



SERIES: APRIL – YES, YOU CAN! OVERCOMING YOUR STRUGGLES

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Scripture: Romans 5:1-5

TITLE: The Power of Why

I love smoked meat. When I graduated from seminary, my wife bought me this electric smoker that smoked meat to perfection. But here's the secret to the best BBQ. It is a low and slow process. You can't hurry tender, delicious meat. It takes time.

Whenever I've chosen to pull the meat early, it isn't as good. The meat can be tough. The flavor is not where it should be. It's just okay. But when I endure the process of smoking the meat, it becomes a treat that I don't want to end.

We all know there is a benefit to enduring and persevering, but often we settle, and we live with the results. It's true with BBQing and in other areas of our life, including pursuing spiritual fitness. If you need a little bit of motivation to keep going, Paul has a word for you today in Romans 5:1-5.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have also obtained access through him by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

We all want to have real hope. We want to long for something real and lasting. Well, there is no greater future than eternity ruling with Christ. That's a great reminder for us to endure. But let's not negate that getting there is a marathon. It's tough. This world is beautiful but full of many trials along the pathway.

Those trials, or as Paul puts it, those afflictions are real. But they produce endurance. They provide a hardy spirit for perseverance. And that perseverance produces character, which produces hope.

I don't know what hardship you are facing today but I know it can and should be used for your benefit. That long hot cook time produces the most delicious, moist BBQ. That daily discipline of going to the gym provides a pathway to health. The painful physical therapy is there to make you whole. The question isn't if we'll experience the hardship. The question is will we lean into it to produce perseverance, character, and hope.

Will you do it perfectly? Not likely. That's okay. But start each day with the determination to push forward no matter what happens. George Lorimer said, "You've got to get up every morning with determination if you're going to go to bed with satisfaction."

So here's my challenge for you today: Remember the why of your perseverance. Many people fail in achieving their goals and living out their faith because they forget their why. Having a strong why will help you to keep going when the discipline of enduring becomes difficult, discouraging, or tedious. So today, make a list of your whys to keep on in your faith and pursue spiritual fitness.

When you do, you will win the day!