

## To-Do in 2025: perspective on trials

### Key Scriptures:

James 1:2-4 <sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

1 Peter 1:6-7 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the tested genuineness of your faith-- more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire-- may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 48:10 Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

Romans 5:3-5 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. <sup>8</sup> Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. <sup>9</sup> And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

John 16:33 In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

2 Corinthians 1:5 For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.

## TALK IT OVER

**Start talking:** Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- What is on your To-Do List for 2025?
- What is on your spiritual To-Do List for 2025?

**Reflect, Think, & Share:** Read through the key scriptures and share any observations or questions with the group.

- What do you observe from the key scriptures about why God allows difficulties in our lives?
- What do you glean from these passages about the kind of attitude and perspective is needed to endure trials and find a way to "consider it joy?"
- What comes to your mind when you think about the "power of Christ?"
- How does 2 Cor 12:9 impact your understanding of "the power of Christ" being upon a person?
- In what ways have you observed our culture attempting to avoid difficulties and suffering at all costs? Are some of these attempts valid? (why or why not?)
- Reflect on a time in your life when a trial revealed something about your faith or character. How did God use that situation to refine or strengthen you?
- What does it mean to find joy in trials without denying the pain? How have you experienced joy amidst difficulty in the past?

**Start doing:** How can you pre-decide to look for God in the trials of 2025 rather than simply looking for a way out? Determine to allow God to use whatever happens next in your life as a platform to grow your trust in Him.

**Prayer Requests.** Take some time to pray together. Use the key scriptures as a guide in praying the scriptures back to God.

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