

V. WE HAVE LEARNED LOVE

“5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:5-8

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39

WHAT SPECIFIC ENDURING LESSONS HAS GOD TAUGHT YOU IN 2020?

REFLECTING BACKWARD, REACHING FORWARD

Reflecting Backward
Pastor Steve Reynolds

INTRODUCTION

- A.** The entire world has collectively lived through one of the most difficult years in modern history. It has been a time full of fear, unrest, and division. We have been stretched to our spiritual, emotional, mental and physical limits. Most of us are totally worn out!

Now a new year is upon us! And despite the fact that we are still dealing with some of the same stressful circumstances we have reasons to believe that life will slowly improve in the new year. As we transition from one year to another we must follow the commandment of God given to Moses for the children of Israel.

“Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren,”

Deuteronomy 4:9

- B.** Our Reflecting Backward, Reaching Forward teaching series will help you obey this command and prepare you for the next season of your life. We will look back at enduring lessons from 2020 and look ahead to necessary actions for 2021.

These messages include:

TODAY	Reflecting Backward
Jan 5	Reaching Forward

- C. TEXT:** Romans 5:3-8

FIVE LESSONS LEARNED IN 2020

Tribulation is a great teacher.

“11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound.

Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4:11-13

I. WE HAVE LEARNED JOY

“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations,...”

Romans 5:3a

“2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” James 1:2-4

II. WE HAVE LEARNED PERSEVERANCE

“...knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;”

Romans 5:3b

“8 “Look, I go forward, but He is not there, And backward, but I cannot perceive Him;

9 When He works on the left hand, I cannot behold Him;

When He turns to the right hand, I cannot see Him.

10 But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.

11 My foot has held fast to His steps;

I have kept His way and not turned aside.

12 I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food.”

Job 23:8-12

III. WE HAVE LEARNED CHARACTER

“ and perseverance, character; ...”

Romans 5:4a

“28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Romans 8:28-29.

“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,”

Philippians 3:10

IV. WE HAVE LEARNED HOPE

“...and character, hope.”

Romans 5:4b

“3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that

does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,”

I Peter 1:3-6

“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

Revelation 21:4