

# Called to Endure

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*Sowing endurance and reaping hope.*

## **I. “Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.” - Revelation 14:12 ESV**

- We as followers of Jesus are called to endure.
- The most interesting thing about being called to endure is the reality of what endurance produces in our life.
- If we really want to understand where we are going in this talk today we need to address the principle of sowing and reaping.
  - *Sowing and reaping doesn't deal solely with finances, but other arenas of life as well.*
    - We reap how we want to be treated, by way of sowing treating others well or poorly. (Matthew 7:12)
    - We reap shouts of joy, by way of sowing in tears. (Psalm 126:5)
    - We reap reward or punishment, by way of the good or bad we do with our body. (2 Corinthians 5:10)
- The basic reality God wants us to catch through the principle of sowing and reaping is that our actions and response in life produce.
- Our talk today will specifically focus on the truth that the seed of endurance produces the fruit of hope.

## **II. “Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame ...” - Romans 5:3-5a ESV**

### 1. Fruit and seed aren't the same thing.

- A. Here is what I think about when I hear the word apple...

i. Apple:

- Apple pie.
- Apple cider.
- Apple juice.
- Apple sauce.
- Apple fritters.
- Apple butter.

B. Here is what I think about when I think about the words apple seed...

ii. Apple seed:

- Apple core.
- Process.
- Farming.
- Getting my hands dirty.
- Years of dedication.
- Hard work.

i. This is comparable to thoughts I think about sowing endurance to reap hope.

C. Here are my thoughts about hope ...

i. Hope:

- A joyful expectation of good outcomes.
- A deep knowing that God will turn a situation around.
- The trust that everything is going to be alright.
- Unmaterialized joy.
- Watching a sunset, listening to LoFi ... chill vibes.

D. Here are my thoughts about endurance.

i. Endurance:

- Difficulty.
- Hardship.
- Gritting your teeth.
- Struggle.
- Pain.
- Pushing through.
- Waiting under pressure.
- Required patience.
- Uncomfortable.
- Process

E. Hope is the confident expectation that God is going to change my circumstance.

F. Endurance is continuing to believe in that hope when it seems like everything in your life is contrary to hope.

2. Fruit is more desirable than seed.

A. If I'm hungry and you hand me a seed I'm going to look at you like your crazy. If I'm hungry and you hand me an apple I'm happy.

- B. *Everyone wants the fruit, but not many people want the seed.*
- C. We all want hope, but biblical hope requires endurance.

### 3. There is no fruit without seed.

- A. The apples in the fruit sections didn't just appear there. What we see at the grocery store is the end of a process.
- B. In the same way, the hope we hear preached from pastors and told about from other people, didn't just appear there. What we see and hear is the end of a process.
- C. The same way that you can't have an apple without refrigerating the seed for six weeks. Potting it. Letting it grow into a seedling. Transplanting it into the ground and then waiting 2-3 years for it to begin producing, *You can't have hope without enduring a process that holds the potential for hopelessness.*
  - No healing without enduring sickness.
  - No joy without enduring sadness.
  - No provision without enduring lack.
  - No victory without enduring a fight.
  - No peace without enduring anxiety.
- D. We hear testimony or messages and we get excited.
  - i. We take a bite of their fruit, and we think, "I want some of that!"
  - ii. What we don't realize is that if we want the product we will have to embrace our own process.
- E. The longer I follow Jesus the more interested I become in what difficulty does inside of someone.
  - i. I love hearing the miraculous stories, but I also love hearing about how people's hearts and character were transformed through what they endured.

- F. This is where we realize that sandwiched between endurance and hope is character transformation. (... endurance produces character, and character produces hope...)
- G. *Hope is the end product, but improved character is the process.*
- i. You'll remember I talked to you a few weeks ago about God being holistic in everything He does. Keeping this in mind we need to realize that God is just as interested in the process as He is the miraculous.
    - a. He wants you healed, but he also wants you speaking gently to you spouse and children.
    - b. He wants to provide for you, but he also doesn't want your identity wrapped up in what you have.
    - c. He wants you to get that job or promotion, but he also wants you to stop gossiping about your current boss.
    - d. He wants you to find your spouse, but he also wants you to realize that he is the only one that can fulfill your needs.
    - e. He wants to bless your business, but he also wants you to realize that rest is just as important as work.
  - ii. *Suffering reveals two things: our need for God's power and our need for God's character.*
    - a. Why? Because if He can shift your character then outward circumstances won't shake you.
  - iii. *He doesn't want to temporarily satisfy your hunger with fruit. He wants you to plant your own seed, and to engage in your process.*
- H. What if coming to church wasn't only so that we could be fed, but so that we could extract the seed from the fruit being fed to us.

- I. Endurance precedes hope, but hope multiplies our endurance.
4. There is no seed without fruit.
- A. **“We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.” - 1 Thessalonians 1:3**
    - i. *Hope inspires MORE endurance which produces to MORE hope!*
    - ii. And this didn't just affect their own life, it affected the lives of those around them and even into other parts of the earth.
  - B. **You paid careful attention to the way we lived among you, and determined to live that way yourselves. In imitating us, you imitated the Master. Although great trouble accompanied the Word, you were able to take great joy from the Holy Spirit!—taking the trouble with the joy, the joy with the trouble. Do you know that all over the provinces of both Macedonia and Achaia believers look up to you? The word has gotten around. Your lives are echoing the Master's Word, not only in the provinces but all over the place. The news of your faith in God is out. We don't even have to say anything anymore—you're the message! - 1 Thessalonians 1:5-8 MSG**
    - i. I believe that the spirit God is calling those who originally came to church just to be fed, to begin to extract the seed, and start becoming orchards of their own.
    - ii. Your process has purpose because your life is bigger than just you.