

Getting Started

What’s the hardest task you’ve ever had to complete? Tell the group about it, its difficulties, and its rewards.

Have you ever had a task that you simply could not complete? Describe the effort and the emotional impact of not achieving your goal.

Into the Bible

Consider one of the largest building projects in the Bible—the construction of the temple in its various iterations.

According to 1 Kings 6:37-38, how long did it take to build the first temple?

According to Ezra 3:8 and 6:15 how long did it take to rebuild the temple? (The exiles returned in 538 BC, and Darius came to the throne in 522 BC.)

According to John 2:20, how long did Herod work to refurbish the temple?

What difficulties would there be in projects that lasted so long?

What explains the Israelites’ ability to stick to it?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:58 and Colossians 3:17. What encourages a Christian to keep going in the long project of living a Christian life?

Read Mark 10:17-22. What did the man want to do? What was Jesus’ response?

Compare Galatians 2:16. What’s the one project that no Christian, no matter how faithful, will ever accomplish?

Finally, Ephesians 2:8-10. How is the work of salvation accomplished? Does that mean that we can just take it easy as Christians?

Digging Deeper

Have you ever been tempted to look at your sin, shrug your shoulders, and say, “Oh, well. I’m forgiven”? Does that seem like the right attitude for one of Christ’s people? How do rest easy in Jesus’ salvation and still “continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12)?