

ENDURING FAITH

We need enduring faith to reach the end of the race.

ENDURING FAITH - *Sees the future*

It is only in time of difficulty that our true faith is expressed, tested and strengthened.

Pain, difficulty, and frustration should never be an excuse to doubt or question our faith, but only ever be an opportunity to exercise it!

“Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.” Hebrews 11:1 NLT

Anchor your faith in what God HAS done, IS doing and WILL do rather than in the pain and difficulty you are going through.

The cross of Jesus truly is a source of timeless truth and comfort for us all!

“For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord’s death until he comes again.”
1 Corinthians 11:26 NLT

“And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me - everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.”

Philippians 4:8-9 NLT

There is a place where we can anchor ourselves that is true, honorable, right, pure, lovely and admirable.

We carry with us an ability to have a faith that speaks clearly. A faith that helps us see things that are yet to come as if they already are!

“Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.” ***Hebrews 11:1 NLT***

ENDURING FAITH - Stands on The Word

It is God’s creative and powerful Word that holds all of creation together.

“By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God’s command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.” ***Hebrews 11:3 NLT***

“He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.” Colossians 1:17 NLT

“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.” - C.S Lewis

“Then Peter called to him, “Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.” “Yes, come,” Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “Save me, Lord!” he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?”” Matthew 14:28-31 NLT

Peter wasn't walking on water; he was walking on the words of Jesus!

It's only on the words of God that we can find a stable and sure footing in the storm, in the pain and in the difficulties of life.

The question then is:

- *Do you know God's word?*
- *Do you want to know God's word?*

- *Have you realised the importance of God's word?*

Peter brought fear into the situation, not because of an overwhelming force from the outside, but from a weak posture on the inside.

We can find ourselves drowning in our situations because we have anchored our faith in our situation rather than on the word of God!

ENDURING FAITH - Conquers Through

*“At dawn Jesus was standing on the beach, but the disciples couldn't see who he was. He called out, “Fellows, have you caught any fish?” “No,” they replied. Then he said, “Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you'll get some!” So they did, and they couldn't haul in the net because there were so many fish in it.” **John 21:4-6 NLT***

A difficult thing in life can be when you fail at the thing you are supposed to be the best at!

The disappointment and frustration:

- *They were professional fisherman*
- *They had cast their nets out many times*

- *They had caught no fish*
- *They were told what to do by a carpenter*

The disciples did not ignore their disappointment and frustration. They conquered through it by holding onto the words of Jesus.

Disciples heart response: *“Jesus, because you say so... we will cast our nets again.”*

An enduring faith is not found in comfort. It is found in times of testing and challenging.

Jesus’ enduring faith journey:

- *Carried the burdens and the sins of the world on His shoulders*
- *His last breath was made in pain and suffering*
- *He conquered through it all by holding onto the words of God the Father and His will.*

An enduring faith is an indicator of maturity and authenticity.

It is the only kind of faith that will carry us through the finish line.

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

1. How can we not always anchor ourselves in the 'now' [hurt/pain] and instead anchor ourselves on what God has, is doing, & will do?
2. What can distract or can prevent you from knowing the Word of God more intimately?
3. Have you had a time in your life where you have endured and persevered through a difficulty?

If so, have you experienced any benefits or growth from holding onto God in those times?