

**OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — INTRODUCTION**

Faith Under Trial

A 6-week Bible study, anchored in 1 Peter 1:6–7 (ESV).

Anchor Passage

“In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 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.” — 1 Peter 1:6–7 (ESV)

Introduction

Trials are not accidents in the life of a believer; they are instruments of grace in the hand of a faithful God. Across six weeks and twenty-four days, this study traces how Scripture frames hardship, obedience, endurance, and hope — from the testing of faith in trials, through worship and trust in adversity, to weakness met by grace, perseverance grounded in God's sovereignty, refuge from fear, and hope that endures to the end. Peter's words to grieving, scattered believers set the course: trials grieve now, but produce what is more precious than gold. This study asks you to read as a disciple, not a spectator — tracing each week's texts back to Christ, in whom every trial finds its meaning.



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 1 OF 6

The Purpose of Trials

Week 1 of “Faith Under Trial,” anchored in James 1:2–4 (ESV).

PASSAGE James 1:2–4 (ESV)

LENGTH Week 1 of 6

AUDIENCE Group or personal study

VERSION OurLight Ministries, 2026

Study aim: The group should understand that trials are not random but purposeful — used by God to test, refine, and mature genuine faith — and should respond by fixing their hope on the eternal glory that outweighs present affliction, rather than on the removal of the trial itself.

Scripture Anchor

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” — James 1:2–4 (ESV)

This Week's Daily Readings

Day 1 — Joy in Trials

Scripture: James 1:2–4; Romans 5:3–5; 1 Peter 1:6–7

Principle: *Trials cultivate perseverance and maturity.*

James encourages believers to consider trials pure joy because they produce steadfastness. Paul and Peter echo that suffering produces endurance, character, and hope, testing the genuineness of faith and yielding maturity for God's glory in believers' lives.

Reflection Questions:

1. How can you practically cultivate joy when facing various trials?
2. When have difficulties strengthened your faith?

Day 2 — Faith Refined

Scripture: 1 Peter 1:6–9; Malachi 3:2–3; Psalm 66:10–12

Principle: *Trials refine faith, revealing its true worth.*



Peter reminds suffering believers that their trials are temporary and purposeful. Like gold refined by fire, difficulties test faith's genuineness, purifying it so that it brings praise, honor, and glory at Christ's revelation for his people.

Reflection Questions:

1. According to Peter, why are trials "necessary" for believers?
 2. How might present struggles refine your faith for God's glory?
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Day 3 — Endurance Through Christ

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1–3; Galatians 6:9; James 5:7–8

Principle: *Fixing our eyes on Jesus gives endurance.*

Hebrews urges believers to run the race with perseverance by laying aside sin and fixing their eyes on Jesus, who endured the cross for the joy set before Him; His example strengthens us to endure hardships, remembering the harvest that awaits.

Reflection Questions:

1. What weights or sins may be hindering your race of faith?
 2. How does focusing on Jesus' endurance encourage you in trials?
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Day 4 — Eternal Perspective

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:8–18; Colossians 3:1–4; Romans 8:18

Principle: *Eternal glory outweighs present afflictions.*

Paul describes being afflicted yet not crushed and invites believers to look beyond temporary troubles to the unseen eternal weight of glory. Setting minds on things above changes how we view suffering, giving hope beyond comparison.

Reflection Questions:

1. What "light momentary afflictions" have you experienced recently?
 2. How can you practice fixing your eyes on the eternal in everyday life?
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Observation

- Across these four days, Scripture consistently describes trials not as accidents but as tests — James calls them "trials of various kinds" and Peter calls them "various trials," both using testing language to describe what trials do to faith.
- A repeated pattern runs through the week: trial leads to testing leads to a produced result. James moves from trials to steadfastness to completeness; Paul moves from suffering to endurance to character to hope; Peter moves from grief to tested



genuineness to praise, glory, and honor. None of these texts treat the trial as the end point — only the beginning of a process.

- The immediate context of James 1:2–4 is a letter written to Jewish believers scattered by persecution (James 1:1); James does not soften the reality of trial but immediately reframes its purpose, and the verses that follow (1:5–8) show that this reframing requires wisdom asked of God in faith.

Interpretation

Question	Notes
Main point	God ordains trials as the means by which He tests, refines, and perfects the genuineness of a believer's faith, producing a completeness that comfort alone cannot produce.
Doctrine	The sanctifying purpose of suffering and the perseverance of the saints.
Context	James writes to Jewish Christians dispersed by persecution (James 1:1), addressing real hardship, not hypothetical difficulty; the command to "count it all joy" is not stoic denial but grounded in what God is doing through the trial, confirmed by Peter's parallel language of gold tested by fire in 1 Peter 1:6–7.
Christ connection	Hebrews 12:2 (Day 3) roots this pattern in Christ Himself, who endured the cross "for the joy set before him" — the pattern of suffering preceding glory that James, Paul, and Peter describe in the believer is first and definitively true of Christ, whose tested faithfulness secures the very hope believers are being refined to hold.

Application

- Believers must actually hold as true in the moment of trial — not merely assent to in the abstract — that God is producing something specific and valuable through what they are presently enduring, rather than treating the trial as an interruption to the real Christian life.
- These texts confront the false expectation that mature faith should feel unshaken, or that difficulty signals God's absence or displeasure — Scripture instead treats trial as the ordinary means by which genuine faith is distinguished from false.
- Identify one trial currently at work and name, specifically, what steadfastness or character it may be producing — not to manufacture comfort, but to test whether hope is anchored in present relief or in the revelation of Christ (1 Peter 1:7).



Discussion Questions

1. According to James 1:2–4, what does testing actually produce, and why does James command believers to count trials as joy rather than merely endure them?
2. How does Peter's image of gold tested by fire (1 Peter 1:7) clarify what "genuineness" of faith means, and why does that genuineness matter at "the revelation of Jesus Christ"?
3. Where in your life right now does a trial call for the kind of settled trust these passages describe, and what would change if you treated it as purposeful rather than merely painful?



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 2 OF 6

Worship and Trust Regardless of Outcome

Week 2 of “Faith Under Trial,” anchored in Daniel 3:17–18 (ESV).

PASSAGE Daniel 3:17–18 (ESV)

LENGTH Week 2 of 6

AUDIENCE Group or personal study

VERSION OurLight Ministries, 2026

Study aim: The group should see that faith under trial is expressed concretely — in worship that blesses God even in loss, and in trust that obeys regardless of whether God delivers — and should respond by examining whether their own trust in God is conditioned on a particular outcome.

Scripture Anchor

“If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.” — Daniel 3:17–18 (ESV)

This Week's Daily Readings

Day 5 — Hope in Suffering

Scripture: Romans 5:1–5; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18; Philippians 4:4–7

Principle: *Suffering produces endurance, character, and hope.*

Paul calls believers to rejoice in sufferings because God uses hardship to build endurance, which yields character and produces hope. Through prayer and thanksgiving, the Holy Spirit pours God's love into our hearts, assuring us amid trials.

Reflection Questions:

1. Why does Paul say Christians can rejoice in suffering?
2. How has suffering in your life led to hope rather than despair?

Day 6 — Worship in Adversity

Scripture: Job 1:20–22; Habakkuk 3:17–19; Psalm 34:1–4

Principle: *Worship honors God even in loss.*



After devastating loss, Job worshiped and blessed God's name, acknowledging His sovereignty in giving and taking away. Habakkuk and the psalmist also rejoice in God despite barren circumstances. Faith under trial expresses itself in reverent worship.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does Job's response to tragedy reveal about his faith?
 2. How can you cultivate worshipful trust when facing adversity?
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Day 7 — Trusting God's Deliverance

Scripture: Daniel 3:16–28; Isaiah 43:1–3; Psalm 46:1–3

Principle: *Faith trusts God regardless of outcome.*

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow to Nebuchadnezzar's image, entrusting themselves to God. They believed He could rescue them but pledged fidelity even if He did not. Such faith rests in God's presence and strength amid danger.

Reflection Questions:

1. How do these men demonstrate trust in God's sovereignty?
 2. What "ifs" in your life tempt you to waver in your commitment to God?
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Day 8 — Faith in the Den of Lions

Scripture: Daniel 6:10–23; Psalm 55:16–18; Psalm 57:1–3

Principle: *Faithfulness persists despite opposition.*

Daniel continued his daily prayers despite a royal decree forbidding petition to anyone but the king. God delivered him from the lions, vindicating his steadfast faith. Faithful obedience to God matters more than personal safety or approval.

Reflection Questions:

1. What risks did Daniel take by praying publicly?
 2. In what situations might fear hinder your faithfulness to God?
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Observation

- The week's four days present two responses under trial that hold together: Paul, Job, Habakkuk, and the psalmist model rejoicing and worship in the midst of ongoing hardship, while Daniel's three friends and Daniel himself model active obedience that risks worse hardship rather than compromise.
- A recurring contrast appears between circumstance and confession: Job has lost everything yet blesses the Lord's name; Habakkuk names barren fig trees, empty stalls,



and no flock, yet will "rejoice in the Lord"; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego face a furnace and confess God is able to deliver — but will not serve the king's gods even if He does not.

- The immediate context of Daniel 3:17–18 is a direct royal ultimatum (3:15) — worship the image or be thrown into the furnace immediately — meaning the three men's answer is not theoretical confidence but a response given under the threat's full weight, moments before the furnace is heated seven times hotter.

Interpretation

Question	Notes
Main point	Genuine faith worships and obeys God on the basis of who He is, not on the basis of whether He grants the outcome the sufferer wants.
Doctrine	The sovereignty and worthiness of God as the ground of worship and obedience, independent of deliverance.
Context	Daniel 3 is set under Nebuchadnezzar's absolute imperial power, with the golden image functioning as a loyalty test for every official in the empire (3:1–7); the three men's answer in verses 17–18 holds two clauses together — God is able to deliver, and God may not — without contradiction, which is the passage's central theological move.
Christ connection	The pattern of a divine presence in the furnace (Daniel 3:24–25) anticipates a God who is present with His people in the fire rather than only removing them from it — a pattern fulfilled in Christ, who does not merely deliver His people from suffering but enters it with them, consistent with Isaiah 43:2's "when you walk through fire... I will be with you," cited in Day 7.

Application

- Believers must confess, in specific and nameable terms, that God's worthiness of worship and obedience does not depend on Him granting the relief being sought.
- These texts confront the false confidence that measures God's goodness by outcomes — treating unanswered prayer for deliverance as evidence of God's absence or unfaithfulness rather than as a variable that faith was never meant to depend on.
- Identify one circumstance where "but if not" has not yet been said honestly to God, and name what obedience or worship would look like even if the outcome does not change.



Discussion Questions

1. In Daniel 3:17–18, what two things do Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego both affirm, and why does the text need both held together rather than just one?
2. How do Job's and Habakkuk's responses (Day 6) sharpen what it means to trust God regardless of outcome — what do they add that Daniel 3 alone does not show?
3. What would it look like this week to worship or obey God in a specific circumstance without first knowing how it resolves?



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 3 OF 6

Lament and Grace Sufficient in Weakness

Week 3 of “Faith Under Trial,” anchored in 2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV).

PASSAGE 2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV)

LENGTH Week 3 of 6

AUDIENCE Group or personal study

VERSION OurLight Ministries, 2026

Study aim: The group should understand that biblical faith does not suppress honest lament but brings it to God, and that God's strength is specifically revealed through weakness rather than despite it, and should respond by bringing their own unspoken complaint honestly before God rather than performing strength they do not have.

Scripture Anchor

“But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” — 2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV)

This Week's Daily Readings

Day 9 — Cry of Faith

Scripture: Psalm 13:1–6; Psalm 22:1–5; Lamentations 3:19–24

Principle: *Faith laments but ends in praise.*

David cries, “How long, O Lord?” yet anchors his trust in God's steadfast love. His lament turns to praise as he remembers God's goodness. In Lamentations, Jeremiah recalls God's mercies, grounding hope in God's faithful character amid sorrow.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does the psalmist balance honest lament and trust?
2. What habits help you move from lament to confidence in God's goodness?

Day 10 — God Our Deliverer

Scripture: Psalm 40:1–5; Psalm 34:17–19; 2 Samuel 22:1–7

Principle: *God hears and rescues those who wait on Him.*



David waited patiently for the Lord; God heard his cry, lifted him from the pit, and set his feet on a rock. God rescues the righteous from troubles, inspiring new songs of praise that encourage others to trust Him.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does waiting on the Lord entail in your own life?
 2. How can sharing your experiences of God's deliverance encourage others?
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Day 11 — Strength in Weakness

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:7–10; Isaiah 40:28–31; Psalm 73:25–26

Principle: *God's power is perfected in our weakness.*

Paul learned that God's grace is sufficient and His power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, he boasts in weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities, for when he is weak, then he is strong in Christ.

Reflection Questions:

1. Why does Paul boast in his weaknesses?
 2. How can acknowledging your weakness lead to experiencing God's strength?
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Day 12 — Trials for Growth

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:12–16; Romans 8:16–18; Philippians 1:27–30

Principle: *Trials join us to Christ's sufferings.*

Peter reminds believers not to be surprised by fiery trials but to rejoice insofar as they share Christ's sufferings. Such participation brings blessing and prepares believers for future glory; suffering for Christ should strengthen resolve and unity within the body.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does sharing Christ's suffering prepare us for His glory?
 2. What recent "fiery trial" in your life invites you to rejoice?
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Observation

- The week moves through a clear arc: honest cry (Day 9), remembered deliverance (Day 10), present weakness met by grace (Day 11), and suffering understood as participation with Christ (Day 12) — lament is not the opposite of faith in these texts, it is one of its forms.
- A repeated pattern is God's response to the low place: the psalmist cries "How long, O Lord" and ends in praise; David is drawn "up from the pit"; the Lord is "near to the



brokenhearted"; Paul asks three times for a thorn's removal and instead receives sufficient grace — in each case God answers the cry not always by removing the trouble but by meeting the sufferer in it.

- The immediate context of 2 Corinthians 12:9 is Paul's own unanswered prayer — he pleaded three times (12:8) for the thorn's removal before receiving Christ's answer in verse 9, meaning the verse is a direct divine reply to a specific, repeated, denied request, not abstract teaching about weakness.

Interpretation

Question	Notes
Main point	God does not remove every weakness or unanswered prayer; He meets it with sufficient grace so that His power, not the sufferer's strength, becomes visible.
Doctrine	The sufficiency of grace and the perfecting of God's power in human weakness.
Context	2 Corinthians 12 follows Paul's reluctant recounting of his visions and revelations (12:1–6); the thorn (12:7) is explicitly given to keep him from becoming conceited — the weakness itself, not merely Paul's response to it, serves a purpose connected to humility before the surpassing revelations he had received.
Christ connection	Philippians 1:29 (Day 12) states that suffering for Christ's sake is itself "granted" to believers as a gift tied to belief in Him, and 1 Peter 4:13 (Day 12) frames such suffering as sharing Christ's own sufferings — Paul's thorn and the believer's trials are the specific means by which believers are conformed to and share in His pattern of weakness followed by power.

Application

- Believers must trust that when God does not remove a specific weakness or unanswered request, His grace for that specific circumstance is sufficient, not that He has failed to answer.
- These texts confront the false pattern of treating unresolved weakness as a faith failure — either the sufferer's, for not having enough faith, or God's, for not caring — when Scripture presents unresolved weakness as the very place divine power is revealed.
- Name one "thorn" — a weakness, limitation, or unanswered prayer — currently being hidden or minimized, and bring it honestly to God this week rather than managing it privately.



Discussion Questions

1. In 2 Corinthians 12:7–9, why was the thorn given to Paul, and what does the Lord's answer in verse 9 tell us about how God typically relates to unanswered prayer for relief?
2. How do the psalms of lament in Day 9 change how we should think about bringing complaints to God — is honest lament in tension with faith, or an expression of it?
3. What is one place of weakness in your life where you have been asking God to remove the difficulty rather than asking Him to be sufficient in it?



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 4 OF 6

Perseverance Grounded in God's Sovereignty

Week 4 of “Faith Under Trial,” anchored in Romans 8:28 (ESV).

PASSAGE Romans 8:28 (ESV)

LENGTH Week 4 of 6

AUDIENCE Group or personal study

VERSION OurLight Ministries, 2026

Study aim: The group should understand that Christian perseverance is not sheer willpower but confidence grounded in God's sovereign purpose and promised reward, and should respond by examining whether their endurance is currently anchored in that confidence or in their own resolve.

Scripture Anchor

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” — Romans 8:28 (ESV)

This Week's Daily Readings

Day 13 — Confidence in Hope

Scripture: Hebrews 10:32–39; Romans 15:13; 1 Thessalonians 1:2–3

Principle: *Persevering faith receives its reward.*

The author of Hebrews encourages believers not to throw away their confidence but to recall former zeal and endure. God is the God of hope, filling His people with joy and peace as they believe, so they may abound in hope.

Reflection Questions:

1. What motivates you to persevere when tempted to give up?
2. According to this passage, what is the outcome for those who shrink back?

Day 14 — Finishing the Race

Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:6–8; Acts 20:22–24; Hebrews 6:11–12

Principle: *Faithfulness unto death receives the crown of righteousness.*



Near the end of his life, Paul declares he has fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith. He looks forward to the crown of righteousness promised to all who love Christ's appearing and finish their course.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does Paul describe his life and ministry in terms of a race?
 2. What "crown" is promised, and who will receive it?
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Day 15 — Sovereignty in Suffering

Scripture: Romans 8:28–30; Genesis 50:20; Psalm 103:19

Principle: *God works all things for good according to His purpose.*

Paul assures believers that all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose. Joseph testified that God used evil for good, and the psalmist declares God rules over all.

Reflection Questions:

1. What conditions does Paul set for God's promise to work everything for good?
 2. How do these verses provide comfort amid difficult circumstances?
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Day 16 — The Assurance of Faith

Scripture: Hebrews 11:1–6; John 20:29–31; Psalm 125:1–2

Principle: *Faith trusts God's promises and pleases Him.*

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen. The ancients gained approval by faith. Those who believe without seeing are blessed, and those who trust in God are secure like Mount Zion.

Reflection Questions:

1. How do verses 1–2 define faith and its results?
 2. In what ways does your current walk demonstrate an unwavering trust in God's promises?
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Observation

- The week's four days build toward a single confidence: Hebrews 10 calls believers not to throw away confidence because reward is coming; 2 Timothy 4 and Acts 20 show Paul finishing his course with that confidence intact near death; Romans 8:28 grounds it in God's sovereign purpose; Hebrews 11 defines the faith that holds it as "the assurance of things hoped for."



- A repeated structure connects present endurance to a future certainty: Hebrews 10:36 ties endurance to "receiving what is promised"; 2 Timothy 4:8 names "the crown of righteousness... on that day"; Hebrews 6:11–12 urges the "full assurance of hope until the end" — each text refuses to let present endurance stand alone; it is tied forward to something certain, not merely hoped for in a vague sense.
- The immediate context of Romans 8:28 sits inside Paul's larger argument about the Spirit's intercession amid present groaning (8:18–27) and moves directly into the unbreakable chain of foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification (8:29–30) — the promise of "all things for good" is anchored in God's specific, sovereign purpose for those He has called, not generic optimism.

Interpretation

Question	Notes
Main point	Endurance under trial is sustained not by human resolve but by confident hope in God's sovereign purpose, which guarantees both present good and future reward.
Doctrine	The perseverance of the saints, grounded in God's sovereignty over all things.
Context	Romans 8:28 stands between Paul's description of creation's groaning and the Spirit's intercession (8:18–27) and the unbreakable chain of God's saving purpose (8:29–30) — "good" in verse 28 is defined by that chain, conformity to Christ in verse 29, not by the immediate relief of the trial itself.
Christ connection	2 Timothy 4:8's "crown of righteousness" is given specifically by "the Lord, the righteous judge," and Romans 8:29's stated goal of "all things for good" is conformity "to the image of his Son" — the endurance this week describes results in believers looking more like Christ and receiving from Christ Himself, not endurance in the abstract.

Application

- Believers must trust that God's sovereign purpose, not their own strength or the trial's resolution, is what secures both present good and the promised reward.
- These texts confront the false pattern of throwing away confidence when a trial outlasts expectation — treating a long trial as evidence the promise has failed rather than as the ordinary shape of the race described in Hebrews and Paul's own life.



- Identify where confidence has quietly shifted from God's promise to a timeline or outcome you are demanding, and name what re-anchoring that confidence in the promise itself would require this week.

Discussion Questions

1. According to Romans 8:28–30, what specifically is the "good" God is working, and how does that definition change how we read "all things work together for good"?
2. How does Hebrews 11:1's definition of faith — "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" — relate to the confidence Hebrews 10:35 says not to throw away?
3. Where has a long trial tempted you to throw away confidence rather than endure toward the promise, and what would renewed confidence look like this week?



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 5 OF 6

Refuge from Fear

Week 5 of “Faith Under Trial,” anchored in Psalm 46:1–3 (ESV).

PASSAGE Psalm 46:1–3 (ESV)

LENGTH Week 5 of 6

AUDIENCE Group or personal study

VERSION OurLight Ministries, 2026

Study aim: The group should understand that God's presence — not the absence of danger — is the ground Scripture gives for courage and refuge, and should respond by identifying whether their fear is currently being brought to God in persistent prayer or managed alone.

Scripture Anchor

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.” — Psalm 46:1–3 (ESV)

This Week's Daily Readings

Day 17 — Prayer in Crisis

Scripture: Psalm 55:16–18; Psalm 56:8–9; Luke 18:1

Principle: *Persistent prayer sustains us in distress.*

The psalmist calls on God evening, morning, and at noon, confident that God hears and redeems. He pours out his complaint, trusting God records his tears. Jesus teaches His disciples to always pray and not lose heart, even in crisis.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does constant prayer change your perspective in crises?
2. What practices help you persevere in prayer when overwhelmed?

Day 18 — Hope in Affliction

Scripture: Lamentations 3:19–24; Psalm 119:71; Romans 15:4

Principle: *God's steadfast love renews hope amid suffering.*



Jeremiah recalls his affliction and bitterness yet brings to mind God's steadfast love and mercy, which are new every morning. Suffering can teach us God's statutes, and Scripture provides endurance and encouragement that sustain hope.

Reflection Questions:

1. What truths about God revive your hope in affliction?
 2. How has suffering deepened your understanding of God's word?
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Day 19 — Fear Not

Scripture: Isaiah 43:1–3; Joshua 1:9; Matthew 14:27

Principle: *God's presence dispels fear.*

The Lord reassures His people, reminding them that He created, redeemed, and called them by name; therefore they need not fear waters or fire. He promises to be with Joshua and Peter, commanding them to take courage and not be afraid.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does God's presence calm fears in challenging situations?
 2. What specific fears can you entrust to God's care today?
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Day 20 — God Our Refuge

Scripture: Psalm 46:1–3; Nahum 1:7; Proverbs 18:10

Principle: *God is a safe refuge in every storm.*

The psalmist declares God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way. The Lord knows those who take refuge in Him, and His name is a strong tower.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean to take refuge in God?
 2. How can you remind yourself of God's strength when circumstances shake?
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Observation

- The week moves from crying out (Day 17), to remembering God's steadfast love as the ground of hope (Day 18), to being directly commanded not to fear because of God's presence (Day 19), to naming God explicitly as refuge and strength (Day 20) — each day supplies a different facet of the same confidence.
- A repeated word across the week is presence: God "hears" the psalmist's complaint (Days 17); His mercies are "new every morning" (Day 18); He says "I am with you"



across three separate texts (Day 19); and He is "a very present help in trouble" (Day 20) — the antidote to fear in these texts is consistently God's nearness, not the removal of danger.

- The immediate context of Psalm 46:1–3 is a psalm that goes on to describe nations raging and kingdoms tottering (46:6) and concludes "Be still, and know that I am God" (46:10) — the refuge described in verses 1–3 is not refuge from disorder in the world but refuge in the midst of it, addressed to a besieged Jerusalem.

Interpretation

Question	Notes
Main point	God's presence with His people, not the absence of threat, is the ground Scripture gives for courage, hope, and refuge in crisis.
Doctrine	The doctrine of God's presence as the believer's refuge and the ground of courage.
Context	Psalm 46 is traditionally associated with the Korahite temple worship tradition and reflects a period of geopolitical upheaval against Jerusalem; its imagery of the earth giving way and waters roaring (46:2–3) evokes cosmic-scale threat, deliberately set against the steadier image later in the psalm of a river that gladdens the city of God (46:4).
Christ connection	Matthew 14:27 (Day 19) records Jesus walking on the water and saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid," echoing Isaiah 43:1–3's divine self-identification placed in Christ's own mouth to His terrified disciples — the refuge and presence promised through this week's Old Testament texts is embodied and made present to the disciples in Jesus Himself.

Application

- Believers must believe that God's presence is sufficient ground for courage even when the threat itself remains unresolved, rather than waiting for courage until the danger passes.
- These texts confront the false pattern of managing persistent, unresolved fear through control or avoidance rather than bringing it to God directly and repeatedly in prayer, as Luke 18:1 commands.
- Name a specific fear currently being managed rather than prayed, and bring it to God today using the specific language of one of this week's passages, such as "you are with me" or "you are my refuge."



Discussion Questions

1. In Psalm 46:1–3, what does the psalmist say God is, not merely what God does, and why does that distinction matter for facing crisis?
2. How does Isaiah 43:1–3's "I am with you" language, placed by Matthew in Jesus' own mouth (Matthew 14:27), change how we should read God's presence as a Christian promise, not just an Old Testament one?
3. What is one specific fear you have been holding onto rather than bringing persistently to God, and what would praying it — rather than managing it — look like this week?



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 6 OF 6

Enduring to the End

Week 6 of “Faith Under Trial,” anchored in Revelation 2:10b (ESV).

PASSAGE Revelation 2:10b (ESV)

LENGTH Week 6 of 6

AUDIENCE Group or personal study

VERSION OurLight Ministries, 2026

Study aim: The group should understand that the hope, comfort, and patience traced across this study are Spirit-given realities meant to sustain believers to a definite end — Christ's return and the reward of the faithful — and should respond by asking what enduring faithfully, rather than merely surviving, looks like in their present trial.

Scripture Anchor

“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.” — Revelation 2:10b (ESV)

This Week's Daily Readings

Day 21 — Abounding in Hope

Scripture: Romans 15:13; Romans 5:5; Ephesians 1:17–19

Principle: *The Holy Spirit fills believers with joy, peace, and hope.*

Paul prays that the God of hope would fill believers with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit they may abound in hope. God's Spirit pours His love into our hearts and enlightens our understanding.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does the Holy Spirit enable you to abound in hope?
2. In what ways can joy and peace coexist with trials?

Day 22 — Deliverance and Comfort

Scripture: Psalm 34:17–19; Psalm 145:18–19; John 16:33

Principle: *God hears the brokenhearted and overcomes the world.*

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. He fulfills the desires of those who fear Him and hears their cry. Jesus assures believers that they will have tribulation but can take heart because He has overcome the world.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How has God comforted you in seasons of heartbreak?
 2. What confidence do you gain from Christ's victory over the world?
-

Day 23 — Patience and Perseverance

Scripture: James 5:7–11; Hebrews 6:10–15; Romans 8:24–25

Principle: *Waiting on the Lord cultivates patience and endurance.*

James urges believers to be patient until the Lord's coming, using the farmer as an example of waiting for precious fruit. God remembers the love shown to His saints, and those who inherit the promises through faith and patience receive God's reward.

Reflection Questions:

1. What lessons about patience can you learn from farmers and prophets?
 2. How does hope for future promises sustain you in waiting?
-

Day 24 — Enduring to the End

Scripture: Matthew 24:13; Revelation 2:10; Mark 13:13

Principle: *Those who endure in faith will be saved.*

Jesus warns of tribulation but assures that those who endure to the end will be saved. Faithfulness unto death brings the crown of life. Disciples must be on guard, trusting God's grace to persevere through trials until Christ returns.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does Jesus' warning about endurance challenge your faithfulness?
 2. What practices help you remain steadfast until the end?
-

Observation

- The week closes the study's arc: hope is identified as a work of the Holy Spirit, not self-generated optimism (Day 21); comfort is grounded in God's nearness to the brokenhearted and Christ's stated victory over the world (Day 22); patience is modeled on the farmer awaiting a harvest (Day 23); and endurance is explicitly tied to a definite end point (Day 24).
- A repeated word across the week is "end" or "until": Paul prays believers "abound in hope" by the Spirit's power; James commands patience "until the coming of the Lord"; Jesus states plainly that "the one who endures to the end will be saved" and commands,



"be faithful unto death" — the study's final week does not describe open-ended endurance but endurance aimed at a specific, promised conclusion.

- The immediate context of Revelation 2:10 is Christ's letter to the church at Smyrna, a persecuted, materially poor congregation (2:9) facing imminent imprisonment and tribulation "for ten days" — the promise of the crown of life is spoken directly into ongoing, worsening suffering, not offered as a hypothetical reward for those who never face real cost.

Interpretation

Question	Notes
Main point	The hope and patience this study has traced from Week 1 onward are Spirit-given realities aimed at a definite end — Christ's return and the reward of those who remain faithful to the end.
Doctrine	Eschatological hope and the final perseverance of the saints.
Context	Revelation 2:10 addresses the church at Smyrna, one of only two of the seven churches in Revelation 2–3 to receive no rebuke from Christ; the promised crown of life answers directly to the specific tribulation named in the same verse, framing the reward as commensurate with, not separate from, the suffering it answers.
Christ connection	The crown of life in Revelation 2:10 is given by Christ Himself, who identifies Himself to Smyrna as "the first and the last, who died and came to life" (2:8) — the risen Christ, who has already passed through death into life, is the one who promises and guarantees the same pattern to those who remain faithful to Him under trial, tying the study's arc of trial-then-glory back to His own resurrection.

Application

- Believers must trust that the hope and patience needed to endure trial are not natural strengths to summon but gifts the Holy Spirit supplies, and should ask for them rather than manufacture them.
- These texts confront the false pattern of treating endurance as indefinite or open-ended, as though faithfulness has no destination, when Scripture consistently ties endurance to a specific end: Christ's return and His promised reward.
- Name one trial from this study that remains unresolved, and commit to one specific act of faithfulness in it this week, holding it as "unto death" rather than only until relief comes.



Discussion Questions

1. In Revelation 2:10, what does Christ promise, to whom, and under what specific circumstance — how does the promise's context change how it should be read?
2. How does Romans 15:13's description of hope as something the Holy Spirit produces correct a view of hope as simply choosing to think positively?
3. Looking back across this study, where do you most need to ask the Spirit for hope and patience rather than trying to endure in your own strength?



CLOSING ENCOURAGEMENT

As You Go From Here

“Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.”

— James 1:12 (ESV)

James begins where this study began — trials, testing, and the crown promised to those who endure. Six weeks do not exhaust what Scripture says about suffering; they only orient you rightly toward it. Return to the ordinary means of grace: Scripture, prayer, and the gathered church. When the next trial comes — and it will — you will not face it untaught. Stand firm. Keep asking the Spirit for hope and patience. The crown belongs to those who remain.



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