

## Sermon Discussion Questions – June 2, 2024

### Scripture Passages:

**James 1:2-3** ...when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. 3 For you know that when your faith is tested...

**Ephesians 2:8 (NIV)** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith.

**John 3:15-16 (CEV)** Then everyone who has faith in the Son of Man will have eternal life. 16 God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.

**1 Peter 1:6-7 (NLT)** 6 So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. 7 These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.

**Romans 5:6, 8-10** 6 When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. 8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. 9 And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. 10 For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son.

**Romans 5:3-5 (NLT)** 3 We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. 4 And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. 5 And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

**2 Corinthians 1:8-9 (NLT)** 8 We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, [b] about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. 9 In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead.

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NLT)** 16 That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are[e] being renewed every day. 17 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."

**Hebrews 12:1-2 (NLT)** And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NLT)** 3 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. 4 He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others.

**James 1:4 (NLT)** So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

**James 1:12** God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

**Matthew 16:18 (NLT)** ...and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.

**James 1:5 (NLT)** If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.

### **Warm Up:**

As we officially kick off summer, what are you most looking forward to this summer?

### **Discussion:**

1. Pastor Paul started his message by talking about looking to others trials to help put yours into perspective. Do you ever find yourself comparing your struggles to others? Why do you think that is?
2. Read James 1: 2-3. What does it mean to have joy in times of trouble? How can you develop a sense of joy when dealing with difficult times?
3. Read 1 Peter 1:6-7. How can you develop endurance when facing difficulties?

4. Pastor Paul's first point was "Seasons of pain should be seasons of growth." Have you been through a season of pain that led to growth? What was that like? How did it change you?
5. Pastor Paul's second point was "Seasons of trouble should remind us of our need for the cross." How does trouble remind you of your need for the cross?
6. Pastor Paul's last point was "A growing faith should have an impact on those around you." Why do you think it's important for your faith to have an impact on others? Have you seen this in your own life? Has this been a positive impact?

### **Next Steps:**

Pastor Paul ended with this:

*What trials are you dealing with right now that God may want to use to strengthen you? How can you change your mindset from these trials being a "burden to bear" to being an "opportunity to grow"?*

*What specific aspects of your faith do you need to pray and ask for God's wisdom and help? (I would encourage you to pray for wisdom in regard to your role and leadership at ALIVE.) God wants to give it! James says,*

*<sup>5</sup> If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. – James 1:5 (NLT)*

*What does it look like for you to endure or persevere (remain steadfast) in this season?*

How would you answer these questions? Which one sticks out to you the most? What next steps do you think God may be calling you to when it comes to enduring trials?