

Endure (9/15/24)

Discussion Questions

Summary: Jesus was preparing his disciples for his departure and death – and preparing them to face a similar fate in the near future. All who follow Jesus follow His path through service and suffering to carry our own cross and lay down our lives in service to Jesus and His kingdom. How can we endure persecution and opposition? Jesus shows us three keys to resilient faith: 1) prepare to be hated; 2) plan to become like your Master and; 3) proclaim the worthiness of Jesus. Are your roots deep enough in the worthiness of Jesus to endure even great tribulation?

“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Matt. 5:11-12

How to Persevere through Great Tribulation:

1. Prepare to be hated by the world because it is not your home (v. 18-19)
2. Plan to become more like your Master, who was unjustly persecuted (v. 20-25; Ps. 69:4)
3. Proclaim the worthiness of Jesus as the Spirit enables you (v. 26-27)

“You are worthy, worthy of my all; My tears and pain I lift up as an offering; Teach me to share in the fellowship of Your suffering; Lamb of God You are worthy of my all.” Andrew Brunson

Get Started:

1. What hero of the faith, in the Bible or in history, has most inspired you? Why?
2. What kind of suffering did he or she have to go through? How was that instrumental in the way God prepared and used him or her?

Dig In: Read John 15:18-27

3. What stands out to you in this passage?
4. What was about to happen to Jesus? What was coming for the disciples?
5. What should followers of Jesus expect from the people of this world? Why?
6. What does it mean that, “a servant is not greater than his master”?
7. Even though many did not respond to Jesus’ miracles or teachings, what did they accomplish anyway? How does that encourage you?

Move Forward:

- How is God shaping you right now? What kind of pruning or chiseling is going on?
- Are you able to interpret suffering as a loving act of God? Why or why not?
- Why is it important to speak truth and “bear witness” (v. 27) even when we don’t feel like it?

*“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. **29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. **30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.”* Romans 8:28-30

Many people misinterpret Romans 8:28 to mean “everything will work out well” for us if we just trust in the Lord and pray. But notice the central “good” to which all things work together in v. 29 – “to be conformed to the image of his Son.” God is working in us and around us to make us more and more like Jesus. This may or may not feel good at any given moment. And we may or may not discern “the reason” for each instance of our suffering and pain.

- How can we pray for you as you trust in the Lord and are shaped more into the image of Christ?