

## Don't Stop at Hard

October 15, 2023 | Acts 14 | Pastor Mike Foster

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Notes on Acts 14:

A basic biblical theology of trials:

- Trials are normal – expect them

- Trials are useful – invest them

- Trials are tempting – but God is there in your despair

What to do in trials:

- Look for God's grace
- Surround yourself with God's people
- Don't stop at hard

## Discussion Questions

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1. What stood out to you most from the message?
2. In your own words, explain the differences between viewing the Christian life as a walk on the beach, a marathon, or a hike.
3. Do you agree the Christian life is like a hike? Why or why not? What other metaphors might accurately represent the journey it is to follow Jesus in this world?
4. Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17. How does Paul view his sufferings in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra? How did he see God at work through these trials?
5. What are some ways God has used trials in your life or in the lives of others that you have witnessed?
6. Read 2 Corinthians 1:8-9. Have you ever despaired of life like Paul himself? How did God help you through this time? Or, how can we trust God to help you now? What might it look like to help someone who is experiencing great despair? (Consider Elijah in 1 Kings 19)
7. Who are some people that you have surrounded yourself with during trials? How has God used them in your life?
8. Share about a trial you are experiencing right now and pray for one another.
9. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. What are some practical ways we can “fix our eyes on Jesus” in the midst of trials?
10. Spend some time praying for Israel and those affected by the conflict in the Middle East using the prayer guide in the section above.

## For Further Reflection

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Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17, Romans 5:1-5, 2 Cor. 4:16-18, Hebrews 12:1-3  
Study Acts 14 in more detail – <https://bit.ly/acts14commentary>  
Read about God's grace in trials – <https://bit.ly/graceintrials>  
Read about the art of lament in the midst of trials – <https://bit.ly/lamentintrials>  
Pray for Christians in nations where they are persecuted for their faith  
– <https://bit.ly/persecutedchristiansww>  
Pray for Israel and the people of the Holy Land  
– <https://bit.ly/israelprayerguide>  
Read *God will use this for Good* by Max Lucado  
Read *God's Grace in your Suffering* by David Powlinson

