

Endurance - Part III - For Others
Reflection and Discussion Questions

15 We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." 4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.
(Romans 15: 1-7)

Spend some time reading through the above verse several times slowly, and prayerfully asking God to open your heart, mind and body to how he wants to speak, challenge, encourage you through it.

1. The men were desperate to get off the dividing ice flows and kept looking to their leader to give direction, ***"The men stood looking up at Shackleton atop the little knoll"***.
 - a. How did it help the men to look to Shackleton for their cues?

 - b. Hebrews 12:1-2 reminds us as well, this is to be our aim, ***"looking to Jesus the Founder and Perfecter of our faith."*** How does looking to Jesus in the middle of our suffering and trials help us?

 - c. What keeps you from looking to Him more often? Is there anything you need to repent of or confess?

- d. The passage in Hebrews goes on to share what Jesus continues to do “**for the joy that was set before him endured the cross**”. If we are following and looking to Him in life where might He take us?

2. After a grueling night at sea, Lansing recounts, “**But the dawn did come - at last**”. And yet Shackleton as their leader combed the faces of his men as he thought, “**How much more could they take**”? He wasn’t just concerned with himself and what he could handle.
 - a. Read Romans 15:1 from above. Where are you being challenged to bear with the failings of the weak?

 - b. Where are you the weak, and need to let others bear with you?

 - c. Where is it most tempting to just please yourself in life?

 - d. Read Romans 15:3. How did Jesus model this for us? Pause and sit in awe of how Jesus did not please Himself but took the reproaches on our behalf. He loves us so!

3. On another night on the sea, Lansing writes, “**Gradually the sea grew calmer,..the sun rose in unforgettable brilliance through a pink mist along the horizon, which soon melted into flaming gold. It was more than just a sunrise. It seemed to flood into their souls, rekindling the life within them. They watched the growing light quenching the wild dark misery of the night that now at last was over.**” Our God is a God of “encouragement and endurance”. He loves to encourage us! (pg. 207)
 - a. How has the Lord encouraged you these past two weeks- has anything helped to rekindle your soul and life within?

- b. What would help to have your eyes peeled for this encouragement more and more in your life?

4. Orde-lee, one of the crew, was ordered by a superior to take up his turn and oar in their perilous attempt to get to a safe island but he refused-saying he was not fit and it was too wet. “***The two men screamed at one another in the darkness and from every corner of the boat men cursed Orde-lee as he immediately crawled into the bottom and refused to move even though the weight unbalanced the boat***”
 - a. What was the effect of Ords-lee on the rest of the men? How would you have handled the situation with Ords-lee?

 - b. Is there someone in your life that reminds you of Ords-lee?

 - c. What do you think Ords-lee was feeling? Do you ever feel like Ords-lee? How does it affect those around us when we are fearful, or selfish? How does Romans 15 above help us as we struggle like Ords-lee?

5. At one point, Lansing writes, the men “***reached the limit of their endurance***”(pg. 212). One seminary professor spoke of seasons in his life as he battled cancer, that all he could offer up to the Lord was his endurance or perseverance - that was how he glorified God.
 - a. Is there a situation in your life where your offering to the Lord is endurance?

 - b. Are their ways others have entered in with you? Is it hard to let others help you or do you run to others so quickly that you may miss a work God is doing in you through the trial?

6. ***“So they formed themselves a chain and began the laborious job of passing the stores up the beach.”***
- a. Read Romans 15:5. How does living in harmony encourage endurance and hope?

 - b. Where have you experienced this?

 - c. Read Romans 15:7. The Lord has welcomed us! He has welcomed us into His world, and through Jesus, into His Kingdom forever. He invites us into relationship every day. This is why He made us! Spend a moment enjoying relationship with the living God. Thank Him for welcoming you so lavishly.
7. ***“No man could have endured with just that (the possibility of getting to their island) to keep him going. Instead, life was reckoned in periods of a few hours or possibly only a few minutes - an endless succession of trials leading to deliverance from the particular hell of the moment”***(pg. 286)
- a. What rhythms in your day have helped you in this season?

 - b. Where could you encourage others with those or welcome others into them with you?
8. After a bird was flying around the boat like a fly, ***“Shackleton stood it for several moments then jumped to his feet, swearing and batting furiously with his arms. But he realized at once what a poor example he had set, and sat down at once....”***
- a. Ha! Shackleton reminds us of ourselves. We often will bat and get furious at something other than what is really discouraging us. Can you think of a moment when this happened recently?

- b. Maybe Shackleton was just showing he was real and had frustrations to his men. But he felt he had been a poor example. What do you think?
 - c. Read Romans 15:2. What are we to be about as we interact with our neighbors, church, and family?
9. ***“After a while they even began to sing”***. (pg. 329) Song seemed to be a recurring comfort or even source of laughter for the men over the two years.
- a. Where has song or music been an encouragement to you?
 - b. What have been some favorite songs to listen to or play?
 - c. Could you share one or two of those with someone else to encourage them in their endurance?
10. After Shackleton saw the pace they were making it down the mountain and that they would most likely freeze before they made it to the bottom ***“he suggested they slide.”*** They hooked arms and legs together. ***“They looked like three tobogganers without a toboggan”*** They sped down the mountain and spilled out at the flattened plane ***“but they found themselves laughing uncontrollably.”***
- a. This is a great picture for us! We need each other to get down the mountain - to get to our “destination” in life. With whom have you hooked arms? With whom could you hook arms?
 - b. The men of endurance knew the peril of trying to go it alone. Do we grasp the danger of this in our lives?

- c. Possibly because of pain in past relationships, or fear of rejection we may almost feel the danger is in drawing near to others not in going it alone. How does hearing God's Words in Romans counter this fear or pain?

 - d. Laughter. It is its own gift and medicine from the Lord! How does it help with endurance? What helps you laugh? Can you plan some of that into your schedule this week or month? What laughter can you invite others into as well?
11. Justin Early from our videos leaves us with two final questions, as we consider endurance in our lives as followers of Jesus.
- a. How can your church create rhythms of small, vulnerable, safe, and embodied gospel communities?

 - b. What commitments would that take from you?