

# SERMON NOTES

## Growing Up 7 - Perseverance

The simplest way of maturing is for time to pass. We gain experience and overcome obstacles. This is true in spiritual things too. There is no substitute for time, and experience.

There are things that can only be learned by overcoming some difficult trials, and a certain amount of time must have passed. The Bible calls this "PERSEVERANCE."

**1 Timothy 3:6, 9-10 (NKJV)** - 6 not a novice (recent convert), lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. ...

9 Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

10 But let these also first be tested (proven - *dokimazō*); then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.

**BIBLE EXAMPLES OF PERSEVERANCE** - Moses, Joseph, David, Abraham, Jesus, Paul –

**Hebrews 5:8 (NKJV)**: 8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

### THE LIFECYCLE OF FAITH

#### **1. A Measure of Faith is given**

**Romans 12:3 (NKJV)**: For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

#### **2. We Add to it...from His word**

**Romans 10:17 (NKJV)**: So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

#### **3. It is Tested**

**1 Peter 1:7 (NKJV)**: That the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

#### **4. It Can die**

**James 2:26 (NKJV)**: For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

#### **5. OR... It Grows**

**2 Thessalonians 1:3 (NKJV)**: We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,

### SUFFERING HAPPENS FOR 3 REASONS:

1. Because we are believers

**1 Peter 4:14 (NKJV)**: If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed [are you,] for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

**John 16:33 (NKJV)**: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

2. Because we sin and there are consequences

**1 Peter 4:15 (NKJV):** But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.

3. Because we live in a broken, sin-stained world that is not as God originally intended

Luke 13:1-5, John 9:2

## **WHAT DO TRIALS DO FOR US?**

- THEY BUILD "MUSCLE"

**Romans 5:3-5 (NKJV):** 3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces **perseverance**;

4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

- THEY DEVELOP PERSEVERANCE

**Matthew 24:10-14 (NKJV)** - 10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

**Matthew 13:21 (NKJV)** - 21 "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

**Luke 8:15 (NKJV)** - 15 "But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

- THEY REFINE OUR FAITH

**1 Peter 1:6-7 (NKJV)** - 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 that the genuineness (*dokimion*) of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested (*dokimazō*) by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

**James 1:2-4 (NKJV)** - 2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

3 knowing that the testing (*dokimion*) of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

*Dokimion* - that by which something is tried or proved, a test

*Dokimazō* - to recognise as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy

## **CONCLUSION**

**Mark 4:26-29 (NKJV):** 26 And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground,

27 "and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how.

28 "For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head.

29 "But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

**Hebrews 6:11-12 (NKJV)** - 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end,

12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

**2 Peter 1:5-11 (NKJV)** - 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.

10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES

Remember that the aim of the small group is to foster discussion and community, rather than for the leader or one individual to preach to everyone.

**1** - Often an **Icebreaker question** is a great way to start discussion. You could ask a question like:

- What were the highs or lows of your week?
- What is your earliest memory?
- If you had to describe yourself as one animal, what would it be and why?
- What is your favourite type of holiday destination?

**2** - Next, **read the passage**. You can ask various people in the group to help by each reading a portion of the passage.

**3** - These are the **main questions** to ask to understand the passage:

- What is the main message of this talk / passage?  
Allow discussion and even diverging from the main topic if it is helpful.
- What did you find particularly helpful or challenging?
- What did you not fully understand?
- What can we do PRACTICALLY in response to this teaching?

**4** - Close by offering **prayer** for each person.

- Ask, "how can we pray for you / each other now?"
- Ask each person to pray or you, as leader, pray for each person's need

**The blessing** and opportunity in Small Groups is the possibility for...

- Each person to contribute and/or ask questions,
- People to pray for each other and to ask for prayer,
- People to learn to use and grow in their gifts,
- Community, friendship and intimacy in relationships.

God Bless you in this very important ministry.