

## Keep the Faith

### Scripture Reference:

**2 Timothy 4:1-8 (NIV):** In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: <sup>2</sup>Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. <sup>3</sup>For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. <sup>4</sup>They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup>But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. <sup>6</sup>For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup>Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

**Main Idea:** The storms of life that have occurred the last couple of years have caused many church goers and ministers alike to walk away from the faith. What the storms have revealed is that without proper foundation, faith is impossible to maintain. In order to hold tight to our faith, we must ensure that the foundation has footings deep enough to ensure we do not falter when the various storms of life hit.

### Two Ways to Dig Deep:

**1. Protect Your Vision—** Our life must be founded on Christ. Scripture refers to Jesus as the “rock” of our Salvation. If we are to build on The Rock, it will require consistent and obedient effort to dig until He is our foundation. Our primary obstacle to digging deep is maintaining focus. We need to intentionally focus on Jesus rather than our current experiences or the various allures life has to offer.

**Luke 6:47-49 (NIV):** *As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. <sup>48</sup>They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. <sup>49</sup>But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house*

*on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”*

**Matthew 18:9 (NIV):** And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

**Question:** It takes discipline to see something that offers instant satisfaction but still build with the future in mind. How do you develop/practice this discipline in your life? If you have never practiced this discipline, where do you think you should start?

**2. Develop Endurance—** In the natural, endurance is not something we can see. For many, endurance is at the bottom of their priorities when training. In a similar fashion, spiritual endurance is not pursued by believers because its value cannot be seen in the moment. The value of endurance is revealed over time.

**James 1:2-4 (NIV):** *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

**Question:** Do you find it difficult to work on something that you know is valuable but will not garner much recognition?

**Closing Thoughts:** A life that has not just heard the good news but has been practicing its truth is a life that will not be shaken. Its foundation is secure and tested. Digging can be tiring at times. We must ensure that when we grow tired that we lean into the truth we have come to know about Jesus. If we do not, we will be susceptible to building on sandy patches rather than the consistent character of Jesus.

**Call to Action:** While digging to build our life on The Rock, we often come across a group of smaller rocks that seem like they could sustain us such as: notoriety, money, career success, and even family. This week compare the structure of your life to the structure outlined in Luke 6:46-49. This can help us determine if there is an area in which we need to increase our obedience. When our obedience increases, our stability increases.