



Don't Stop in The Struggle | Ronnie Johnson | 11.1.20
Weekly Study

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What are your three favorite books of all time?

SHARE

Welcome back to Group! This week, Ronnie preached a stand-alone sermon called, "Don't Stop in The Struggle." With everything currently going on in the world, we should take a week to talk about persevering through difficulty. But before we jump in, take some time to check in with your Group by answering the following questions.

Rate your week on a scale of one to ten. Why did you choose that number?

If you had to describe your week using one-word, which word would you choose?

What was the best part of your week? What was the most challenging part of your week?

What is one thing you are currently looking forward to?

GROW

Read Genesis 39:1-23

What word would you use to describe Joseph's story? Why did you choose that word?

Joseph's story is an exciting, haunting, and thought-provoking story. It is full of lots of twists and turns. Most of the events in Joseph's life go poorly for him, yet in the end, God still uses him to do tremendous good.

At one point, Joseph is falsely accused and ends up in an Egyptian prison. Eventually, he gets out, but there is a small detail that is often overlooked. Genesis 41:1 says, "When two full years had passed..."

Think about that for a second. After his brothers mistreated Joseph, wrongly accused, and then thrown into prison, he has to stay there for TWO YEARS!

Two years is a long time to hang out in an Egyptian prison.

God's timeline often looks a lot different than ours. And unfortunately, it is almost always slower than we would like it to be. Have you ever experienced that? Have you ever been in the middle of a trial or a time of waiting and felt frustrated by how long it was lasting?

Often, it is difficult to understand what God is up to in the middle of a difficult season. However, when you read the rest of Joseph's story, suddenly, all the trials and waiting start to make sense.

The same is true for us, especially during a pandemic. When we are in the middle of the pit, many of us start jumping to the wrong conclusions. We start thinking God's abandoned us, is mad at us or wants nothing to do with us. It's easy to get frustrated in the middle of trials, but remember, God is always working in our lives, even when it doesn't feel like it.

Have you ever been in a long season of waiting? If so, tell the Group about it?

What lesson do you feel like God was trying to teach you during the wait?

Are you currently in one of those times of waiting now? If so, how do you feel like God is trying to equip you for this time?

M O V E

Read Genesis 50:15-21

At the end of this story, we find out God has had his hand in this story the entire time. In the passage you read, Joseph saves his brothers by providing them with food in the famine. When everyone realizes this, you would think Joseph would want to gloat over his brothers. Instead, he utters these famous words, *"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives"* (Genesis 50:20).

God is ready to take all the bad and use it for good! This means all the obstacles we are facing in life are actually opportunities for God to move. Our world is going through a crazy season. These days, a lot of people are struggling. But in the middle of the struggle, there is an invitation to turn our attention back to God.

As Ronnie reminded us this week, "Faith doesn't remove our problems - faith helps us get through them."

What is one practical step you can take this week to practice patience in the middle of your struggles?

Who is one person that has been instrumental in helping you persevere in this season? How can you reach out to them this week and let them know how thankful you are that they are in your life?

Take-Home Assignment: Wait Well

Identify one thing (job, a pay raise, spouse, etc.) you are currently waiting for and share it with your Group. Commit to spending two minutes every morning this week, thanking God for that dream He's placed on your heart even though it has not come to pass yet.

P R A Y

We need prayer now more than ever. Spend some time-sharing prayer requests. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking off into two separate groups (or calls if you are an online group) to share more freely.

T O G O

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Colossians 3:12