



“Stick With It”

1 Peter 5

Small Group Plan

The Apostle Paul wrote:

¹⁶ That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. ¹⁷ For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! ¹⁸ So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

— 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NLT

Faithfulness ... Diligence ... Determination ... Persistence.

Why do some people decide to keep on keeping on when other people decide to give up? I like this story by Lawrence Crabb:

I can recall standing by the finish line at many track meets, waiting for my son to come straining down the last stretch ... As each of our team's runners came into view, the line of paunchy, out-of-shape fathers would take up the cry, "C'mon, only a few yards to go! Push! Push! Kick up your legs! You can do it!" And most of the young athletes would respond ... I have never yet heard a father call out to his son during that final stretch, "You look tired! Why don't you quit? You're in the back third of the field anyway. Maybe running isn't your sport."

— From **Encouragement – The Key To Caring**

Don't look at the temporary difficulty, look at the long-term return. Don't look at the short-term pain, look at the long-term gain. Look at the character God is building because you have not given up. God is more interested in what you are becoming than what you accomplish.

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- Why do some people keep going while others give up?
- What has helped you to keep going when life became difficult?
- What do these words have in common: faithfulness, determination and persistence?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

CHRISTIANS STICK WITH IT ...

... BY BEING HUMBLE

1 Peter 5:5b-7

⁵ All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” ⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

- Why does God “oppose the proud?”
- The opposite of humility is pride. How can pride keep a follower from seeing and living in God’s power?
- In difficult times why was it vital for these Christian to know “he cares for you” (v. 7)?

... BY BEING WATCHFUL

1 Peter 5:8-9

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

- Why does Peter want the Christians living in Asia Minor to be aware that Satan is on the scene and trying to take advantage of their discouragement (v. 8) — “be alert and of sober mind”?
- Peter reminds them that the larger Christian family is also suffering. How will expanding their point of view help them all to endure?

... BY BEING HOPEFUL

1 Peter 5:10-11

¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

- Notice how Peter writes describes such a personal God — “God ... will himself restore you” (v. 10). How does this help them to endure?
- Peter closes this section with praise and worship. How will it help the Christians to focus on God’s greatness and “power” in the face of their own difficulties?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- Peter says God will work “*In due time*” (v. 6). This often means waiting. Why is it sometimes difficult to wait on God?
- The “*anxiety*” (v. 7) of a Christian today may be different than the anxiety facing Christians in Peter’s day. How are they different now? How are they the same?
- What does faithful waiting on God look like in the life of a Christian?
- How will Satan try to use our discouragement, and even try to deepen it?
- Why is it more discouraging when we feel that we are alone in our difficulty? How does Peter help us to take a bigger view (v. 9)? How does this help us to not only remain faithful, but also to look for God’s deeper purpose?
- Be Humble ... Be Watchful ... Be Hopeful ...
 - ✓ How can **humility** enlarge our view helping us to be **watchful**?
 - ✓ How can enlarging our view help us to **hopeful**?
- Close with prayer asking God to help us remain humble, watchful and hopeful in times of difficulty.