



# FAMILY STUDY

Pilgrim's Progress: Finish Well!

EPISODE  
**10E**  
NIV

Learn More About our Ministries, Products and Resources at [www.truthquest.net](http://www.truthquest.net)



## "Pilgrim's Progress: Finish Well!"

### It Will Be Worth It All...

There's an old hymn with the line, "It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!" How true this is. As the day draws nearer for Christ's return, it will be harder to live for Christ. But as the difficulty of life increases, don't lose heart. Although we may face hardship, ridicule, humiliation, persecution for the sake of Christ, it will be worth it when we see Jesus face to face. In John Bunyan's book, "Pilgrim's Progress," the main character, "Christian," faces many trials. Yet, Christian endures to the end, where he finally reaches his reward and meets Jesus. If you are a believer in Jesus, you too will see Him face to face, but it is important to finish well, so stand firm in the faith. When you become discouraged, take time to consider all we have to gain if we will stand firm and remain faithful to the end. Be encouraged! Our light and momentary trials will seem like nothing when we see Jesus.

We encourage you to look up and study the Scripture passages included in this Family Study and consider, with your family, how you can ensure that you will stand firm in your faith and finish well as you anticipate standing in the presence of Christ!

Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-17

### Stand Firm

Over and over, we are commanded to stand firm to the end. This is vitally important. How many people have lived life well, and then become careless in the last years of their lives, falling away from their close fellowship with God? Look at David, the man after God's own heart. He grew careless and experienced a mid-life crisis when he lusted after Bathsheba. His fall into sin had lasting repercussions. From that moment on, his life was plagued with troubles and trials, mostly coming from his own family.

In the same way it affected David's family, not finishing well affects our children. When we have lived our lives in a way that pleases God, our children notice. When we fall into sin after faithful living, it shakes their faith. It makes them question everything they have been taught about God. Is that the legacy you want to leave for your children?

How do we stand firm then? How do we finish well? The answer is simple, but not easy. We stand firm by making a choice every day to live for God. We spend time each day in God's Word. We pray continuously. We fellowship with other believers regularly. It is a day by day, hour by hour commitment to live for Jesus. That is how we stand firm. Below are several Scriptures reminding us of our need to stand firm and finish well.

|                |                     |                   |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Matthew 10:22  | Matthew 24:12-13    | Mark 13:13        |
| Luke 21:19     | 1 Corinthians 15:58 | 1 Timothy 6:17-19 |
| 1 Peter 5:7-10 | James 5:7-8         |                   |

### Persevering Under Trial

Enduring trials is not an easy thing. No one likes to suffer. Yet, as the days grow more evil, those who stand for righteousness should be prepared to suffer for Christ's name. When trials and persecution come—and they are coming—we must continue to stand firm. We do this by running to God even more. The more we are persecuted, the more we must run to God for

encouragement and strength. It is He who will strengthen us. It is Jesus who is our solid foundation on which we stand firm. If we try to stand firm on our own, we will fall. So, in the strength of the Lord, we must stand firm.

How do we endure? Do we meekly let trials come our way and do nothing to stop them? Do we fight back? What do we do? It is our nature to fight back, but is that the Biblical answer?

We don't have to look for ways to be persecuted, but we should not avoid it at all costs either. Too often, our desire for comfort causes compromise in our faith. To remain faithful, we are to endure and persevere, even under trial and persecution. Endurance means "suffering patiently." Perseverance means "continuing a course of action even when faced with difficulty." Patient suffering and continuing through difficulty isn't easy, and it doesn't sound like a definition for fighting back. We endure suffering for Christ because He endured for us. This means we don't retaliate and fight back. In Romans 12, God says vengeance is His. He keeps record of the wrongs done to us. It is He who will punish those who persecute us.

Look at Paul's example. He did not look for ways to be persecuted for the name of Christ, but neither was he passive when persecution came. Sometimes he hid and escaped, like when he escaped from Damascus by being lowered from the wall in a basket. Other times, he patiently endured. He did defend himself with words, which meant he continued to preach about Jesus, but you never find an example where Paul used violence to protect himself. When faced with persecution, we can try to flee if it is possible, or we can stand firm and continue to preach when no other option is available.

This is not to say that we are never justified in physically defending ourselves. At times, physical force—even violent force—is called for. When our families are being attacked, we are to protect them. If a crime is being committed against us, we can defend yourself. But, when it comes to facing trial because of your faith in Jesus, we should wait patiently and endure. Below are several verses that remind us to endure and persevere.

|                      |                |                   |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 2 Corinthians 1:6-10 | 1 Timothy 4:16 | 2 Timothy 2:12-13 |
| Hebrews 12:1-3       | James 5:10-11  | Revelation 2:3    |

### Rewards for Perseverance

For those who stand firm and persevere to the end, there are great rewards. It is important that we run a good race, and it is important that we finish well. In Pilgrim's Progress, Christian and Hopeful enter the Celestial City (which represents Heaven), receive crowns of gold, meet Jesus, and spend the rest of eternity in peace and joy. That is the destiny for those who follow Jesus. To get a glimpse of the rewards awaiting those who endure to the end, read Revelation 21-22. It will all be worth it! So be patient, friends, and stand firm. Endure and persevere to the end in Christ Jesus, and your reward will be great.

|                       |                    |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Matthew 5:11-12       | Matthew 16:25-27   | Luke 6:22-23, 35   |
| 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 | Ephesians 6:7-8    | Colossians 3:23-24 |
| Hebrews 10:35-36      | Revelation 3:11-12 | Revelation 22:12   |

### Finish Well

Make it your goal in life to finish well. Make Paul's declaration in 2 Timothy 4:7-8 your own. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing."