

Character Matters Message Series: Fortitude Matters

Scriptures used: [2 Corinthians 11:25-27](#), [Psalm 23](#), [Psalm 24:7-10](#), [Philippians 4:12-13](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor introduced the new series, Character Matters. Today's launch was on the topic of fortitude. "Character is who we are on the inside, the quality that embodies many important traits: integrity, courage, perseverance, confidence, and wisdom," per John Maxwell. Pastor Hurmon amplified, "Fortitude enables us to face danger, pain, and adversity with courage and resilience." The secret to growing in fortitude is living life with God, having a faith mindset so that highs and lows are processed with God and shape our character.

KEY POINTS

1. The power of Fortitude

a. The account of Paul on the matter

Pastor Hurmon shared the account Paul gave reflecting on his life, on the many ups and downs that he faced and what he ultimately learned, to be content in the midst of any circumstance. He encouraged us to look forward (see [Philippians 4:12-14](#)). God does not make us feel bad for not having fortitude, but He does remind us that fortitude is needed for the days ahead. In order to grow in fortitude, we need to grow in faith and grow in understanding the ups and downs of life with God and others. When we grow in fortitude, we are able to truly believe that we can do all things that God is calling us to do as God gives us strength ([Philippians 4:13](#)). Like Paul, we are able to keep looking forward. Pastor Hurmon adds how to accomplish this: "Changing, strengthening, and developing our character is an enterprise that should be done with the God who created us. He continues to help us align with our purpose."

b. The win-win of Superbowl LVIII

Many people will watch the Super Bowl today. What people may not know is that both 49er's quarterback Brock Purdy and the Chiefs' quarterback Patrick Mahomes are followers of Christ. This is a win-win, Pastor Hurmon notes, "for the Kingdom!" He noted that Purdy was selected in the final pick of the 2022 NFL draft, labeled as "Mr. Irrelevant." Purdy's career has been a display of fortitude, of not letting circumstances define him or discourage him. Purdy has said that he reads Psalm 23 daily for fortitude, to be reminded that He is loved by God, his life and purpose are in God's hands, and he doesn't need to win the approval of others.

2. The result of being fortified in our faith

Pastor Hurmon asks us to consider how to answer, "How do I respond to obstacles in life?" To empower our resolve, he shared the story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran pastor during WWII, who opposed Hitler and the Nazi oppression of the Jews. Pastor read his insightful poem, "Who Am I?" The poem ends, "Whoever I am, You know me, and I am Yours." When we walk in faith, we have great strength and courage to persevere through successes and failures, joys and heartbreaks. Pastor Hurmon gave four steps to plan and execute our own roadmap for fortitude:

1. Regulate emotions with: prayer, meditation, deep breathing, and journaling
2. Build a team. Who in your inner circle of influence helps to build your faith?
3. Practice self compassion. Be kind to yourself. What are your tenets for self compassion?
4. Encourage yourself. Review [Psalm 24:7-10](#). Lift up your heart, soul, and mind gates!

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - It is a significant help to hear your own voice reading scripture. Do you have an "anchor Scripture", one that you return to over and over again in your life? Share your anchor Scripture, or read aloud one of the Scriptures shared in today's message. What resonates with you from today's message?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [2 Corinthians 11:25-27](#). How do you usually respond to adversity? What has been your toughest season of adversity? What difference did your faith make, or what difference do you hope faith will make in upcoming seasons of adversity? Do you think it is possible to invest in your faith now in a way that will give you greater fortitude for future seasons of adversity?
- 3) **DO** - To join a team like a Life Group to increase fortitude, fill out our connection card: <https://bit.ly/NBCCConnectCard>. Join us this coming Sunday as we look at other ways to grow our faith and fortitude during our 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting leading up to Easter.