

Sermon: Pressing Faith

¹⁰ I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. ¹² Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but **I press** on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ **I press on toward** the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:10-14 (NIV)

Sometimes life happens, Life can be beautiful and the next thing you know life can be brutal.

Have you ever heard that things are going to get better?

Have you ever heard this is your year. Only to see the struggles of life get even harder?

It doesn't take long to see that life comes with its challenges. The question is what do we do in hard times? How do we handle the pressures of life?

What do we do when we are currently in a time of struggle. What do we do when our faith has been challenged?

In our text we find Paul writing this letter to the Philippian church while he is in jail as an Encouragement. The book of Philippians is known as the book of joy. Paul writes he wants to **KNOW CHRIST.**

I believe Paul is saying in this text I don't just want to know about; I just don't want to be in Relationship with him **BUT I WANT TO BE LIKE HIM.** Paul was eager to know Christ! He had an attitude of **I GOT TO KNOW CHRIST.**

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for **the joy** that was set before Him **endured** the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:2 NKJV

None of us pray for suffering or pray for pain.

Paul says I press towards to goal. The Goal is to know Christ. If the goal is to know Christ it changes the way you look at the situation you are going through.

Experiencing challenging time can strengthen your Faith. We must understand that all of us will go through difficult times. Many people are going through a hard time now, maybe you know someone who is experiencing it now and you are going through with them.

³³“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33 NIV

Trouble exists in our lives because we are living in a broken world. Some suffering is due to our sinful and wrong choices.

Endurance

The question we should ask God during trouble/suffering is: What are you trying to show me in this trouble (what are you trying to show me about you?). What is building in me during this trail. Not just “how to get out” or “when am I going to get out”. If my goal is only getting out, I might miss the purpose what this is for.

Time Out – (Picture of KJ in time out)

No matter how you end up in your trouble, it's good to know that God promise to be in it with you.

Waiting can be hard? But how are you waiting?

Whenever there is a challenge facing you, you must learn how to press on.

Whenever you feel pressed, you must press.

We must learn to Press in the Press

⁸We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. **-2 Corinthians 4:8-9 NIV**

¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

2 Corinthians 4:16-17

Trouble don't last always

I think when we think about pressing, we think about pressing in our own strength but the truth of matter we must press with strength of Christ.

The good news is that there is a blessing in the press.

God's hands will keep you during trouble.

The Press isn't supposed to be comfortable. Suffering isn't comfortable.

our ultimate purpose isn't to be comfortable...it's to grow into Christ's image. There are times in life that we are stretched. In life we will have some growing pains.

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 5:3-6 NLT

Weightlifting Example:

God is building us to be able to handle more and still trust Him

Suffering isn't just for haters to see you win one day. Paul says he wants to know God in the fellowship of his suffering.

Christ Suffered, He Died and He Resurrected.

Two important points that I want to take for what Paul is saying in order to press:

Forgetting The Pass:

³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead.

Philippians 3:13-14 NIV

Fix your eyes: Look to Christ.

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.

-2 Corinthians 4:18 NIV

Keeping our eyes on the prize.

- Fix my eyes by praise (Praise and Worship) As we worship with our telling our self/ situation how big our God is.

-by prayer (Totally depending on God,) by community (We are not alone).

Community doesn't allow us to stay where we are. (Small Groups)

