



Virtues Study: **Perseverance** **Leader Guide**

LEADERS: I want to encourage you to prepare well for your group time...

PRAY: Before anyone shows up, go before God and ask Him to lead and direct your time together. Ask God to prepare your heart, and the hearts of those in your group, to engage in the discussion so you can ultimately grow closer to Christ and one another.

PREPARE: Before your CG meets, read and pray through this week's scripture passage and think through the questions below. This will allow you to process each question and think about how these questions might apply to your CG specifically. Also, going over the questions beforehand might help you think of a few questions of your own, or follow up questions.

PROCEED: After praying and preparing beforehand, you can confidently trust that God will use your time together to help you grow closer to Him and one another!

BIG IDEA!

Perseverance is the unwavering endurance through trials and challenges, rooted in our faith in Christ. In a world marked by uncertainties and difficulties, the Christian journey is not exempt from trials. Perseverance, however, is not merely enduring hardships but a process where our faith is tested, refined, and ultimately strengthened. As we navigate the various trials of life, our commitment to Christ shapes our response, transforming adversity into an opportunity for spiritual growth. Through perseverance, we not only withstand challenges but also embrace them as a means by which our faith matures, leading us to a place of completeness in Christ. This journey of endurance is not something we do alone; rather, it is a collective pursuit where we support and uplift one another in our shared commitment to following Christ faithfully.

WARM UP (5-10 minutes)

1. **DISCUSSION STARTER:** How do you usually handle curveballs that life throws at you?

2. **DISCUSSION STARTER:** What's a challenge that you faced, that you didn't think would ever be resolved, but it ended up working out?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (30-40 minutes)

READ JAMES 1:2-4 OUT LOUD TOGETHER

(We recommend reading from the same version of the Bible if possible, for continuity sake. Although there are several good versions, we recommend the NIV, CSB, NLT, ESV)

1. **According to the passage, what is the relationship between trials, faith, and steadfastness?**

(Leader note: James 1:2-4 teaches that trials are an opportunity for joy because they produce steadfastness. As faith is tested through trials, endurance is developed, leading to a more mature and complete faith.)

2. **How do you make sense of the idea of finding joy in trials?**

(Leader note: The joy in trials is not a superficial happiness in the difficulties themselves but a recognition that trials serve a purpose in refining one's faith. The testing of faith through trials leads to the development of steadfastness, endurance, and a more mature and complete faith. The joy stems from the understanding that God is working through adversity for the ultimate growth and perfection of one's faith.)

3. **How does persevering through trials contribute to our spiritual maturity? In what ways might our perspective on trials change if we view them as opportunities for steadfastness?**

(Leader note: When faced with challenges, enduring through them strengthens our faith and character, fostering resilience and perseverance. As James suggests, trials are not meaningless hardships but opportunities for growth. Viewing trials as opportunities for steadfastness shifts our perspective from mere difficulties to occasions for spiritual development.)

4. **Share examples from your life where you really had to persevere. How did that experience impact your spiritual growth?**

5. **Take a moment to reflect on the trials you are currently facing. How might you view them through the lens of these verses?**

6. **Does knowing that Jesus suffered and went through trials for you change the way you view your own trials?**

(Leader note: Understanding that Jesus' suffering had a purpose—bringing salvation—can inspire us to approach our own trials with faith and endurance, trusting that God is working through our challenges for a greater purpose. We can also turn to him knowing that He can relate to us.

LIVE IT OUT!

- 1. Surrender whatever trial you're walking through right now to Jesus, spend time each day this week in prayer for this trial.**
- 2. Share the trail that you're walking through with someone in the group or with someone that you're close to, ask them to pray for your situation**

PRAYER (5-10 minutes)

Close your time with prayer. Thank God for the time that you just spent together. Thank Him for His grace in your lives. Pray for each other's specific needs. Remember, this can just be a very simple prayer.

NEXT STEPS...

- 1. Plan a Thanksgiving Party with your group, decide who's bringing what.**
- 2. Share the group calendar with your group, including the advent study.**

Calendar:

- 11/19 - 11/25: Thanksgiving Week
- 11/26 - 12/2: Advent Study
- 12/3 - 12/9: Advent Study
- 12/10 - 12/16: Christmas Party
- 12/17 - 1/6: Break