Long Story Short: Enduring Faith!

Reflect

1. In your opinion is persecution a good thing or a bad thing for your faith?
2. What is more challenging for your faith, persecution that comes from the world or the effects that come from your own sin? How different and how similar are they in what they do to your faith?
3. What kinds of practices help you maintain an enduring faith in the face of persecution?

Read Your Bible
- Romans 4:1-8
- Hebrews 12:1-13

Apply God’s Word to Your Life

1. According to Romans an enduring faith begins with belief in God not works to earn God’s favor. Why is believing in God and what He has done and is doing more important for your faith than trying to earn God’s favor with your works?
2. See Romans. “Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.” What does this mean to you in terms of your own faith?
3. See Hebrews. In terms of the great cloud of witnesses in your life who has been most helpful in cheering you on in your race of faith?
4. Jesus is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. In what ways does the image of the cross encourage you to endure in faith?
5. Keeping the cross of Christ in your mind in what ways does God discipline you in terms of your faith?
6. How is an enduring faith an antidote to the persecution of sin in your life?

Faith in God is the beginning of a right relationship with God. Faith acknowledges that the persecution of this broken world of which my sin is a paramount problem needs a solution and we as human beings can not provide that solution. Only God can solve the sin problem that affects and infects my life and this world. An enduring faith looks to the work of God in Christ who took my sin to death with Him on the cross and gave me life with God when He was raised from the dead. The cross of Christ both encourages me and disciplines me to run my race of faith confident that God has forgiven me and that His promise of life will lead me to life with Him in heaven forever. In response I put my faith into action joining with God in His work in this world by doing good works that He calls me to do, not as a way to earn His favor but in response to what He has done for me.

Pray

My faith looks up to You O Lord. I believe You are my God and Savior. I can not by my own will or understanding overcome the damage that my sin does to my soul and to those around me. I need You to encourage me and to discipline me. I need You to save me. Do Your work in me O Lord that my faith might endure the challenges and struggles of life and that I might run the race faithfully to life with You. I lift my eyes to the cross looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of my faith. Amen.