



"Our ability to handle life's challenges is a measure of our strength of character."

—Les Brown

13-Jul-18

Challenges

Throughout our lives, we have all confronted challenges and difficulties—from learning to walk as toddlers and learning to read as children to becoming adults and facing all the responsibilities that come with it. We must learn skills for jobs and handle the different relationships we have at school, at work, and at home. All of these can be challenging.

What constitutes a challenge? One definition is apropos to us as Christians: "to arouse or stimulate especially by presenting with difficulties." Everyone encounters difficulties; every Christian faces trials. The apostle James provides some advice: "My brethren, count it all [joy](#) when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your [faith](#) produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing" ([James 4:2-4](#)).

Life is difficult to navigate. Adversity is a common part of life, yet now, having been called to live as Christians, we must work hard to overcome and conquer these challenges. We must overcome our carnality and even many of the feelings inherent within it. Also, we must triumph over [the world](#), which is always working to make us succumb to its ways. Then, there are [Satan](#) and the forces of spiritual darkness. All of these challenge us on a daily basis.

Our character is developed as we are tested and overcome, and our faith grows as we

CGG Weekly: Challenges (13-Jul-18)

traverse the road of life with its difficult obstacles, situations, and misfortunes that pop up along the way. Sadly, we find more than enough challenges to deal with. Many brethren right now are facing numerous difficult trials: sickness, disease, financial problems, relationship problems at home and on the job, and many other adverse challenges.

[God](#) wants us to work at overcoming such difficulties and grow into the people we are meant to be. He wants individuals who pass the tests that rise against them. To do so, we must develop a godly attitude and perseverance to conquer and go on to perfection ([Hebrews 6:1](#)).

Each of us has unique situations and challenges that will test us. We could call it a customized examination of our ability to overcome and to grow strong in the faith. However, none of us will be "tested" beyond what we can handle or placed in a trial without a way out. It is a promise from God: "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" ([I Corinthians 10:13](#)).

Sometimes we feel as if our challenges are too overwhelming, that we cannot bear up against the adversity. But we have to keep the faith. The promise is there. Christ, our Elder Brother, and God the Father will not renege on Their promises.

Paul was painfully aware of this, as he had many times been in adverse circumstances, faced trials, and suffered persecutions: "But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me" ([II Timothy 3:10-11](#)). Notice his calm affirmation: "Out of them all the Lord delivered me." Each apostle had his own obstacles to overcome, and so will we.

The Bible brims over with examples of those who overcame adversity and proved their mettle, displaying great strength of character. We must remember, though, they did not face them alone. God was involved with each one, just as He is with us.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong,

CGG Weekly: Challenges (13-Jul-18)

became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. ([Hebrews 11:32-40](#))

Adversity, challenges, tests, and persecutions—all of which had built in them a conqueror's faith and perseverance. Some of them even suffered torture and death. We see this and then look at our situations and think, "My problems and circumstances are nothing compared to those."

Jesus states in [John 15:4-5](#): "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." Every challenge we successfully conquer with His help serves to strengthen, not only our resolve, but our confidence and therefore our ability to confront future obstacles, building our perseverance and faith.

[Luke 12:48](#) instructs us, "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more." Our Lord Himself lived a life filled with challenges—tests far greater than any of us have had to endure. He had to deal directly with Satan (Matthew 4; Luke 4)! How many times was He challenged by those who wished to kill Him? If He had to face such challenges, then we as disciples will have to conquer and overcome as He did ([John 15:20](#); [Matthew 10:24-25](#)).

But we now have Him as our Advocate and Helper. It is vitally important that we stay connected with the Vine, our source of power and growth. In addition, as fellow sojourners on this path to God's Kingdom, we must support each other, praying daily for each other. We need to communicate with, encourage, and aid each other as much as we can.

Paul writes encouragingly in [Romans 8:37](#), "Yet in all these things we are more than

CGG Weekly: Challenges (13-Jul-18)

[conquerors](#) through Him who loved us." Therefore, as we walk our daily walk, we must persevere, overcome, and conquer the adverse challenges arrayed against us. This is how we build the faith and character that our great God desires to see in us, the faith and character of our Savior Jesus Christ.

- Gary Montgomery

World News Highlights

[Angela Merkel Hits Back at Donald Trump at NATO Summit](#)

The Guardian 11-Jul-18

[Smart Technology Sees Through Walls to Track and Identify People](#)

NBC News 08-Jul-18

[Feminists Clash With Transgenders at London Pride Parade](#)

PJ Media 08-Jul-18

[Top Iranian General: Forces in Syria 'Awaiting Orders' to Destroy Israel](#)

The Times Of Israel 09-Jul-18

[Dangerous Developments: Surrogacy & the Universal Parentage Act](#)

Prophecy News Watch/Breakpoint.org 10-Jul-18

[Netflix Airs 'Salute to Abortion;' Host Declares: 'God Bless Abortio](#)

CNS News 09-Jul-18

[Boris Johnson Tells Pm She Is Suffocating Brexit 'Dream'](#)

BBC News 09-Jul-18

[Salafist Scare in Sweden as Report Points to Avalanche Growth of Radical Islam](#)

Sputnik News 02-Jul-18

[There Are Fears of New Conflicts at One of Israel's Quietest Borders](#)

Bloomberg 11-Jul-18

[The Technological Tipping Point](#)

Prophecy News Watch 13-Jul-18

New Transcripts

[913c: Breaking Israel's Pride](#)

Given by John W. Ritenbaugh on 06-Dec-08

[915c: The Islamization of Europe](#)

Given by John W. Ritenbaugh on 20-Dec-08

Prayer Requests

New prayer request updates have been posted for the following people:

[Musonda Sakala](#)

[Musonda Sakala](#)

[Margi Saxton](#)

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[The Challenge of Growth in the New Eden](#)

by Charles Whitaker

In this sermon, Charles Whitaker focuses on the marvelous opportunities for young people in God's church who find themselves on the threshold of God's Millennium, a time population growth will take place in abundant prosperity brought about by creative God-inspired technology, refashioning and terraforming the entire eco-system. In this Edenic setting, the family of God and the family of man will be collaborating on preparing the world for billions of additional human beings in the Great White Throne Period. Abundance, growth, and an expanding population of animals and people will characterize the New Eden, constructed out of the tohu and bohu or wreckage of the previous era. Young people need to prepare themselves now, envisioning themselves as architects, civil engineers, transportation engineers, explorers, teachers, replacing today's inefficient and misdirected technologies with God's perfect and efficient technology.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Peer-Pressure: A Challenge for All](#)

by Staff

All of us—teens and adults—have felt the stress of peer-pressure in one form or another. Though the Bible does not use the term, it teaches us not to conform to our peers but to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

Featured Audio Schedule

Friday Night Bible Study

The next Bible Study will be **Lamentations (Part 6; 1989)**, given by **John W. Ritenbaugh** on **Friday 13-Jul-18**. The Bible Study will be continuously available from **6:00 pm Friday** until **12:00 pm Saturday (EST)**.

Daily Audio Programs

Hear previous sermons, sermonettes, and Feast of Tabernacles messages, **Sunday through Friday**. [Available from the homepage.](#)

Date	Title
Sunday 15-Jul-18	Faith and Technology
Monday 16-Jul-18	Letting Go
Tuesday 17-Jul-18	Enduring to the End
Wednesday 18-Jul-18	What's So Bad About Valentines Day?
Thursday 19-Jul-18	Seeing God in Creation (Part Three)
Friday 20-Jul-18	Resistance (Part One)

If you would like to subscribe to the C.G.G. Weekly newsletter, please visit our [Email Subscriptions page.](#)
