

My grandkids have introduced me to the cartoon series, *Phineas and Ferb*. It's about how they spend their "104 days of summer vacation." They are always inventing and building things and having fantastic adventures. Those two are never bored.

Wouldn't it be great if life was like that – never boring – but we can't always have mountain top experiences and, thankfully, we don't always live in dark valleys. Sometimes life is boring: "same ol', same ol'" and sometimes our faith goes through "dry places." Bible study becomes meaningless and prayers are repetitious. We find ourselves just going through the motions.

I wonder if, in the days before his public ministry, John the Baptist ever got bored in the desert? Did his diet of locusts and wild honey ever seem stale? Did he get tired of looking at sand, rocks and scrub brush? If he did, what advice would you give him?

"Just be faithful Brother Baptist! Keep on keepin' on." But we are not called to stagnation and "faithfulness" can even become a way of rationalizing complacency or outright negligence.

Someone else might encourage John the Baptist to, "Keep growing!" That isn't necessarily biblical advice. It sounds like something Oprah or Dear Abby



Photo by Felipe Barbozaman

would suggest and what if you lack the motivation to do even that?

"Persevere! Our preacher keeps talking about Christians persevering. Winston Churchill said, 'Never, never, never, never, never, never, never give up!'" And while the Bible does call for perseverance, it doesn't allow for hollow perseverance. Paul told the Romans, "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord," (Romans 12:11).

I think John the Baptist understood the need to maintain an internal faithfulness. We need a sense of duty and a sense of passion. That sense of passion

comes from seeing faith at work. That means spending time with our brothers and sisters, sharing our passion and our energy. When I see the Spirit at work in others I am more likely to sense His presence in my own life.

And finally, what is the difference between sitting at home on the couch – bored – and standing in line for an hour at Disneyland? Anticipation! So, what are we waiting for? The Lord is coming and that is exciting!

A small, square graphic containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is stylized and appears to be the name 'John'.