



Perseverance

In life we can often feel “stuck in a rut” for various reasons. Sometimes life is just so overwhelming you become immobilized. Sometimes it’s just the same boring routine over and over. Sometimes you just don’t feel like moving forward. In the same way, we can find ourselves “stuck in a rut” spiritually. This series explores four words that help us to move forward in your relationship with Jesus.

- What is one thing that stood out to you from this week’s message?
- Circle Time: What was your biggest challenge growing up as a kid?
 - How did you feel about it at the time?
 - How do you feel about it now looking back? Are you glad you had to go through that? Or do you regret that you had to go through that?
 - What benefits were there for your life since making it through that challenge?
- Read James 1:2-4. Trials and testing never feel good at the time. How can you be joyful while at the same time feeling the stress of your trial?
- The Greek word the James uses for “testing” in v.3 is *dokimion* referring to the “means of testing”.
 - During the first four centuries, *dokimion* described the process of smelting metallic ore. Extreme heat was employed to extract the impurities and produce pure metal.
 - How does that statement help to shape a joyful perspective in the face of testing and trials?
- When going through trials and testing in your life is it easier for you to process through on your own? Or is it easier to seek out others who can help you through it?
 - Is it hard for you to ask for help from others? Why or why not?
 - Why do you think scripture refers to Satan as “prowling around like a roaring lion?” *A lion specifically targets prey that is alone and vulnerable.*
 - The word “your” in v.3 is actually the plural form of the word. Why is it important to understand that our faith is a *shared* faith and so the testing of that faith is also shared?
- How does the testing of your faith produce perseverance?
- Who do you know that is “mature and complete” in their faith? Where they always this way? How did they achieve maturity and completeness in their faith?
 - How did others come alongside this person to help them get to the place they are in their faith?
 - Have you as a group made a commitment to each other to walk through trials and testing together?