

“Bearing Fruit—Part 1”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of July 8, 2023.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I began a three-part series about “Bearing Fruit.” (This was a follow-up to the series about the parable of the sower.) These three studies will discuss scriptures by three different authors—the first by Paul, the second by James and the third by Peter.

Let’s look at the first presentation.

Building toward hope

- Romans 5:1—Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Romans 5:2—We have access by faith into this grace, and we rejoice in hope.
- Romans 5:3-4—We glory in tribulation because it produces growth in our lives.
- Romans 5:5—Hope does not disappoint.

Trouble, patience, experience and hope

Notice the four characteristics in Romans 5:3-4.

- Glory in tribulations.

The Greek word for “tribulations” is *thlipsis* (Strong’s No. 2347), which is a noun that means trouble, distress, oppression and tribulation.

- Tribulation produces patience.

The Greek word for “patience” is *hypomone* (Strong’s No. 5281), which is a noun that means perseverance, endurance and patience.

- Patience produces experience.

The Greek word for “experience” is *dokime* (Strong’s No. 1382), which is a noun that means character.

- Experience produces hope.

The Greek word for “hope” is *elpis* (Strong’s No. 1680), which is a noun that means hope and expectation.

Not prosperity gospel

Do you remember that “experience” came from the Greek word *dokime* (No. 1382)?

A variation of *dokime* (No. 1382) is the Greek word *dioko* (Strong’s No. 1377). It is a verb that means to pursue, persecute, oppress and harass. This Greek word is mentioned three times in the Bible. Notice one of the times.

■ 2 Timothy 3:12—All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution (No. 1377).

Beware of people who teach that obedience to God will always keep you from experiencing trouble.

Growing through trouble

■ Acts 14:22—We must through many tribulations (No. 2347) enter the Kingdom of God.

■ 2 Corinthians 1:4—God comforts us in all our tribulation (No. 2347).

■ 2 Corinthians 1:8—Paul didn’t want his friends to be ignorant about their trouble (No. 2347).

■ 2 Corinthians 4:17-18—The brethren considered their affliction (No. 2347) as light and temporary—when comparing the physical with the spiritual.

■ 1 Thessalonians 3:3-4—Paul didn’t want the brethren to be derailed by their afflictions (No. 2347), and reminded them that he had previously told them that they would suffer tribulations (No. 2347).

■ 2 Thessalonians 1:4—Paul mentioned that he praised them in the Churches of God for their patience (No. 5281) and faith in all their tribulations (No. 2347).

Believing and anticipating

■ Acts 24:14—Paul worshiped the God of his fathers—believing the things that were written in the Law and in the Prophets.

■ Acts 24:15—Paul expressed his hope (expectation and anticipation) that there will be a resurrection of the dead.

Faith and hope work together. Faith is believing and knowing. Hope is expecting and anticipating.