

ENDURING FAITH

Not that I have already obtained all things, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers, 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 3:12-14 (NIV)

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV)

True F.A.I.T.H -

F.irst (of) A.ll I. T.rust H.im

1. Remember the faith you STARTED WITH.

"Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. ³³ Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. ³⁴ You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. ³⁵ So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. ³⁶ You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. ³⁷ For, "In just a very little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. ³⁸ And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." ³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.

Hebrews 10:32-39 (NIV)

- Think back on that time when you first heard and understood that God loves you.
- Think back on that decision you made to accept Christ and surrender to Him.
- Think back on the struggles you have had in your faith and how you overcame.

2. Be reminded of HEROES of the FAITH in your life.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Hebrews 12:1 (NIV)

- Were there heroes of the faith in your family that you owe a debt of gratitude?
- Were there heroes of the faith in your church that you need to thank?

- Are you a hero of the faith for those around you?

3. Re-Focus on the PRIMARY SOURCE of your faith.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12:2-3 (NIV)

- What can we do to increase our faith?
 - Fix your eyes daily on Jesus... He is the author of your faith.
 - Focus on Jesus... He is the perfecter of your faith.
 - Fashion your life after Jesus... He is the example for your faith.

Closing Thoughts:

1. For the church to function and impact the world, we must develop an enduring faith.
2. As we grow in our faith, we should enjoy the good times and be prepared for the difficult times.

Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. ³ For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴ So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything.

James 1:2-4 (NLT)

3. Please remember that this journey can only begin once you place your faith and trust in Jesus as your Savior.