

# FAMILY FAITH BUILDER

## Character Lessons for Practical Application of Faith

# ENDURANCE



### The inward strength to withstand stress and do my best.

Hope is the foundation of Endurance. Without hope there is no purpose to Endure. The hope we have as Christians is that our struggles will give us grace to live the gospel life and prepare us for the gift of eternal life. We know our struggles and good works do not earn us a spot in heaven. It's a gift.

In our daily lives we are asked to endure sinful temptations and not give in; we endure setbacks in achieving personal, financial or career goals, and we endure difficult relationships. Each time we succeed with Endurance, we are strengthened for the next challenge.



It is important to remember during difficult times, to ask God for grace and strength to endure and to be grateful to Him for His help.

Even if we fail at our task, we need to look for the lesson and keep on going.

This month, focus on building your Endurance and include God in your challenges, no matter how small.

#### *To Practice Endurance I Will:*

- not be a "quitter"
- accept both instruction and correction
- not waste my time, energy and talent on meaningless pursuits
- bend instead of break
- put my whole heart into everything I do

Any others appropriate to your family?

#### *God's Word on Endurance*

*"More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope." Romans 5:3-4*

*"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."*

*1 Corinthians 10:13*

*"I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Philipians 4:13*

*"Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 2:3*

*"Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?" Hebrews 12:7*

*"You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary." Revelation 2:3*

*Jesus said: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:10*

#### **Peter Teaches Us about Endurance**

We all remember the story of Peter denying that he knew Jesus just before Jesus was crucified. How do you think Peter felt after he denied knowing Jesus? We know that Peter went on to become a great preacher and became the first Pope of the new Catholic Church. Unlike Judas, who let his guilt and failure lead to his death, Peter used it to better himself and pushed on.

It's easy to let failures get us down in our lives but we must rally our Endurance. God has a plan for us but as humans we don't always understand the big picture. The challenges and failures may be preparing us for something bigger and better.

To demonstrate this, find something that has been embroidered. On the reverse side, you see the knots and threads crossing and it isn't very pretty. Sometimes this is all we see of what we are trying to accomplish. If you turn the piece over you can see a wonderful picture that couldn't exist without the "ugliness" of the backside.

When we are in the midst of challenges, we need to remind ourselves of the embroidery and the promise of a beautiful picture when we are done.



## The Egg, the Carrot and the Coffee Bean

For this activity you will need an egg (hard-boiled is safer), a raw carrot and a can of coffee. Show these items to the family. Explain that problems and difficulties in life are like boiling water and that people react to problems differently. If you are adventurous, add the items to boiling water and watch for their reaction. If not, you can simply ask family members to predict how each item reacts to boiling water. (The egg becomes hardened, the carrots become soft, and the coffee changes the water into coffee.)



Relate these reactions to the responses that people have to problems. The carrot went into the water strong, hard and unrelenting. However after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. ("Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matthew 26:41 ) Carrot reactions are the give up/do nothing kind of responses. The egg had been fragile before it was boiled but, after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. ("While it is said, 'Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked me.'" Hebrews 3:15) A typical Egg response is to take action but the wrong kind. The coffee was unique, however. After it was in the boiling water it had changed the water. Coffee answers will endure and solve the problem. ("Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him." James 1:12)

All of us will face hardships and difficulties of varying degrees. Learning to tie a shoe for a toddler can be just as difficult as a high school senior selecting a college. No matter what type of problem we face we need to stay strong (not like the weakened egg), stay flexible, (not like the cooked carrot) and make positive impact on those around us (just like the coffee).

Now, give each family member a Styrofoam or paper coffee cup, one that can be written on. Ask each family member to think about ways they can be "coffee kind of people" and react to problems the way Jesus would want us to react. Once you have brainstormed several ideas, ask each family member to write on the coffee cup one of the ideas that they think will help them endure hardships. Have them think about challenges they face often. Look at the "I wills" on the front for suggestions and discussion starters. Non-writers can draw a picture or have someone write for them. When finished, each family member can put their cup at their place at the family dinner table for the month, in their bedroom or someplace they will see it often.

### POSTER IDEA:

Dear Jesus,

**ENDURANCE**  
**The inward strength to**  
**withstand stress and do my**  
**best.**



**"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."**  
**James 4:7**

**How do you resist**  
**Temptation?**

We praise you for your goodness and mercy and thank you for the example of Endurance in your life. We remember how you endured the cross and grave for our salvation. Help us to embrace our roles as your servants here on Earth and be all that we can be. Remind us to put our whole hearts into everything we do and to not be a quitter. May we learn, with your help, to accept both instruction and correction. Teach us to not waste our time, energy and talent on meaningless pursuits. Guide us in learning how to bend instead of break. Help us to act in all things in harmony with the will of the Father. Amen.

#### Other ways to teach character in the home:

- Display the character quality and definition in a prominent place such as on the refrigerator or let each child decorate it for their bedroom door.
- At the dinner table ask if anyone noticed anyone (not just family members) demonstrating the character quality (or not demonstrating it).
- Point out news stories where character was or was not involved.
- During car trips, challenge the kids by describing scenarios and having them identify if it describes being the quality or being the opposite.
- Praise with character by recognizing the character quality involved rather than the achievement.
- For more ideas visit [www.charactercincinnati.org/faith.php](http://www.charactercincinnati.org/faith.php)

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For more activities that can be adapted for family use, visit  
[www.charactercincinnati.org/quality\\_resource.php?q=Endurance](http://www.charactercincinnati.org/quality_resource.php?q=Endurance)