

June 24 & 25, 2017



## Winning in the Game of Playing For Keeps

1. love God
2. love people
3. take responsibility
4. extend forgiveness
5. pursue joy
6. expect adversity

## Adversity is our Ally.

1. Expect God to allow trials in our lives

James 1:2 *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds . . .*

John 15:19 *If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. 20 Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also . . .*

John 16:33 *. . . "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

Acts 14:22 *strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.*

Acts 20:23 *I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.*

1 Thessalonians 3:2 *We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, 3 so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them. 4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know.*

1 Peter 4:12 *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.*

*Disappointment is the gap between expectations and reality.*

2. Expect God to have a purpose for our trials

James 1:3 *because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

### 3. Expect God to give us wisdom in our trials

James 1:5 *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. 6 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.*

*9 The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. 10 But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wild flower. 11 For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business.*

### 4. Expect God to reward us for enduring our trials

James 1:12 *Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.*

2 Corinthians 4:16 *Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

My Life is but a weaving  
between my Lord and me;  
I cannot choose the colors  
He works steadily.

Oft times He weaves sorrow  
And I, in foolish pride,  
Forget He sees the upper,  
And I the underside.

Not til the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly,  
Shall God unroll the canvas  
And explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful  
In the Weaver's skillful hand,  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned.

He knows, He loves, He cares,  
Nothing this truth can dim.  
He gives His very best to those  
Who leave the choice with Him.