The Measure of Maturity 3
Faith that Puts You to Work
Hope that Makes You Endure!

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3;
1 Peter 4:12-19
1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father.
THE MEASURE OF OUR MATURITY

2 Cor. 13:5, Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

John 3:30, He must increase, but I must decrease.
What shows the world the reality of Christ in you, our hope of glory? The proof that you are truly a Christian is that you **persevere** - no matter what!
So how do you keep on going when your plans blow up in your face?
When your dreams don't come true?
When you get sick, when the unforeseen steals opportunities from your grasp?
What does it take to hang in there when the glamour is gone?
Hebrews 11:1 …faith is the assurance of things hoped for …

There are two bedrock realities upon which Christians build their hope.

1. The resurrection of Jesus Christ.
1 Peter 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

(Because He Lives)

Because He lives - I can face tomorrow;
Because He lives - all fear is gone;
Because I know – He holds the future.
And life is worth the living just because He lives.
II. The reliability of God's Word.

Rom. 15:4  For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.
Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;

but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters.

Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Now “If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.
1. Suffering is not a surprise, it's a plan, v. 12, 17.

v. 12 It isn't strange.

v. 17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?
2. Suffering as a Christian shows your union with Christ.

v. 13a "But to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing."

3. Hope-filled joy will strengthen your assurance of heaven.

v. 13b - that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

"If we suffer with him we will be glorified with him."

Hope-building truths that help you endure.
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4. **In your trying times, the Spirit of glory and of God rest upon you.**

   v. 14 *If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.*

5. **Holding on to hope when it's hard glorifies God.**

   v. 16 *Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.*
Hope-building truths that help you endure.

6. Finally, you can count on your Creator to care for your soul.

v. 19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.
What is your quitting measure?

What would it take to side-line you in the cause of Christ?

The measure of your Hope is the measure of your Spiritual Maturity!