we can get somewhat more specific—attribute number three, spiritual growth. Guidepost Family Topical Concordance defines “spiritual growth” as this: The process of moving toward maturity in one’s relationship with God and with other people. It’s a process of moving towards maturity, with God (yes), but with other people as well. Spiritual growth is a process. Not an event that automatically occurs at baptism. It’s a process.

Turn to Jude, if you would. In Jude, we’re going read verses 20 through 23 and I’ll be reading from the New Living Translation.

**Jude 1:20.** But you, dear friends must continue to build your lives on the foundation of your holy faith, and continue to pray as you are directed by the Holy Spirit, (NLT)

Well, we referenced just moments ago the need of fruitfulness in our faith, that we were to add attributes to our faith—virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.

Jude verse 21:

**Jude 1:21.** Live in such a way that God’s love can bless you as you wait for the eternal life that our Lord Jesus Christ in His mercy is going to give you.
22) Show mercy to those whose faith is wavering.
23) Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. There are still others to whom you need to show mercy, but be careful that you aren't contaminated by their sins. (NKJV)

Here we find maturity in our relationship with God and Christ, and maturity, spiritual maturity, in our relationship with others.

1 Peter chapter 2, if you would, read the first three verses. Once again from the New Living Translation, 1 Peter 2:1. I just love the way this is stated in this translation.

**1 Peter 2:1.** So get rid of all malice, [evil] behavior and deceit. Don’t just pretend to be good. Be done with hypocrisy and jealousy and backstabbing. (NLT)

In other words, be mature. Verse 2:

**1 Peter 2:2.** You must crave pure spiritual milk so that you can grow into the fullness of your salvation…. (NLT)

It’s a process.

**1 Peter 2:2b.** … Cry out for the nourishment as a babe cries for milk, 3) now that you have had a taste of the Lord’s kindness. (NLT)

And each of us, brethren, has had that taste. Each of us have been taken from what’s outside of these four walls and brought into the understanding that we have here today through God’s mercy, through God’s holy spirit, we can understand these inspired words, this Book that we should know. And, as mentioned moments ago, it’s a spiritual growth process.

Turn to 2 Peter 3, we’ll read verses 17 and 18.

**2 Peter 3:17.** You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; (NKJV)

You see spiritual hypothermia can unknowingly creep into our lives. Reference what we just heard in the opening remarks of this message: We can get off the path and we can stray further and further and further into the woods. We can become disoriented. Spiritual hypothermia can unknowingly creep into our lives. Verse 18:

**2 Peter 3:18.** but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ…. (NKJV)
How do we grow in that grace and knowledge? By keeping the basics active in our lives—prayer, Bible study, fastings, meditations.

Attribute number four (it goes hand in hand here) is perseverance. Turn to Ephesians chapter 6. We’ll read verses 10 through 17 and once again I’ll be reading from the New Living Translation.

_Ephesians 6:10._ A final word: Be strong with the Lord’s mighty power. (NLT)

Stay on the path through the Lord’s mighty power. Get back to the parking lot by staying on the path. Don’t get lost in the woods. Don’t become disoriented. Don’t let your core body temperature, spiritually speaking, don’t let it drop. We have the might of the Power of this universe. Follow the lead of God’s spirit. It will keep us on track.

Verse 11:

_Ephesians 6:11._ Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies and tricks of the devil.
12) For we are not fighting against people made of flesh-and-blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of an unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule the world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms. (NLT)

Verse 13, I love the way this is worded.

_Ephesians 6:13._ Use every piece of God’s armor … (NLT)

Not some of it.

_Ephesians 6:13._ Use every piece of God’s armor to resist the enemy in the time of evil, so that after the battle you will still be standing firm.
14) Stand your ground, putting on the sturdy belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness.
15) For shoes, put on the peace that comes from The Good News so that you will be fully prepared.
16) In every battle you will need faith … (NLT)

This is interesting how it’s worded.

_Ephesians 6:16._ In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan.
17) Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (NLT)

As we heard in the introduction of today’s message, it’s not enough. It’s not enough to be clothed properly. It’s not enough to be wearing a life jacket. It’s not enough to be a seasoned hiker and to have all the knowledge of the trail. It’s much, much, much more,
brethren. For you see, we are instructed in verse 11 here in Ephesians 6 to put on the whole armor of God and rightfully so.

We must be prepared as we read in verse 15, but preparation is not enough. It seems, as we heard in the introduction, that those individuals that perished were prepared. But you see with preparation comes perseverance. And perseverance comes through faith.

Verse 16 once again:

Ephesians 6:16. In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan. (NLT)

With all the armor of God, brethren, with all the armor of God—the belt of truth, God’s righteousness, peace through the Gospel, with the helmet of salvation—with all this armor within our reach, we still need the shield for every battle. And that shield is faith. Faith is the key ingredient to persevering. I want to restate that. Faith is a key ingredient to persevering.

Turn, if you would, 1 Corinthians 15. Here we find a chapter that we’re all very, very familiar with. Sometimes it’s referred to as the resurrection chapter. And here in chapter 15, we’re going to begin where the chapter ends. So, verse 58:

1 Corinthians 15:58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, … (NKJV)

What’s steadfastness but perseverance?

58b) … immovable [persevere], always abounding in the work of the Lord, … (NKJV)

Always abounding—persevere.

58 continued) … knowing that your labor is not … vain in the Lord. (NKJV)

Question: Why the “therefore” here at the beginning of verse 58? Let’s read it again.

1 Corinthians 15:58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, … (NKJV)

What’s the “therefore” referring to? Have you ever asked yourself that? Well, let’s go back a few verses to verse 50. Look here beginning in verse 50.

1 Corinthians 15:50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51) Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, … (NKJV)

Spiritual hypothermia will not take its toll.
1 Corinthians 15:51b. … but we shall all be changed—
52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will [rise] incorruptible, and we shall be changed.
53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.
54) So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” (NKJV)

Persevering, having the faith to stay steadfast brings with it a fantastic reward, a fantastic gift. And that gift is that of eternal life.

Verse 57:

1 Corinthians 15:57. But thanks be to God, who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

We began this message with listing hypothermia’s eight progressive stages.

Stage one is mild shivering increasing to violent shivering;
Stage two is profound weariness;
Stage three is heaviness of movement;
Stage four is distorted sense of time and distance leading to mental confusion and illogical decisions;
Stage five is thorough disorientation;
Stage six is hallucinations;
Stage seven is a sense of burning up rather than freezing;
Stage eight is something we don’t even want to get near. At this point the heart rate falls and brain waves begin to flat line and finally death.

Each of these physical stages of hypothermia has a spiritual connotation or a spiritual perspective, if you will. Brethren, we need not succumb to spiritual hypothermia if we will implement four Christian attributes in our lives.

Number one: Obedience to God
Number two: Bearing fruit in our Christian calling
Number three: Grow spiritually, and
Number four: Perseverance

Apply these four attributes in our lives and let’s not fall prey to spiritual hypothermia.