**How To Get Through What You’re Going Through**

**Isaiah 43:2**

**1/16/22**

Today, we are one church, meeting literally in many different locations. I want to welcome you wherever you may happen to be joining us from.

It’s been a rough couple of months for us here at PGC, what with sickness, other health issues, and other issues that we have all been going through...I wrote a post on Wednesday about the faithfulness of God in these rough moments. We talked last week about how God has plans for us of a future and or hope! We know the enemies plan for us is to kill, steal, & destroy us! Meaning our struggles can be used in two ways...TO BUILD OUR FAITH OR DESTROY IT!

But even knowing these things, we still are tempted sometimes we wonder if God is listening if God cares or if God is going to do anything about our current situation.

To that let me just give you some hope... Yes, He’s heard you, yes, He cares, and yes, He is moving in your struggle. During the toughest, most tragic moments of our lives, God is with us, God loves us, and God wants to use our most trying struggles to develop a living faith within us that can withstand any circumstance.

For those of you who are into this sort of thing, you know how difficult hiking up and down a mountain can be and is. It’s supposed to be hard! Challenges and difficulties are part of the journey!

But the truth is, most of us don’t really like hard things, do we? If these past couple of months have showed me anything, it’s how uncomfortable & difficult life can get. Truth of us most of us don’t do well with difficulty. Specifically, we don’t like struggle, pain, or tough times. We are more comfortable with a path that is level and smooth and where there aren’t any steep up hills.

Most of us do all we can to avoid pain and struggle. And you know what? That’s a smart thing! But there’s just one problem… Pain and struggle are inevitable. Tough times knock on every door. Every person experience some of it. Struggle is a part of life. In fact, the one thing we probably all have in common right now is struggle…and tough times!

And for that reason, we want to look at “How to Get Through What You Are Growing Through.” For some of us “tough times” are…

* …brand new experience.
* …for others it’s all too familiar.
* …and for some of us our tough times have to do with COVID-19!

But the brutal reality is we will all struggle through tough times.

* It might be something you got yourself into – a poor decision that has taken you down a path you never intended.
* It could be a situation brought on by someone else – perhaps your pain is a result of someone else’s bad decisions.
* Or, like right now, it could just be that life hit you with a circumstance that are beyond anyone’s control. No one is to blame for it, but nonetheless, it’s here.

Again, so we understand...struggles are a reality of life! Every one of us goes through stuff. What I want to suggest in this message today is that it’s…

* …*how* we get through what we’re going through that really matters.
* …*how* we respond to difficult circumstances can set a trajectory for the rest of our lives and our journey with God.

Scripture:

Isaiah 43:2

*When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you.*

No matter how long this season lasts, inevitably, the enemy tries and bring us to these points.

* Fears emerge.
* Doubts grow.
* We feel like God has stopped hearing our prayers.
* Obedience doesn’t seem to be getting us anywhere.

What about you? How are you grappling with everything that’s happening in our world?

I want you to take just a second and think on the thing or things in your life that are hard right now.

* What is causing you pain?
* Maybe you’d even call it suffering.

Take a moment and think, not dwell, what you’re going through.

I want to encourage us today about some people in the Bible who has struggles, difficult times, and even situations they weren’t sure they see through...

People in the Bible who went THROUGH struggles:

* Genesis 37 - Joseph went from normal to slavery in a blink of an eye
  + God carried him THROUGH until he was 2nd in command in Egypt
* Genesis-Exodus - Israel went from thriving to slavery
  + God was with them THROUGH the difficulties in making them a promise of freedom
* Exodus - Israel was free, but went THROUGH the wilderness
  + God was with them every step of the way
  + Red Sea, food, water, shade, heat, health
* 1 Samuel - David went from shepherd boy to King
  + God was with him in the field tending sheep
  + God was with him in the battlefields from Goliath to all his enemies
  + God even carried him THROUGH his repentant heart after sinning.
* Job - Job was stripped of all material & physical comforts
  + Though his wife left him, and his friends tried to accuse him, he stood confident in the Lord and even said “Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad? In everything he went THROUGH the Bible say “...in all this, Job said nothing wrong”
  + God stood with Job during this difficulty and walked with him THROUGH this unbelievable situation and restored Job.
* New Testament - Saul had everything going for him, so he thought. When he found Christ, his whole life went from comfortable to trying in an instant. But...
  + God stood and carried Paul THROUGH beatings, prisons, shipwrecks, and even snake bites! And look how we see Paul today as possibly one of the greatest men of God who ever lived!

It’s crucial for us to remember that the God of the Bible is the same loving Father who sees, hears, and is concerned for us in our pain and struggles today! These aren’t just some ancient stories, but real examples of how a loving God responds to us with concern as he brings us THROUGH our struggles!

Notice God didn’t you would go through deep water or fires, but that when you do, He will be with you, so you won’t drown, or be consumed by the flame! But in those difficult times all the enemy wants us to feel is

* …ourselves feeling like prayer isn’t changing things.
* …we wonder if God’s listening or if he cares.
* …to even begin to doubt God’s existence or at least his goodness!

Is anyone feeling some of that today?

All along the journeys that each person or persons we looked at today got to watch God do some pretty amazing things. Things that should have built their faith!!!

**Conclusion**

We so want God to take away the pain – pull us out of the waters and the fires, just make it go away. And sometimes he does. He really does. But **every** time, **all** the time, he says, “I am concerned about your struggle. I will walk with you **through** the deserts, through the waters, and through the fires! Cry out to me, and I will promise to be there.”

Will you cry out to your loving Father?

On the night before his death, Jesus cried out to his Father, God. He asked if it was possible to be delivered from his suffering. And yet, that day he chose to endure the most excruciating desert experience anyone could ever imagine.

Jesus’s suffering on the cross may not give us the reason for our pain and suffering, it might not explain the fear and worry so many of us are feeling right now, but I believe it tells us what the reason is not. The reason is not that God doesn’t love us. The cross upon which Jesus died, as awful as it was, demonstrates God’s love for the world. The cross says that God will be there. He is not indifferent. The cross means Jesus went through ultimate suffering for us.

This year has already been a bit difficult for some, or maybe for everyone. There’s one thing we can bank on in this thing we call life, and that is struggles, difficulties, deserts, & stormy days, but as we have been talking about in the past couple weeks, we are learning to become less of ourselves so the He might become more in us. This applies to our difficulties as well. Rather than complaining or blaming God for our rough times, we should be submitting to Him as He has the way THROUGH your situation.

Sometime struggles come because we cause it, sometime struggles come because of sin, but sometimes, struggles just come because we live in a broken world and the enemy tries to use these situations to pull you away from God. But rather than pulling away from God, we should be drawing near to Him and allow this difficulty to build us in Him and our faith. Why? Well because as we already know, they’ll be another flood come around, they’ll be another fire, they’ll be another rough time, they’ll be another mountain, but if we surrender to God in it, we know that He is going to be right by our side strengthening, building, and teaching us.

So church, remind your hearts today that **r**egardless of what happens tomorrow, next week, or next month, God will be with you. He’s concerned for you. He will help all of us get through what we’re going through.