

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS—Faith Church 2025 Women's Retreat
September 6, 2025
Breakout—Endurance: Standing Firm Despite
Pam Saletri Parron

When I hear the word “endurance,” I immediately brace for something unpleasant. Whether that has been in sports or in physical therapy-, “we’re going to build up your endurance!” was code for something that I would rather avoid is going to be forced upon me. After I left the hospital so many years ago in a wheelchair, I found a verse that I could easily hold onto AND keep my bad attitude. Jeremiah 10:19 says, “Woe to me because of my injury! My wound is incurable yet I said to myself this is my sickness and I must endure it.” Yes! I had to endure it, but don’t try to convince me that it was good or ever could be. It was something simply to put up with or survive because God had allowed it to happen. Much like the older brother of the prodigal son, I would do my duty and resent every minute of it. Until God made this right or at least apologized. I had well-meaning people tell me to remember the patience of Job. He had no choice! That wasn’t patience. I was filled with indignance every time someone worked Romans 8:28 into a card or conversation. Psalm 73 described me perfectly,

“When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart,²² I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you. The Lord allowed my angry rants that dissolved into hopelessness. When I was cried out, He would gently lead me to answer difficult questions and discover hard truths. I continue with the Psalmist,

Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.

²⁴ You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory.

²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you?

And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.

²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail,

but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Although I disagree with William Barclay’s liberal theology, his words on Christian endurance resonate the truth that this preacher’s kid’s heart had to learn.

“Endurance is not just the ability to bear a hard thing, but to turn it into glory.”

Of course, you and I do not have the capacity to change anything into glory. That is the place of God in our lives; the sacred work of the Holy Spirit in the quiet places of our hearts as we draw near to the Lord. That said, endurance has a big role to play in our lives, and it is something that faith in our Lord Jesus must exercise or our “faith” must ultimately be questioned. One of my favorite Bible teachers, Alistair Begg, says that “endurance is a key indicator of spiritual

fitness.” John Bevere writes, “Christianity is not a sprint, but an endurance run. Therefore, it is not how we start the race that counts, but how we complete it. How we finish is determined by the choices we make, and those are often informed by patterns we develop along the way.”

So being the word nerd that I am, let’s start with a deeper dive into this word endurance. The Merriam Webster dictionary says it is the ability to withstand hardship or adversity, the act or an instance of enduring or suffering, or permanence or duration. The word endurance can be equally substituted with perseverance, which is defined as the continued effort to do or achieve something, despite difficulties, failure, or opposition, the action or condition of an instance of persevering or steadfastness. If we go back even further to the 15th century, when both words came to be in our English vocabulary -originally from the Latin and up through the Old French. To be perfectly honest, at this point my knowledge of Spanish helps me to make sense of this better, that **dur** in the middle of endurance is what to this day in Spanish is **duro**, which means something is hard. So the word could mean to make hard, harden, bear, tolerate keep up, maintain, and it came to mean to undergo or to suffer, especially without breaking or to continue in existence. Its word sibling is perseverance, and it contains the idea of to persist, to have a hold on, to continue in something that is severe, serious, and/or strict, to continue steadfastly. I know what you’re thinking. Great. we’ve come here to define words! Indulge me. I think taking the time to think about meaning helps to clarify what is being asked of me when I read my Bible. So now, we need to look at another meeting, and since most of our verses will be coming from the New Testament, let’s look at the original Greek word, which is actually pretty funny sounding: Hypomone (hoop-om-on-ay) or hypomono. When the word is in the New Testament, these are the different ways that it has been translated into English: endurance, perseverance, patience, patient continuance, patient waiting, standing firm, steadfast. I think it’s important for us to know this because depending on what our English translation says, in the Greek is some form of the same word.

Why do I bother with all of this? Well, can we go back and look at Job? People always talk about the patience of Job because in the 1600s when the King James version was translated from Greek to English, their understanding of that word was patience which has changed in meaning for us now. For me a 21st century American woman the word is endurance. The book of the Bible speaks to the endurance of Job not the quality alone of patience as I would understand it to be waiting calmly. That gives me a greater understanding of what the Bible is talking to me about. At the same time, it is good for me to know that the patience is the exercising of faith in the waiting on God for an answer. Job believed God would answer so he endured. Job did not get the answer that he wanted, but he never doubted that God would

answer him. Hence, his persistence in asking questions of God. That helps me.

Now that we have a foundation laid on what is abstract idea, we will go to scripture to allow God's word to interpret how we understand it in a biblical context.

Various verses

The idea that if you are in the center of God's will, everything will go well is a complete fiction according to the Bible. If I am reading my Bible correctly, I believe the exact opposite is true. Jesus himself tells us in John 16: 33 that in this world, we will have trouble, but we are to take heart because he has overcome this world. If I go back and look at all these verses, I see what I must endure and why! In the garden of Eden, we see that work will be hard, there will be danger, there will be grief and bitterness. We will get weary and sick. There will be temptation there will be persecution. We will die. At this point, you may be wondering if I'm going to say anything that will encourage you. 😊 I hope so! I find it very encouraging that the Bible is so honest about these issues and that God is so very trustworthy to meet us in them. Paul writes in second Corinthians that he did not want them to be unaware of the affliction that they had experienced. He writes in verse eight *for we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despair of life itself Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves, put on God who raises the dead.* This continues to be the testimony of the saints throughout the ages. God will supply the strength, and our every need. He does the heavy lifting, but we must abide in Him. Look back at Jeremiah 10:17 – notice the pronouns. Now look at Psalm 73. Do you see the shift? This is all good in Bible theory, but what does it look like in practice.

I'd like to introduce you to some amazing ladies, our sisters in Christ. These women's lives have encouraged me in their endurance.

Katherine von Bora - Work

Katherine von Bora was born in 1499 in Germany. Her mother died when she was five at which point her father put her into a boarding school. When she turned nine, he put her in a convent which is not an easy place for a little girl to grow up. When she was 16, she was married to Christ and officially became a nun. Two years later, a man named Martin Luther would nail his 95 theses to a church door and the Reformation would begin. Many monks and nuns became believers and wanted to escape their convents and monasteries. Those who were caught were brought back and severely punished. Katherine was one of 12 nuns who wanted to escape her convent. Seven years after taking her vows, a merchant drove away from the convent with 12 herring barrels-each one containing a nun. Two years later, all of those nuns had husbands found

for them, except for Katherine. Someone told Martin Luther that Katherine had said that if he were to ask her to marry him, she would. Martin Luther tried his best to find another husband for her because his life was in danger, he was an outlaw, and had no home or income. But in the end, the 42 year-old Luther married the 25 year-old Katherine. The pet names these two had for each other is well documented. Perhaps the best known is Luther calling her, “Kitty, my rib.” She is documented as saying, I’ve read enough. I’ve heard enough. I know enough. Would to God that I lived it .” A rundown abandoned cloister that had once housed 40 monks became their home. Kitty was an amazing household manager, according to all accounts, like the woman of proverbs 31. She kept cows, a garden, pigs, she planted an orchard, she sold any extra produce at the marketplace, she even stocked a pond with fish. She was also a gifted nurse and herbalist. Their home was filled with children from other families besides their own, and other Christians, who had nowhere else to go. Martin Luther suffered from many different physical problems, but also from paralyzing depression. They had six children- one died when she was a year old another at 11. Their marriage lasted 21 years before Martin Luther died. After his death, war broke out in Germany, and they had to leave their home. When they returned, she found that her house had been destroyed along with all the gardens and animals. They had to leave again when the plague returned. During that trip, she was thrown out of the wagon into the icy waters of a ditch, and although she was cared for by her daughters, she did not recover. She died at 52. The final words from her lips were a reflection of her life. “I will stick to Christ as a burr to a topcoat.”

Elisabeth Elliot -Danger/ grief

Elizabeth Elliot was born in Belgium in 1926 the daughter of a missionary family. She studied classical Greek at Wheaton College believing that that would be the best tool to assist her in translating the Bible into another language. After years of waiting and letter writing that mostly centered around deep theological thoughts and missions. Jim & Elizabeth were married in 1953, when she joined him on the mission field in Ecuador. She had to catch up with Spanish because Jim was now well advanced. Jim had already transitioned to studying the language of the Quichua Indians. Their daughter, Valerie, was born in February 1955 as plans for initial contact were prayed over. Their goal was to contact this hostile people group, the Aucas, and learn their specific dialect to translate the Bible. They moved into the jungle and set up a base camp. The men on the team flew over the contact areas with a bucket full of gifts. Initial contact went well and after much prayer, it was decided that they would land to make contact. The five men met the Aucas while their wives and children waited and prayed at the base camp. The men were slaughtered, speared to death in January 1956. Despite their heartbreak, the women were convinced that God wanted them to stay and continue the work God had put in their hearts.. The

women and their children lived among the Auca people- many of whom came to saving faith in Jesus because of the inexplicable forgiveness and love of these widows and children.

in 1963, Elisabeth returned to the States to write books and speak mostly about Jim. She would remarry & be widowed again. She was married a 3rd time until the Lord took her home. Despite being married 3 times, she spent many years as a single woman and mother. Her books address heartbreak and loneliness but focus on Jesus and how loving and faithful He is. "Sometimes life is so hard you can only do the next thing. Whatever that is just do the next thing. God will meet you there." Her words spoke of the transformation work of the Holy Spirit in us. "Our vision is so limited we can hardly imagine a love that does not show itself in protection from suffering.... The love of God did not protect His own Son.... He will not necessarily protect us - not from anything it takes to make us like His Son. A lot of hammering and chiseling and purifying by fire will have to go into the process." Elizabeth Elliott had a daily radio program for 13 years until she had to stop in 2001 due to dementia taking hold of her mind. at the beginning of the program gateway to Joy. She always said, you are loved with an everlasting love, that's what the Bible says, and underneath are the everlasting arms. This is your friend, Elizabeth Elliot.

Fanny Crosby- Bitterness/ sickness

Fanny Crosby was born in 1820 in New York. When she was only six weeks old, she developed minor eye inflammation, and the doctor's careless treatment left her blind. "It seemed intended by the blessed Providence of God that I should be blind all my life," she wrote in her autobiography, "and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me." Fanny Crosby wrote over 8,000 songs- many of them are still held by the Hope Publishing Company that were never put to music. She wrote hymns such as: To God be the Glory, Blessed Assurance, Praise Him, Praise Him, Redeemed, Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross, Rescue the Perishing. When she was only eight years old, she wrote her first poem:

"Oh what a happy soul am I although I cannot see,
I am resolved that in this world contented I shall be.
How many blessings I enjoy that other people don't.
To weep and sigh, because I'm blind?
I cannot and I won't."

Her gift with words was tremendous, and I have to laugh because, like me, math was not her thing. She wrote in one of her classes:

I love, abhor, it makes me sick, to hear the word arithmetic.!

It was common at the time for authors to use pseudonyms, but Fanny Crosby had over 200 that she used at different times.

In 1864, Fanny dedicated herself exclusively to writing hymns. How did Fanny Crosby write her lyrics? "I never undertake a hymn," she explained, "without first asking the good Lord to be my inspiration in the work that I am about to do." She would pray and meditate until she was in the right mood and sometimes, she would quote several hymns to herself to prime the pump. Then the ideas would come, and she would write the songs in her mind and commit them to memory. At times, she would have as many as 40 different songs stored away in her mind. She would let each song lie still for a few days before dictating it to a friend. At 83, she told a friend that she believed herself to be in the prime of life. In 1915, at the age of 95, her song- *Saved by Grace*- was sung all over the world to remember the blind lady that could now see. *and I shall see him, face-to-face, and tell the story saved by grace.*

Amy Carmichael- Weary

Amy was born in December 1867, in Northern Ireland. When she was 16 years old, she trusted Christ. The oldest of seven children, Amy came alongside her mother to care for the family after her father died when she was 18. Amy wanted to live a holy life and that meant sacrifice and ministry to her. She had no time for Christians who went from meeting to meeting and soaked up Bible truth but never reached out to share Christ with the others. "If the praise of others elates me and their blame depresses me; if I cannot rest under misunderstanding without defending myself; if I love to be loved more than to love, to be served more than to serve, then I know nothing of Calvary love." Amy was burdened for the girls who worked in the mills and she started a ministry for them at the local churches. The girls were called "Shawlies" because they did not have enough money to buy a proper hat. Her ministry was so successful and growing that it was interfering with the church's programs. She believed that if God wanted her to do this work, He would provide a meeting place for the hundreds of ladies who were coming. God did provide. In 1892, as she waited quietly before the Lord, he made it clear to her that she was to give her life to Him as a missionary and permit Him to direct her just as He pleased. There were many obstacles such as her being a single woman, a prior commitment to care for an elderly gentleman, and her suffering from neuralgia, which would often force her to her bed for weeks at a time. A year later, she was on her way to Japan. However, the cold in Japan made the neuralgia worse, and she was sent to China to recover. In 1895, she arrived in India and she would remain there until her death in 1951. Amy adopted native dress following the example of Hudson Taylor. This set her apart from the missionary community that she was serving with that separated themselves in every way from the people they were trying to reach. Amy was diligent

in her duties, but this all changed 6 years later when a seven-year-old girl fled from one of the temples into the mission compound and begged to be protected. Amy learned with horror that parents would often sell their children to the temple gods. These children would be married to the gods and then serve as temple prostitutes. By 1904, there were 17 children under her care. They called her Amma, which means mother. She had to establish another mission location far from the main roads because what she was doing was illegal. Babies were given to them, many of them died. Amy would paint her skin with dark coffee to go on rescue missions. It should be noted that when she was very young, she asked God for blue eyes instead of brown. In her own writings, she would later see even the brown eyes as God's providence to do His work. Amy prayed about everything. She would not accept donations from anyone in the same way that she would not allow anyone to work with them until the Lord confirmed it. There were no paid positions. She cautioned her helpers to leave a margin in their lives and reminded them to beware of the barrenness of a busy life. In 1931, Amy suffered a serious fall along with other complications. She was physically limited to her room for the next 20 years, but that did not limit her ministry. "The word comfort is from two Latin words meaning "with" and "strong" – He is with us to make us strong. Comfort is not soft, weakening commiseration; it is true, strengthening love." She wrote 13 books and many letters, besides directing the work of the mission through her capable associates. In 1948, she fell again and this time was confined to her bed until her death in 3 years later. She wrote 35 books of various kinds, the story of the mission, poems, stories about the children who were rescued, devotionals, and messages for those who suffer. "Sometimes when we read the words of those who have been more than conquerors, we feel almost despondent. I feel that I shall never be like that. But they won through step by step, by little bits of wills, little denials of self, little inward victories, by faithfulness in very little things. They became what they are. No one sees these little hidden steps. They only see the accomplishment, but even so, those small steps were taken. There is no sudden triumph, no spiritual maturity. That is the work of the moment." Amy depended on God for day by day and hour by hour for direction.

Corrie Ten Boon - Persecution

Corrie was born in 1892 in Amsterdam. She was the fourth and youngest child of a watchmaker named Casper and his wife. While she was still an infant, her father inherited his father's home above the watch shop in Harlem, a 15th century narrow three-story building. Corrie became an active believer at the age of five and was regularly part of prayer meetings that her grandfather had begun years ago in the city. Her mother had died and two of her siblings had married so it was her father, Casper, her oldest sister, Betsy, and Corrie, who lived in the house. After the first world war and all through the 1930s Betsy and Corrie cared for foster children and began several

clubs for young people, always including the Bible message and explanation of how to become a Christian. In 1924, at the age of 32, Corrie became Holland's first woman licensed as a watch maker. The ten Boom home was known for its hospitality and had many visitors. On May 10, 1940, the Nazis invaded Holland, beginning an occupation that would last five years. Their home became one of the many centers of unofficial underground work where they did all they could to help Jewish people find safe housing. They decided to build a secret room where Jewish guests could hide during a possible Nazi raid. Eight months after the completion of the Hiding place, Nazis carried out a raid on Feb 28, 1944. Four Jewish guests and two underground workers were able to reach the hiding place and remain in safety until they were freed by the underground resistance two days later. However, Casper, Betsy, and Corrie along with her other siblings and children who were visiting were arrested and taken to prison. Their father died after only 10 days. Betsy and Corrie were ultimately taken to Ravensbrueck concentration camp in Germany. Betsy died of starvation in December 1944. Just before she died, she told Corrie,

"When we are set free from this terrible place, and we will be freed, Corrie, before the new year, we must go over the world and tell everyone who will listen what we have proved to be true in this terrible place: that the love of God is stronger than the deepest darkness. They will believe us because we were here." Shortly after her sister's death, Corrie was released due to a clerical error and escaped the almost certain death.

Corrie began doing exactly what her sister had instructed. In the characteristic style of the Dutch, her messages were delivered with no sentiment or emotionalism. She would say, "There is no pit so deep, the love of God is not deeper still. We do not know when the Lord Jesus will return, but we do not know of one moment when he may not return. Are you ready? Have you forgiven your enemies? There was a time when I could not forgive those who had been so cruel to me and to my dying sister, Betsy. But God has taught me how to forgive. The Lord Jesus has promised to return. And he will. It may be very soon. In the meantime, are you taking hold of all His riches God has given us in Christ Jesus? We so often live like paupers when we are really children of the king of kings." She became known as the "tramp of the Lord" as she traveled for 33 years and worked in 64 different countries. "Jesus did not promise to change the circumstances around us. He promised great peace and pure joy to those who would learn to believe that God actually controls all things." At 85, she retired in California, she wrote several books, had telephone and letter correspondence, gave interviews and received many guests. The next year, she suffered a stroke. Her brain was permanently damaged. She was unable to speak, write, or comprehend as she had before. During what have been called her five silent years that followed her stroke, her friend and traveling companion, Pamela Rosewell Moore, would say that she saw how Christianity really works. This remarkable woman, although captive to her

physical condition, was nevertheless very much spiritually free and a powerful witness to the truth of Christ. "The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something and enter God's realm where everything is possible. He specializes in the impossible. Nothing is too great for His almighty power. Nothing is too small for His love." Corrie passed into the arms of Jesus on her 91st birthday in 1983.

Joni Erickson Tada - Sickness/ broken bodies

Joni was born in 1949. She enjoyed a very active life, her father had participated in the 1932 summer Olympics as an alternate for the U.S. wrestling team. In 1967, at the age of 17, Joni dove into the Chesapeake Bay after misjudging the shallowness of the water. She became a quadriplegic with a fracture between her fourth and fifth cervical vertebrae. In her autobiography, Joni, she speaks about her anger, depression, suicidal thoughts, and religious doubts. "God is more concerned with conforming me to the likeness of His Son than leaving me in my comfort zones. God is more interested in inward qualities than outward circumstances - things like refining my faith, humbling my heart, cleaning up my thought life and strengthening my character." She learned how to paint with a brush between her teeth and began selling her artwork. In 1979, she founded an organization known as Joni and Friends to accelerate Christian ministry in the disabled community throughout the world. "The Christian faith is meant to be lived moment by moment. It isn't some broad, general outline--it's a long walk with a real Person. Details count: passing thoughts, small sacrifices, a few encouraging words, little acts of kindness, brief victories over nagging sins." In 1982, she started doing regular radio broadcasts. She married Ken Tada in 1989. She has a plethora of honorary degrees and awards. She has served on numerous councils in defense of the "weakest" and vulnerable in our society. Joni has had breast cancer not once, but twice. She is now 75 years old. More than 50 years in a wheelchair. For the past 20 years, she has been in intense chronic pain, can barely sleep, and struggles to breathe. "Yes, I pray that my pain might be removed, that it might cease; but more so, I pray for the strength to bear it, the grace to benefit from it, and the devotion to offer it up to God as a sacrifice of praise." When asked how others can pray for her, she simply responds, "I want to love Jesus more. Pray I would love him more." "The weaker we feel, the harder we lean on God. And the harder we lean, the stronger we grow."

These women endured for the glory of God. They are mentors and examples of faithfulness, despite never having met them. I treasure their words as they acknowledge where their strength comes from. No amount of try will keep us going.

This is so important because Jesus says so. Before he went to the cross, we find Jesus' words in three of the gospels that are part of the Olivet discourse, where Jesus says by endurance, you will gain your lives. Endurance is not what saves us, it is the evidence of where we truly place our reliance for our salvation. We "lean into" God for strength.

As I look back in my life, I can so clearly see how God has been faithful in my life. As I look forward and more than likely foolishly, anticipate what my retirement years will look like given my physical limitations, I found myself asking how will I be faithful? The truth of that answer is found in every testimony you've heard today. It is the same answer as how I will remain faithful this day. I will spend time with the Lord in prayer and in His Word. I will humble myself to hear the hard things and know that he is God. I will believe that he orders my steps, no matter what happens and that he loves me, he loves me so much. He knows the future that waits for me before He calls me home. It was His joy at the prospect of eternity with me and you He kept before Him to endure the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. So let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,+ looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Lean into His love.

"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." (Romans 5:1-5)

ENDURANCE: Standing Firm Despite...

“Endurance is not just the ability to bear a hard thing, but to turn it into glory.” ~ William Barclay

“Woe is me because of my hurt! My wound is grievous.
But I said, “Truly this is an affliction, and I must bear it.” (Jeremiah 10:19)

“When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you.

Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory.

Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (Psalm 73:21-26)

"Endurance is a key indicator of spiritual fitness." ~ Alistair Begg

"Christianity is not a sprint but an endurance run. Therefore it is not how we start the race that counts, but how we complete it. How we finish is determined by the choices we make, and those are often formed by patterns we develop along the way." ~ John Bevere

Endurance 1: the ability to withstand hardship or adversity
especially : the ability to sustain a prolonged stressful effort or activity
2: the act or an instance of enduring or suffering
endurance of many hardships
3: permanence, duration
*durare "to harden," from durus "hard," root *deru- "be firm, solid, steadfast."

Perseverance : continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition: steadfastness

In NT Greek - Hypomone (hoop-om-on-ay) or hypomono
endurance, perseverance, patience, patient continuance, patient waiting, standing firm, steadfast(ness)

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace.
In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

hard work danger grief bitterness weariness sickness temptation persecution death

For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. (2 Corinthians 2:8-9)

Katherine von Bora - Work (1499-1552)

"I've read enough. I've heard enough. I know enough. Would to God I lived it."

"I will stick to Christ as a burr to a top coat."

Elisabeth Elliot - Danger/ grief (1926-2015)

"Sometimes life is so hard you can only do the next thing. Whatever that is just do the next thing. God will meet you there."

"Our vision is so limited we can hardly imagine a love that does not show itself in protection from suffering.... The love of God did not protect His own Son.... He will not necessarily protect us - not from anything it takes to make us like His Son. A lot of hammering and chiseling and purifying by fire will have to go into the process."

Fanny Crosby - Bitterness/ sickness (1820-1915)

"It seemed intended by the blessed Providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me."

"Oh what a happy soul am I although I cannot see,
I am resolved that in this world contented I shall be.
How many blessings I enjoy that other people don't.
To weep and sigh, because I'm blind?
I cannot and I won't."

Amy Carmichael – Weariness (1867- 1951)

"If the praise of others elates me and their blame depresses me; if I cannot rest under misunderstanding without defending myself; if I love to be loved more than to love, to be served more than to serve, then I know nothing of Calvary love."

"The word comfort is from two Latin words meaning "with" and "strong" – He is with us to make us strong. Comfort is not soft, weakening commiseration; it is true, strengthening love."

"Sometimes when we read the words of those who have been more than conquerors, we feel almost despondent. I feel that I shall never be like that. But they won through step by step, by little bits of wills, little denials of self,

little inward victories, by faithfulness in very little things. They became what they are. No one sees these little hidden steps. They only see the accomplishment, but even so, those small steps were taken. There is no sudden triumph, no spiritual maturity. That is the work of the moment."

Corrie Ten Boon – Persecution/Temptation [unforgiveness] (1892-1983)

"There is no pit so deep, that God's love is not deeper still."

"Jesus did not promise to change the circumstances around us. He promised great peace and pure joy to those who would learn to believe that God actually controls all things."

"The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something and enter God's realm where everything is possible. He specializes in the impossible. Nothing is too great for His almighty power. Nothing is too small for His love."

Joni Earickson Tada - Sickness/ broken bodies (1949 -)

"God is more concerned with conforming me to the likeness of His Son than leaving me in my comfort zones. God is more interested in inward qualities than outward circumstances - things like refining my faith, humbling my heart, cleaning up my thought life and strengthening my character."

"The Christian faith is meant to be lived moment by moment. It isn't some broad, general outline--it's a long walk with a real Person. Details count: passing thoughts, small sacrifices, a few encouraging words, little acts of kindness, brief victories over nagging sins."

"Yes, I pray that my pain might be removed, that it might cease; but more so, I pray for the strength to bear it, the grace to benefit from it, and the devotion to offer it up to God as a sacrifice of praise."

"The weaker we feel, the harder we lean on God. And the harder we lean the stronger we grow."

Olivet Discourse (Jesus speaking to his disciples on the Mt. of Olives)

Matthew 24:13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. Mark 13:13b

Luke 21:19 By your endurance you will gain your lives.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4

and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. (Romans 5:1-5)

"This hard place in which you perhaps find yourself is the very place in which God is giving you opportunity to look only to Him, to spend time in prayer, and to learn long-suffering [patience/endurance], gentleness, meekness - in short, to learn the depths of the love that Christ Himself has poured out on all of us." ~ Elisabeth Elliot

Reflection & Discussion:

- ❖ What impression do you have about how these women of faith “feel” and believe about God. How do they believe God “feels” about them? {Prayerfully personal ~ Ask & answer about yourself}
- ❖ Which story impacted you the most? Why?
- ❖ What is necessary in our lives for us to endure / stand firm / persevere? What qualities were part of these women’s lives?
- ❖ Pray!

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand firm**... 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all **perseverance**, making supplication for all the saints,

Philippians 1:27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are **standing firm** in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,

Colossians 1:11 being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all **endurance** and patience with joy;

1 Corinthians 13:7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, **endures** all things.

Corinthians 4:12b When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we **endure**;

1 Corinthians 9:12 If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we **endure** anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to **endure** it.

2 Timothy 4:5 But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Hebrews 10:36 For you have need of **endurance**, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

James 1:2-4 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces **steadfastness**. 4 And let **steadfastness** have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.