

## Keep Going!

Message 2 of 2 in the series: "Reset"

### A. God has good things for us to accomplish this year.

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the **good things he planned for us long ago.**" Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

"Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well." Romans 12:4-6a (NLT)

### B. Doing the good things God has planned for us in 2022 will require endurance.

Endurance = the ability or strength to **continue** despite difficulty, fatigue, stress, failure, or opposition; perseverance

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And **let us run with endurance** the race God has set before us." Hebrews 12:1(NLT)

"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we **don't give up.**" Galatians 6:9 (NLT)

1. Some of the good things God has planned for us to do this year may be much more difficult to accomplish than we expected.

"Here on earth **you will have many trials and sorrows.** But take heart, because I have overcome the world." John 16:33b (NLT)

"An offended friend is harder to win back than a fortified city. Arguments separate friends like a gate locked with bars." Proverbs 18:19 (NLT)

2. Some of the good things God has planned for us to do this year may cause us to face opposition and/or suffer pain and mistreatment.

"Dear friends, **don't be surprised** at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. If you are insulted because you bear the name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people's affairs. But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name!" 1 Peter 4:12-16 (NLT)

"**Stay alert!** Watch out for your great enemy (adversary), the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are."

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NLT)

3. Some of the good things we have been working on for the past six months may not seem to be making much difference.

"Do not despise these **small beginnings**, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin..."

Zechariah 4:10 (NLT)

"I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow. The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work." 1 Corinthians 3:6-8 (NLT)

### C. Three things we can do to increase our endurance:

1. We can encourage and warn each other.

"Brothers and sisters, we urge you to **warn those who are lazy. Encourage those who are timid.** Take tender care of those who are weak. Be patient with everyone." 1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NLT)

"You must warn each other every day, while it is still "today," so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God." Hebrews 3:13 (NLT)

2. We can meditate on God's truth.

"**Let your roots grow down** into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness." Colossians 2:7 (NLT)

"We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And **endurance develops strength of character**, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love."

Romans 5:3-5 (NLT) (See also James 1:2-4)

3. We can pray for each other.

"Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we ask you to pray for us. Pray that the Lord's message will spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes, just as when it came to you. **Pray, too, that we will be rescued from wicked and evil people**, for not everyone is a believer. But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one. And we are confident in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we commanded you. May the Lord lead your hearts into a full understanding and expression of the love of God and the patient endurance that comes from Christ."

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5 (NLT)

"But you, dear friends, must **build each other up** in your most holy faith, pray in the power of the Holy Spirit, and await the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will bring you eternal life. In this way, you will keep yourselves safe in God's love." Jude 1:20-21 (NLT)

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### Connect Group Questions:

1. What is the hardest thing you've had to endure as a Christian?
2. Read the following verses which talk about the importance of endurance in the life of believers:
  - Romans 5:3-5
  - Galatians 6:9
  - Hebrews 12:1
  - James 1:2-4
3. How does it make you feel to know that heroes of our faith endured great suffering for doing what God had planned for them?
  - Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-4)
  - Mary (Luke 2:34-35)
  - Joseph (Psalm 105:17-19)
  - Paul (Acts 9:15-16, 2 Corinthians 11:23-28)
  - Stephen (Acts 6:8-15)
4. How does it make you feel to read about the following people who did not show much endurance?
  - Demas (Philemon 1:24, 2 Timothy 4:10)
  - Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Timothy 1:19-20)
5. Discuss and pray for each other regarding the following ways we can strengthen our endurance:
  - We can encourage and warn each other. (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
  - We can meditate on the truth of God's Word. (Colossians 2:7, Philippians 4:8)
  - We can pray for each other. (2 Thessalonians 3:1-5)

### Quotations to consider:

"To learn strong faith is to endure great trials. I have learned my faith by standing firm amid severe testings."

George Mueller

"Integrity is built by defeating the temptation to be dishonest; humility grows when we refuse to be prideful; and endurance develops every time you reject the temptation to give up." Rick Warren