

Let's Do Difficult

Coaching from an Apostle

World Outreach Church
Sermon Discussion Guide
Sunday Sermon: **February 11, 2024**



“Let’s do difficult” requires recalibrating and refocusing our viewpoints because we all prefer *easy*. What’s ahead of us will require doing difficult things, and we want to begin to say, “We did *easy* yesterday.” The Bible gives us some good coaching on this through Paul, an apostle who took his assignment very seriously. His life took a 180-degree change, and his enthusiasm to serve the Lord speaks to us across the ages. Today, we need a Church that has the courage to say that we can make a broad-reaching difference. Truthfully, we have adopted a cowardly approach, saying, “We’re going to Heaven, and nothing else makes any difference.” Our eternal destiny is vitally important, but Jesus also calls us to be salt and light. That means we need to be equally concerned about the impact our lives can make, in the context of God’s purposes, **while He gives breath to us**. We need to be awakened to a greater awareness of how that applies to our individual lives. It’s time to recalibrate what it means to be a person of faith and embrace learning to “do difficult.”

“We’re not going to talk about what we’re going to accomplish, we’re going to talk about how we’re going to do it.” — Nick Saban

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; ... who at best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.” — Theodore Roosevelt

I. JESUS & HIS FOLLOWERS

Matthew 5:11–12 ¹¹ *“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*

John 15:18–20 ¹⁸ ***“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.***

²⁰ *Remember the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his master.’ **If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.**”*

John 16:33 *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. **In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.**”*

Acts 14:22 ... *strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. **“We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,”** they said.*

1 Thessalonians 2:1–2 ¹ *You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. ² We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel **in spite of strong opposition.***

1. Scripture says, “In this world you will have trouble.” In what ways are Christians being persecuted in today’s culture? What kind of “trouble” do you foresee for Christ-followers in the future?
2. What causes Christians to be reluctant to fully align their lives with the Lord?
3. Share some examples of how Christians can sacrifice so others can hear the gospel of Christ Jesus.

II. PERSONAL COACHING FROM AN APOSTLE

2 Timothy 2:8–10 ⁸Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, ⁹for which I **am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal**. But God's word is not chained. ¹⁰Therefore I **endure everything for the sake of the elect**, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

2 Timothy 3:10–12 ¹⁰You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, ¹¹persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. ¹²In fact, **everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted ...**

2 Timothy 4:5–8 ⁵But you, keep your head in all situations, **endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry**. ⁶For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Now 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.

2 Timothy 4:9–18 ⁹Do your best to come to me quickly, ¹⁰for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry. ¹²I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. ¹³When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments.

¹⁴Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. ¹⁵You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message.

¹⁶At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. ¹⁷But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth.

¹⁸The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

4. How can you coach other Christians to stay the course, fight the good fight, and do difficult things for the Lord?
5. How have you seen honoring the Lord and a duty to live a moral life replaced with an attitude of entitlement at work, as citizens, or with your friends?
6. Commit this week to prayers of thanksgiving to God the Healer, God the Deliverer, God the Restorer, and the God of Mercy.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I rejoice in Your great faithfulness to me. You are my Rock and my Redeemer. All my days are secure in Your hands. Your lovingkindness overshadows me. You have called me out of darkness and set my feet on a path of righteousness. I put my trust in You, for You are a faithful God. Amen.