

WE **ARE NOT** OF THOSE WHO SHRINK BACK ...

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without
wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

(Hebrews 10:23 LSB)



WE **ARE** OF THOSE WHO HAVE FAITH IN GOD ...

But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of
those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

(Hebrews 10:39 LSB)

1. We do not shrink back from the great conflict but bring our minds to it—the good, the bad, the humiliating ... and the joy, 10:32-34.

- (Hebrews 10:32–34 LSB) **But remember the former days**, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, 33 **partly by** being made a public spectacle through reproaches and afflictions, **and partly by** becoming sharers with those who were so treated. 34 For you also showed sympathy to the prisoners **and accepted with joy** the seizure of your possessions, **knowing that you have for yourselves a better and lasting possession**.

A. We bring to mind the reality of the battle as we knew it when we first were brought into the light and courageously and joyfully endured the great conflict.

- (1 Peter 2:9b ESV) ... **that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light**.
- (Acts 26:18 LSB) **To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

B. We bring to mind how courageously and faithfully we withstood the enemy in the midst of sufferings.

- For the sake of Christ we may suffer being made a public spectacle by people who insult, belittle and pressure us.
 - (2 Corinthians 12:10 LSB) **Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions and hardships, for the sake of Christ, for when I am weak, then I am strong**.
 - (Philippians 3:7–8 LSB) But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss **for the sake of Christ**. 8 **More than that, I count all things to be loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.
 - (Matthew 5:11 LSB) **Blessed are you when people insult you** and persecute you, **and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me**.

- (Luke 6:22–23 LSB) **Blessed are you when men hate you, and exclude you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man**.

- Our suffering may result from coming alongside those who were being mistreated in this way.
- We bring to mind the compassion we had for those who suffered and the joy with which we accepted loss because of our fellowship with them.
- We bring to mind the assuring knowledge we had of a better and lasting possession.

EXCURSUS: THE POWERFUL AND NECESSARY YET PARADOXICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONFLICT, SUFFERING AND ENDURANCE.

I. Those who do not shrink back but live by faith need the endurance that God supplies.

- (Hebrews 10:36 ESV) **For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised**.
- (Philippians 4:13 LSB) I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

II. The reality that the Bible presents is that God produces endurance through our suffering.

- (Romans 5:2–3 ESV) Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only that, **but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance**.

III. Endurance produces hope that serves as an anchor for the soul.

- (Romans 5:4–5 LSB) And perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 **and hope does not put to shame, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us**.
- (Hebrews 6:18–19 LSB) So that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, **we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us**. 19 **This hope we have as an anchor of the soul**, a hope both sure and confirmed and one which enters within the veil.

IV. The thought of rejoicing in our suffering so that we might endure is a paradox to the unregenerate human mind—it is foolishness to him.

A paradox is ... a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that when investigated or explained may prove to be well founded or true.

V. So a transformation must take place: Our minds must be renewed by the reality that the word of God provides for us so that we may see and live in our world as God sees it.

- (2 Corinthians 4:17–18 NLT) **For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!** 18 So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. **For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.**

VI. With our renewed minds we will joyfully anticipate the work that God will do in our lives through our various trials.

- (James 1:2–4 NIV) **Consider it pure joy,** my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 **because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.** 4 **Let perseverance finish its work** so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.
- (Hebrews 12:11 LSB) **And all discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful,** but sorrowful, **but to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.**

VII. With our renewed minds we enjoy God's blessing as the Spirit of glory and of God rests on us.

- (1 Peter 4:14–15 LSB) **If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed,** because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 **Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler.**

VIII. Those who live by faith know and live in view of the overwhelming, compelling Scriptural testimony regarding the relationship between suffering, endurance and lives that bring praise, glory and honor to God.

- (Romans 12:12 LSB) **Rejoicing in hope, persevering in affliction, being devoted to prayer.**

- (2 Corinthians 6:10 LSB) **As sorrowful but always rejoicing,** as poor but making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things.
- (2 Corinthians 7:4 LSB) Great is my boldness toward you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I have been filled with comfort; **I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction.**
- (Galatians 5:22–23 LSB) But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** 23 **gentleness, self-control.** Against such things there is no law.
- (1 Thessalonians 1:6 LSB) You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, **having received the word in much affliction with the joy of the Holy Spirit.**
- (1 Peter 1:6–7 LSB) **In this you greatly rejoice,** even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 **so that the proof of your faith,** being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, **may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**
- (1 Peter 4:12–13 LSB) Beloved, **do not be surprised at the fiery trial among you,** which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you. 13 **But to the degree you are sharing the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.**

—END EXCURSUS—

2. We do not shrink back: We do not throw away our confidence that rewarded us with the blessing of endurance and promise, 10:35-38.

- (Hebrews 10:35–38 LSB) **Therefore, do not throw away that confidence of yours, which has a great reward.** 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise. 37 **FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.** 38 **BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH, AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.**

A. The reward of our confidence is a vivid awareness of the reality of where we are before Almighty God.

- i. We find ourselves doing the will of God and receiving the promises of God.
 - ii. We live with a vivid awareness of the coming of Jesus Christ.
 - iii. We live with a vivid awareness that the saved of God—the righteous ones—live by faith.
 - iv. We live with a vivid awareness of the difference between those who believe God and those who shrink back.
 - v. We live with a vivid awareness of the fate of those who shrink back—those in whom God has no pleasure.
- B. Those who do not endure and hold fast in the hope of the gospel do not have the reward of living in the will of God and receiving the promises of God.**

C. Those who throw away their bold confidence do not believe that he who promised is faithful.

- (Hebrews 10:23 LSB) **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.**

D. Not living with bold confidence in our daily lives is equivalent to—same as—throwing it away.

- i. This person has backed away from the conflict and unwittingly surrendered to the enemy.
- ii. He has lost sight of the goal and may be more concerned with escaping the battle than enduring as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
- iii. He will descend into timidity, fearfulness and ultimately compromise.
- iv. He will compromise the truth to lessen the intensity of the conflict.
- v. He has lost his vision of godly service.

3. But we are not of those who shrink back: We are of those who live by faith, 10:39.

- (Hebrews 10:39 ESV) **But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.**

A. We do not shrink back.

B. We are the saved of God who live by faith.

C. We have faith that endures and preserves our souls.

D. The foundation of our lives is believing God.

- (Habakkuk 2:4 LSB) **Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.**
- (Romans 1:16–17 LSB) **For I am not ashamed of the gospel,** for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, **"BUT THE RIGHTEOUS WILL LIVE BY FAITH."**
- (Galatians 3:11 LSB) Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident, for **"THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."**

CONCLUSION: In times of turmoil and confusion the righteous know what to do ... we go and stand at our guard post ... and we wait for God to speak ...

- (Habakkuk 2:1–3 LSB) I will stand on my guard post And station myself on the fortification; **And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me And how I may respond when I am reproved.** 2 Then Yahweh answered me and said, "Write down the vision And write it on tablets distinctly, That the one who reads it may run. 3 For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It pants toward its end, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come; it will not delay."