

## **Give Up or Stand Up**

### **Ready:**

Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. But endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing. - James 1:2-4

### **Set**

When I was admitted into the hospital in 2006 and, after five days of testing, was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, I found myself asking the question, "Why me, God? I have served You all these years, even preached Your Word as a youth pastor. Why would You allow me to get this devastating disease?" I began to let the adversary work in my mind telling me to give up, that my life was over. I began to think that maybe I wasn't worthy of God's protection over my health. This tortured me for a while like a slow drip of water on my forehead. As time went by I realized that I once stood strong and healthy, and now I battle to stand. I asked myself again, "Why?" It was at that moment that I felt the Holy Spirit tell me I was not thinking clearly. God's Spirit brought me to His Scriptures to ensure me that God allows us to face trials in our lives. These trials test our faith, mold us into who God wants us to be, and allows Him to work in our lives the way He wants to work. But for God to work we must make sure our spirit is aligned with His and our faith is intact. Proverbs 18:14 (NIV) says, "The human spirit can endure in sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear?" God uses the adversities we face for many reasons and one is to be an example to others. Also, 1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV) says that we are to "set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." I know now that what I am facing with MS is to be used for His glory. I am no longer asking why nor questioning how God does things. God does not give us more than we can handle, so I realize He knows how strong I am. He knows I will not give up. He knows I will stand strong once again and be a testimony for His great works.

### **Go**

1. When you face a trial in your sport or life do you give up or stand up in faith? 2. Are you willing to be a godly example to others on your team and school in the midst of adversity? Will you press on? 3. Do you believe God allows you to go through trials and tribulations so you may be used for His purpose? What can you do to discover that purpose?

### **Workout**

Romans 5:1-5 Philippians 3:12-21 Hebrews 12:1-3

### **Bible Reference:**

James 1



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