

## **Practice Hard**

### **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**

Very few people love to practice. To most, it is just a means to an end. Only if we practice will the coach allow us to play in games. Even if we loathe it, practice is irreplaceable as the best way to improve skills. Athletes at every level must train. In fact, professionals only get where they are through hard work. How hard we work in practice may predict our game-time performance.

Living for God takes practice. To live the life He has called us to, we must work hard. Because following Jesus is contrary to our natural desires, we must train our minds and hearts to live according to the Bible. Just like in sports, we may fail many times before accomplishing our goal. When trying to be more patient, there will be frustrating times of impatience. When trying to love people more, we will meet a hard-to-love person. During trials, God builds our faith and character

Like practice, trials can be long and difficult. We may even question if living for God is worth it. When I played sports, I questioned whether the practice was worth it. But when my team would outperform another, I knew it was worth every minute. In life we may not compete against others, but when we learn from trials and allow our faith to grow, we will be ready come game time. We will have invested well in our faith, and our efforts will be worth it.

### **Go**

1. What is one character trait you have as a result of enduring a trial?
2. In what area of your life is God growing you? Are you getting plenty of practice?

### **Workout**

James 5:11; 1 Peter 1:6-7

### **Overtime**

Lord, thank You for guiding me. Please help me to endure trials with strength and wisdom. I

know You will use them to continue Your work in me. Amen.



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