

Memory Verses: Romans 5:3-4 NIV

³Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Object Lesson: Point A to Point B

Volunteer.

Objective: you have to get from one side of the room to the other side. (Pastor Henry will explain)

Here is more weight! What does Christ offer?

Group Discussion: What did we learn from this exercise about our trials and our tribulations?

Into our text

Did you hear suffering produces perseverance?

Did you hear perseverance produces character?

Did you hear character produces hope?

Hope does not put us to shame?

Our theme for today: suffering and trials

Can you imagine hearing Paul say we glory in our trials? Who glory's in suffering?

- James seems to agree. Read James 1:2-3
- Jesus agrees as well. Read Matthew 5:11-12

This message seems to be illustrated throughout the New Testament. However, we have to admit their response is not our response to life's struggles? In all honesty, we don't smile and celebrate during testing. Most of us grit our teeth and wonder why am I being tested? We sing the song "I Won't Complain" but we do!

Do you know who Jesus wants you to look like when you look in the mirror? He desires that we look like Him? So, He shapes us through testing so we can look more and more like Him. The problem is we do more grumbling than we do complaining.

Consider the grumbling of the Israelites

God brought them out of Egypt and they were sooo happy. Yet, we find them in Exodus 15:24 doing what?

In the very next chapter, we hear them again in Exodus 16:2-3, doing what?

In the next chapter, we hear them grumbling again in Exodus 17:3, doing what?

Yes, grumbling was their norm! They were constantly grumbling and complaining in spite of God's constant provisions. What are we doing today?

Paul exhorts the Philippians in Philippians 2:14-15 to do what? Write it here. _____

Can we shine as lights if we are constantly complaining about what we are facing?

How can we grow through testing? We can grow through testing when we understand God is using our tribulations to shape us into the image of His Son!

Read 5:3b...."knowing that...

We know because we know God is up to something. God is using our trials for a purpose greater than we can imagine.

Tribulation in the Greek literally means pressure! The Greek word is *thipsis* which means we face persecution, affliction and distress?

Have you ever used a pressure cooker? Why? Why is the meat so tender?

Paul's message is clear! We don't develop endurance and patience by taking the easy route. We develop patience and endurance as a result of being tested.

You don't have to endure when things are going your way! You have to endure when your back is against the wall.

The question is: Will you trust God even when you don't understand what He is doing?

Are you passing the test you are currently **growing** through?

Paul learned to focus on the spiritual man rather than the physical man?

Consider 2 Cor 4:16-18

There is no such thing as a trouble free Christian life!

Jesus said in John 16:33 we shall have trials and tribulations.

Paul is saying a good thing can come out of suffering. We just have to trust the sovereignty of God.