

## Rise Up!

### Rise Up and Persevere!

May 1, 2016 / Dan Solofra

<sup>29</sup> Now, Lord, **consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.** <sup>30</sup> Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

<sup>31</sup> After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. Acts 4:29-31, NIV

The Christians were realistic about the \_\_\_\_\_ they faced and the \_\_\_\_\_ that God offered.

<sup>32</sup> **All the believers were one** in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. Acts 4:32, NIV

<sup>12</sup> Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its **many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.** 1 Corinthians 12:12, NIV

Although very \_\_\_\_\_, following Jesus is meant to be a \_\_\_\_\_ activity. We use the gifts that God has given us to \_\_\_\_\_ one another.

<sup>33</sup> With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Acts 4:33<sup>a</sup>, NIV

The most \_\_\_\_\_ gift that was shared was the clear witness that Jesus is alive.

And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all <sup>34</sup> that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales <sup>35</sup> and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need. Acts 4:33-35, NIV

God's \_\_\_\_\_ changed the hearts of people. Christians thankfully shared \_\_\_\_\_ they had.

<sup>36</sup> Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"), <sup>37</sup> sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet. Acts 4:36-37, NIV

<sup>22</sup> News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. <sup>23</sup> When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. <sup>24</sup> He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord. Acts 11:22-24, NIV

Joseph was given the gift of \_\_\_\_\_. God used this gift to help other Christians \_\_\_\_\_ in the faith.

<sup>1</sup> And Saul approved of their killing him. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Acts 8:1, NIV

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4, NIV

Suffering develops \_\_\_\_\_. When we despair of our strength and turn to God, suffering has done its job.

#### MEMORY VERSE

<sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:4, NIV

**Bottom line:** By God's grace and power I will persevere. Even under the most difficult circumstances, he grows my faith and will bring me out the other side of any adversity.

What's your next step today?

Mark it on your Communication Card.



**Quick Review:** Looking back to Sunday, is there something about the message that caught your attention or made you think differently about God or his Word?

### **My Story**

Even under difficult circumstances, we are encouraged to persevere. We have God's promise that suffering produces perseverance.

Think back to a time in your life that was difficult that prepared you for something in the future. What was the difficult situation and how did it teach you perseverance?

Generosity is one way that Christians encourage each other. Give examples of different ways we can encourage each other today by giving.

### **Digging Deeper**

We are going to read the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Hebrews. As we read through this section, remember this is a group of people who persevered!

#### **Read Hebrews 11:1-6**

What is God's definition of faith?

How does this type of faith please and honor God?

#### **Read Hebrews 11:7-16**

Focus on verses 13-16 and explain why perseverance was a necessity for these people?

What did their perseverance show?

#### **Read Hebrews 11:17-31.**

These verses describe both the hardship and the beauty of faith and perseverance. Explain the connection between hardship and the beauty of faith.

How does verse 26 give us the key to perseverance?

#### **Read Hebrews 11:32-40**

None of these people who lived by faith received what they were promised. **They had to wait** so that they will receive everything that was promised (they will be made perfect and complete) with us. The days of waiting will be over when we reach heaven.

Explain why it is so important for a Christian to understand delayed gratification.

How does read Hebrews 11 give you a different perspective on the problems you face today?

### **Prayers**