

— IN THE — MEANTIME

PART 5: Believe It or Not

INTRODUCTION

Jesus told his followers that unavoidable trials aren't an aberration; they are an expectation. They can actually serve a beneficial purpose. Why? Because God can redeem, use, or work through the undeserved, unavoidable, circumstantial trials in our lives. But in order for that to happen, we have to believe and persevere.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you usually handle sudden changes in your schedule? Do you go with the flow or does the unexpected stress you out?
2. Talk about a time in your own life or the life of someone you know when good eventually came from adversity. What influence did that event have on your faith?
3. During the message, Andy said, *"Faith that gets a yes from God is nothing compared to faith that gets no answer or no for an answer but endures anyway."* How does that statement challenge what you believe (or want to believe) about faith? What is comforting about that statement?
4. Read James 1:1-8. Do you think it's a realistic goal to be able to consider your trials "pure joy"? Why or why not? How would a perspective like that change your relationship with God? How might it change the way you deal with your circumstances?
5. Do you agree with the idea that spiritual maturity has less to do with what you know than in how you trust God and persevere in the face of adversity? Why or why not?
6. As you think about the adversity you face right now, what is one thing you can do to "let perseverance finish its work"? If you choose to "endure to mature," how might your current circumstances grow your faith? What can this group do to support you?

MOVING FORWARD

Everyone deals with unexpected, unresolvable tensions in life. But God brings purpose to pain . . . if we cooperate. When you're "in the meantime," ask him for wisdom. Ask him for direction. Pray like this:

Heavenly Father, I believe you will use this until you choose to remove this. Give me wisdom to see as you see and strength to do as you say.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

James 1:4

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Heavenly Father,
I **believe** you will **use** this until you choose to **remove** this.
Grant me **wisdom** to see as you see and **strength** to do as you say.

Let perseverance finish its work so that
you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

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