

## How to Build Strong Faith

SIX BIBLE STUDY LESSONS FOR GROUP DISCIPLESHIP

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## How to Use this Material

In Victory, the primary venue for discipleship happens in a small group. It is called a Victory group. We strongly encourage everyone to be involved since these groups are specifically designed to help disciples grow spiritually.

A Victory group meeting has three sections: **Connect**, **Word**, and **Prayer**, and ideally lasts from forty to sixty minutes.

#### **CONNECT** (5-10 minutes)

Victory group meetings begin with a time to relate with one another. Depending on the people who comprise the group, this can be done through a variety of ways:

- Fun—such as an icebreaker activity
- Answered prayers—sharing of testimonies and updates
- Questions—such as those provided in the material, learning each other's personal stories, and sharing feedback from the weekly message

#### Effective Questions During the Connect Portion:

- Are deliberately friendly to first-timers
- Ask for opinion or experiences
- Require no Bible knowledge
- Have no right or wrong answer
- Are not controversial
- Are preferably connected to the meeting's topic

#### WORD (20-30 minutes)

Teach the truth and relevance of God's Word for life application. The Victory group meeting is not primarily a Bible study. Although teaching and explanation of Scripture is involved, the goal is to minister, not finish a material.

There is no need teach all the points in a material.

Within this section, we look at what the Bible says, its relevance to us today, and its application in our lives.

#### What: What does the Bible say?

Communicate and impart biblical truth clearly and concisely

<sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 TIMOTHY 3:16,17

Tips for Sharing the Word Effectively

- Let the Bible speak for itself.
- Use illustrations and tell stories to explain Bible verses.
- When entertaining clarifications, be watchful not to allow the discussion to go off-tangent.
- The primary goal is to minister to the needs of the people, not to finish a Bible lesson.
- Be led by the Spirit when using the material.

**So What:** What is the relevance of the Word to my life? Give participants the opportunity to discuss how the Word impacts the way they live.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. ROMANS 12:2

#### **Now What:** How do I apply the Word to my life?

Our primary reason for sharing the Bible is so that people will know who God is and what He has done. In doing so, the participants will begin to discover who they are and what they should do.

If it is a promise, teach them to claim it. If it is a command or a principle, encourage them to put it to action by God's grace. If it is a truth, let them embrace it willingly and not under compulsion. Allow God's grace and love to win them by the way you teach God's Word.

Encourage specific, measurable action steps that are consistent with the life change that the Scripture is bringing about. We do not command people, but we spur them on toward love and good deeds.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. JAMES 1:22

Tips for Life-Changing Application

- You may choose one of the "So What" and "Now What" questions or you may add your own.
- An effective standby application question is: "What one action step are you going to take as a result of what you heard today?"
- Designate who will be the first to answer the question asked.
- Do not allow someone to argue or be critical of others.
- Remind everyone to apply the lesson to their own lives, not to someone else's.
- Ask God for wisdom to know when to balance or correct strange or unbiblical applications. Insensitive correction or criticism can kill the group, as can unchecked heresy.
- Remind everyone that transformation is God's work, not ours, and our obedience is a response to who He is and His love for us. It is God's grace that enables us to apply and obey His Word.

#### PRAY (15-20 minutes)

Prayer is the most important part of the Victory group meeting. Make sure you have plenty of time left so your prayer time is not rushed. This is not a "closing prayer," but a time for everyone in the group to take specific requests to God. This is where the action is. The goal is to create a venue where people will see God move on their behalf.

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." MATTHEW 18:19

#### Tips for Powerful Prayer

- Listen to the Holy Spirit carefully during the Connect and Word sections for things that may need prayer.
- Spend your time praying for one another, not sharing and discussing prayer requests.
- Keep your prayers simple, sincere, and short. Most non-believers have never heard an ordinary Christian just talk to God and will be touched by the sincerity and simplicity of the prayer.
- Pray, don't preach. Pray in simple and short sentences, not long "sermon prayers."
- Use conversational prayer, not complicated or profound, intercessory prayer.
- Expect God to answer your prayers.

#### CONTENTS

1	Living by Faith 1
2	Enduring Tough Times 5
3	Overcoming Offense <b>11</b>
4	Fighting Fear <b>17</b>
5	Defeating Worry <b>21</b>
6	Withstanding Persecution <b>27</b>

1	Living	by	Faith

CONNECT

- Do you like following a schedule or are you a more spontaneous person?
- Share one thing you're hoping will happen in the next twelve months.
- Tell about a time when you (or someone else) made a promise you were not able to keep.

# WORD

<sup>19</sup>Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. <sup>20</sup>Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup>being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. ROMANS 4:19-21

#### WHAT

The ultimate goal of the Christian life is to please God. Pleasing God is accomplished by faith, not by works. In fact, without faith it is impossible to please Him. Abraham was a man of great faith and we can learn from his life and journey of faith.



### Faith faces the problem, but focuses on the promise.

Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God... ROMANS 4:20

We live by faith, not by sight. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

Abraham did not deny the fact that he was too old to father a child.

How did Abraham face the fact without weakening his faith?

#### Faith believes that God is willing and able to fulfill His promise.

Being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised ... ROMANS 4:21

By faith Abraham, even though he was past age—and Sarah herself was barren—was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. HEBREWS 11:11

Abraham was fully persuaded that God has enough power to fulfill His promise, and that He is willing to fulfill it. What is the difference between being fully persuaded and partially persuaded?

What happens	
to our faith if we	
believe that God	
is able, but we	
are not sure He is	
faithful to all His	
promises?	

#### Faith believes that God is a rewarder.

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. HEBREWS 11:6

What is a reward? What is a rewarder? Who does God reward?


#### SO WHAT

- Are you living by faith? How does Abraham's faith challenge you?
- What causes your faith to weaken? What causes your faith to grow stronger?
- What happens if we face the facts, but forget the promise? What happens if we focus on the promise but pretend the facts don't exist?
- Do you believe God is willing to fulfill His promises? Do you believe He is able?

#### NOW WHAT

- When faced with a difficult situation, are you able to face the problem but focus on the promise? Why or why not? What facts do you have to face that stand in the way of God's promises in your life?
- What are you believing God for? You may want to write these down, so you can keep praying and be in faith to see God's promises come to pass in your life.
- Are you earnestly seeking God? Do you believe He is a rewarder? What could be hindering you from believing that God will reward you for your faith?
- Is your faith growing stronger or weaker? What can you do so that your faith in God will grow stronger every day?

PRAYER

Ask God for faith like Abraham's, to face the facts but focus on the promise. Lift up your concerns to Him and trust that He is willing and able to fulfill His promises.

Pray for those you know who are in difficult seasons of their lives, that they would have great faith and would persevere.

Pray for His promises to be fulfilled in your life, family, work, ministry, and nation. Don't give up!

## 2

# Enduring Tough Times

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CONNECT

How do you deal with challenges in your life?

- Name three people you talk to on a regular basis. Describe your relationship with them.
- Recall a time when someone helped you get through a tough situation. What happened?

# NORD

"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

A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all. PSALM 34:19

#### WHAT

Jesus did not promise a trouble-free life for His followers. In fact, He promised that in this world we would always have troubles, trials, and persecution. The question most people ask in tough times is: "Why me?" Instead, we should be asking: "How can I respond in a way that honors God?" Let's look at what the Bible says we can do to endure tough times and glorify God in the midst of them.

#### 1

#### Read God's Word.

If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. PSALM 119:92

Many suffer spiritual shipwreck during tough times, but God's Word is a solid foundation for us no matter what difficulties we will face.

What kept David from perishing during his affliction? How has God's Word kept you from spiritual shipwreck?



#### Respond with joy.

<sup>2</sup>Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup>because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. <sup>4</sup>Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. JAMES 1:2-4

Joy in the midst of a trial seems like an impossible order. If we understand the end result of a trial, then we might be able to respond with joy.

What happens to our faith if we believe that God is able, but we are not sure He is faithful to all His promises?

3

### Receive trials as character builders that remain in our lives temporarily.

<sup>3</sup>Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup>perseverance, character; and character, hope. ROMANS 5:3,4

One goal of the Christian life is to become more Christlike in our character.

What is "character"? How is it produced? How do trials help build our character?

<sup>17</sup>For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. <sup>18</sup>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 4:17,18 Though tough times seem to last forever while we are going through them, they are really only momentary, or temporary.

While we are going through tough times, what should our eyes be fixed on? How can we focus on the unseen?

### Reach out to others who are experiencing tough times.

<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup>who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. <sup>2</sup> CORINTHIANS 1:3,4

Our God is the "Father of compassion and the God of all comfort."

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How has He comforted you in tough times? How should we respond when we experience God's comfort?

#### SO WHAT

- How does God's Word help you endure tough times?
- How do you respond in a tough time? How can you respond with joy?
- Recall a difficult experience you went through that helped build your character. What did God teach you during this time?
- How have you reached out to people in tough times? How have others reached out to help you?

#### NOW WHAT

- Are you reading God's Word every day? If not, do you want to begin doing so this week? Set a time and place for daily Bible reading. You may want to start with John's Gospel.
- Are you presently experiencing tough times? Would you like to tell us about what is going on? How do you think God is asking you to respond?
- What areas of your character is God currently developing? How can you become more like Christ in these specific areas?
- Do you know of anyone who is going through a tough time right now? What can you do to help and comfort them this week?

PRAYER

Make a decision to prioritize God's Word in your life. Pray the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to be upon you so that you may know Him better.

Pray for the joy of the Lord to be upon you and those you know who are experiencing tough times.

Ask God to develop your character in a greater way and to make you more like Christ every day.

Commit to respond to trials (present and future) in a way that honors God.

# Overcoming Offense


CONNECT

Did you ever have bullies in school? Tell us about your experience.

- Do you have a hard time apologizing or asking for forgiveness? Why or why not?
- What type of personality do you have a difficulty getting along with? Why?

# WORD

A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense. PROVERBS 19:11

WHAT

Offense is an unfortunate and unavoidable part of life. We will all get offended from time to time, and we all have offended others, usually unintentionally. In this lesson, we will look at the causes and effects of offense and how offense can be resolved.

#### Insensitive words can cause offense.

We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check. JAMES 3:2 (SEE ALSO JAMES 3:3-6.)

The tongue has the power of life and death. PROVERBS 18:21

In what ways do you sometimes offend with your tongue? How can you use your tongue to speak life or death?



#### Correction can cause offense.

<sup>12</sup>Then the disciples came to him and asked, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?" <sup>13</sup>He replied, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. <sup>14</sup>Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit." MATTHEW 15:12-14

The disciples seemed upset that Jesus offended the Pharisees. But Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their hypocritical adherence to external religion. Why do you think Jesus responded that way? Recall a time when you were corrected. How did you respond?

#### 3

#### Unresolved offense destroys relationships.

An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city. PROVERBS 18:19

If left unresolved, offense has the potential to destroy the strongest relationships. What is a "fortified city"? How is an offended brother like a fortified city?

Why do offended people become defensive and closed?

We will all have opportunities to get offended. Some offenses are minor miscommunications and misunderstandings. Others are major relational meltdowns. Whether major or minor, if not handled properly, all offenses have the potential to become major roadblocks to spiritual progress.

### If you have offended someone, you should take the initiative to be reconciled.

<sup>23</sup> "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift." MATTHEW 5:23,24

Taking the initiative to be reconciled is not easy. Though it may be easier to pretend the issue does not exist, Jesus said that we should prioritize reconciliation. What should you do if you know someone has something against you?

What does it mean to "be reconciled to your brother"?

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### 5

### If someone has offended you, then you should forgive and forget.

A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense. PROVERBS 19:11

He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends. PROVERBS 17:9

It takes wisdom and patience to overlook an offense. It is difficult to cover an offense, promote love, and protect the relationship. What does it mean to "overlook" and "cover" an offense?

Recall a time when you were offended. How did you respond?

#### SO WHAT

- How do you think God wants you to respond to correction? How does this differ from your natural response?
- How can unresolved offenses destroy relationships? How do you think God feels about these? How can you overlook an offense?
- Why should we not talk about our offenses to people who are not involved in the reconciliation process?

#### NOW WHAT

- Were you corrected in the past but did not respond in a way that honors God? What can you do about this? How can you respond to future correction in a way that pleases God?
- Have you offended someone? Have you asked God for forgiveness? Have you asked God if you need to ask the person for forgiveness? How is your relationship with this person now?
- Have you been offended by someone? Have you forgiven? Has the relationship been restored?

PRAYER

Ask God to help you speak words that give life to others and please Him. Pray that when challenges arise in your relationships, you would not be easily offended, and that you will honor God in the way you respond.

Ask God to give you the grace to forgive those who have offended you, and that you would have the courage to ask for forgiveness from those you have offended.

Pray for those who have offended you. Forgive as the Lord Jesus forgave us. Pray that God's love and kindness would be evident in and through your life.

4	Fighting Fear
T U	What types of movies do you like? Which do you dislike? Why?

How do you respond to conflict?

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ZZ

Tell us about one of your worst childhood memories. What happened?

# WORD

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ROMANS 8:15

#### WHAT

Fear is a natural emotion that can be healthy or destructive. Healthy fear keeps us from sin and causes us to exercise caution in dangerous situations. Destructive fears keep us in bondage and prevent us from fully serving God. For example, Hebrews 2:15 speaks of a people who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. Unhealthy fear produces slavery. God desires for us to walk in freedom from fear of death and all other destructive fears. In this lesson, we will focus on how to fight bondage-producing fears.



#### Fight fear with God's presence.

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." JOSHUA 1:9

God commanded Joshua not to be afraid and at the same time He promised that His presence would be with him.

How does God's presence help us overcome fear?

2

#### Fight fear with God's promises.

<sup>31</sup>To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup>Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." JOHN 8:31,32

The promises of God's Word are our weapons to fight fear. Truth sets us free from fear. The fear of lack can be defeated with promises of God's provision. The fear of failure can be defeated with promises of success. How does God's Word set us free from fear?

What are some of God's promises that have set you free from fear?



#### Fight fear with God's love.

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. 1 JOHN 4:18

Freedom from fear starts when we realize how much God loves us. If we walk in fear, it is because "we have not been made perfect in love." In other words, we have not yet realized how much God loves us. His perfect love drives out all fear.

Has the revelation of God's love for you ever delivered you from fear? Why?

#### SO WHAT

- What might you attempt to do or be if you knew God's presence was with you? How can God's presence help you overcome your fears?
- What are some of your fears? What does the Bible say about these? Which of God's promises can you hold on to and fight these fears with?
- How does fear cripple a person? How can the revelation of God's love deliver you from fear?

#### NOW WHAT

- Are you free from the fear of death? Are you sure you will go to heaven when you die? Are you ever afraid of hell?
- How can you fight your fears with God's presence, promises, and love this week? You may want to declare God's Word over your life every day, write down your prayers and His promises in a journal, or ask someone to pray with you and challenge you to fight these fears.
- Do you know what God has promised for you? What can you do this week to go deeper into His Word and discover His promises for your life, family, and future?

Pray that you would be set free from bondageproducing fears. Proclaim God's promises over your life, family, and future. Hold on to these and declare these in faith.

- Ask God for His presence to be with you and fill you every day of your life.
- Pray that you would experience God's love more and have a greater appreciation for and understanding of His Word.

Pray that you would help others be set free from bondage-producing fears.

# Defeating Worry


CONNECT

Do you like shopping? Why or why not?

If you could be someone else for a day, who would you choose to be? What would you do in those twenty-four hours?

Tell us about one of your dreams in life.

# WORD

<sup>25</sup> "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup>Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" MATTHEW 6:25-27 (SEE ALSO MATTHEW 6:28-34.)

#### WHAT

We all tend to worry about things in our lives. In this passage, Jesus gives His followers specific instructions not to worry. In this lesson, we will look at the top causes of worry Jesus referred to in Matthew 6, and how we can wipe out and defeat worry.

#### 1

#### **Personal Needs**

<sup>25</sup> "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?" MATTHEW 6:25,26

Jesus exhorted His followers not to worry about their personal needs, what they would eat or drink. Do you ever worry about your needs being met? Which personal needs cause you the most worry? Referring to birds, Jesus asked whether we are more valuable than they. How valuable are we?

What determines our value? What does our value have to do with God's provision and worry?

> 22 How to Build Strong Faith

#### 2

#### **Personal Appearance**

<sup>28</sup> "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. <sup>29</sup>Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" MATTHEW 6:28-30

Jesus said not to worry about our body and our clothes.

In what ways
do people worry
about their bodies?
Why do people
worry about
their bodies?

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#### Future

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." MATTHEW 6:34

Finally, Jesus said not to worry about tomorrow.

Do you worry about the future? Why should we not worry about tomorrow?


Though there are many things that can distract us and make us worry, Jesus tells us that we are so valuable to Him and we need not worry because we can trust Him always.

#### • Prayer defeats worry.

<sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. PHILIPPIANS 4:6,7

When we are anxious, the Bible tells us to pray. What does it mean to be anxious about something?

#### • Proper priorities defeat worry.

<sup>33</sup> "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. <sup>34</sup>Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." MATTHEW 6:33,34

When we seek God first, we can defeat worry.

Recall a time when you were anxious about something. What did you do?

What are some practical ways we can seek God's kingdom? How do you order your priorities?

#### SO WHAT

- Why do people worry so much about their clothes and appearance? Why is it wrong to worry about these?
- Why do you think so many people today worry about tomorrow? Why do you think it's easier to worry than to pray and seek Him first?
- How do prayer and proper priorities defeat anxiety and worry?

#### NOW WHAT

- What do you tend to worry about? What does God's Word say about these things? When you're tempted to worry, what will you do to overcome this?
- Are you growing in your relationship with God? Do you trust Him when He tells you not to worry? How can you know Him more every day?
- Do you know someone who worries a lot? What can you do to help them defeat worry?

# PRAYER

Lift up your worries and concerns to God. Ask Him to help you defeat worry. Also ask Him to help you order your priorities. Commit to seek His kingdom first.

Pray for your needs to be met. Ask God to help you focus on Him, rather than personal needs, appearances, and questions about the future.

Pray for those you know who worry a lot. Ask God for opportunities to encourage them.

# Withstanding Persecution

CONNECT

How do you respond to conflict? Do you try to avoid it? How do you deal with it? Why?

- What's one of the biggest challenges you've ever had to face? What happened?
- Name one person you admire for their perseverance and courage. What did they do?

# WORD

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." MATTHEW 5:44

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ROMANS 12:14

#### WHAT

Are we really expected to love our enemies? This command may seem impossible, but if we understand what the Bible says about persecution, we will not only be able to withstand persecution, we may even be able to obey Jesus' command to bless and pray for our persecutors. Just what does the Bible say about persecution?

## We will be persecuted because we follow Christ.

"Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also." JOHN 15:20

Persecution is part of the package of following Christ.

Who persecuted Jesus? Why did they persecute Him?

> "But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away." MARK 4:17

Persecution comes because of the Word.

Why does the Word attract persecution?

## Persecution does not mean God has abandoned us.

... persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 2 CORINTHIANS 4:9

<sup>35</sup>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?...<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ROMANS 8:35,37

Though persecution is painful and difficult, God's love and presence is still with us.

How can we know God has not abandoned us?

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#### 3

### Even people with great faith receive persecution.

<sup>37</sup>They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— <sup>38</sup>the world was not worthy of them ... <sup>39</sup>These were all commended for their faith ... HEBREWS 11:37-39 Great faith enables us to endure, not avoid persecution.

Why is it important to keep our faith in God in the midst of persecution?

#### 4

#### Persecution will be rewarded in heaven.

<sup>10</sup> "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
<sup>11</sup>Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." MATTHEW 5:10-12

How can we be expected to rejoice when we are persecuted?

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#### SO WHAT

- Have you ever been persecuted for your faith in Christ? Have you ever persecuted anyone? What happened?
- Do you know someone who has been persecuted? How did they respond? How does persecution strengthen your faith?
- Why do you think some "quickly fall away" when they are persecuted (Mark 4:17)? How can you make sure you will not fall away when you are persecuted?

#### NOW WHAT

- How do you respond to persecution? How can you respond in a way that honors God? Have you forgiven those who have persecuted you?
- Do you ever feel God has abandoned you? Why? How can you know God's presence is with you?



Pray for boldness to proclaim your faith wherever you go and whoever you're with.

Ask God to strengthen you in your faith and to know that He is always with you.

Pray for those who persecute you. Ask God to reveal Himself to them so they may encounter Him, and to give you the grace to bless them.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

How to Build Strong Faith is a series of six materials for group discipleship designed to help disciples live by faith.

#### TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Living by Faith
- Enduring Tough Times
- Overcoming Offense
- Fighting Fear
- Defeating Worry
- Withstanding Persecution

