

ENDURANCE

finding hope & strength in life's troubles

WEEK 2 - BECAUSE WE'RE ON A MISSION OVERVIEW

The Apostle Paul knew a thing or two about hardships. From prison to shipwrecks to rival teachers constantly undermining his ministry, Paul faced persistent struggles in his effort to be faithful to God's call on his life. In 2 Corinthians, Paul addresses believers in Corinth who began to see all these hardships as a stain on his reputation (maybe God wasn't blessing Paul's ministry?). Quite the contrary, Paul explains. Our *hypomonē* in the face of obstacles is the proof that we *are* God's ministers. In fact, facing (and enduring) hardship is part and parcel with what it means to join Christ in his kingdom mission in a broken world.

As we consider what this new year will be like, where is our focus? Is it in *avoiding* challenges and hardships? Trying to look like we have it all together? Or is it in pursuing God's call on our life regardless of the cost? Perhaps this is the year for us to redouble our efforts to join Jesus in the work he cares about and learn what it means for our endurance to become a testimony.

In everything we do, we show that we are true ministers of God. We patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind.

2 Corinthians 6:4

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read [Psalm 40:1](#). What image comes to your mind when you think of *hypomonē* (the word translated as both *waited* and *patiently* in Psalm 40:1)?
2. Read [2 Corinthians 6:3-10](#). Why did Paul write this to the Corinthians?
3. Barry said, "we should expect to endure hardship if we're following in the footsteps of Jesus." Why?
4. How can endurance can be the proof that we're sharing in the mission of Christ? (see [2 Corinthians 4:10-11](#), [Luke 9:23](#), and [Romans 5:3-4](#))
5. How can you tell whether the hardships and calamities in your life are a result of the broken world or a result of your faith (or maybe even an indication that you are not on the right track)?
6. Barry asked us each to consider our own faith journey. If you are comfortable, share your thoughts with your group (see the Grace app for a full list of introspective questions): If needing to endure can be proof that you're sharing in the mission of Christ, then how is your endurance these days? To put it another way, The cross of Christ is heavy. Are you feeling the weight?
7. Share about a time when you met Jesus in the midst of *hypomonē*.

Prayer

Dear Father, thank you for your love, forgiveness, and all that you have done for us. Please help us to have endurance, hypomonē, as we follow you in a broken world. We love you.

In Jesus' name we pray.