

Session 1

Fortitude: Steadfastness & Spirit

❖ OPEN IN PRAYER

***Suggestion:** LORD, thank you for this time to meet. You are the Almighty God of healing and restoration. Today, will you please bring to our minds memories of things You want to show us. Help us to see where You have been present in our lives, even the places we didn't think you were. Guard us against the hurts of the past and heal them with your power, love and Holy Spirit through Yeshua/Jesus. Give us Your peace as we start to look for You in our lives. Show us Your truth. We pray in the name of precious Yeshua. Amen.*

❖ DEFINING THE TOOL

We will begin each session by exploring definitions of the main topic/word of the day. Growing our understanding of these ideas gives us a tool that we can use to help us make a better and more beautiful life, or when necessary, make some repairs.

>>><<< F O R T I T U D E >>><<<	
Definition	mental and emotional strength in facing difficulty, adversity, danger; bearing pain or temptation courageously
Synonyms	courage, bravery, endurance, resilience, moral fiber, backbone, grit, spirit, steadfastness

➤ **Do you find some words or ideas that stand out to you in this definition?**

❖ DIGGING IN

- **Think of a time when you have had to have fortitude in your life.**
- **If you feel comfortable, share a story of a time in your life when you see that you had fortitude.**
- **Did you know at the time that God's strength and spirit were with you in that situation? Looking back now, do you see His presence?**

These stories tell about a strength inside you that won't let you give up.

That's Fortitude.

You know you matter and you want better.

You're here.

Praise the LORD!

❖ SPIRIT AND STEADFASTNESS

Spirit is important. It's the part inside of you that you can't see, but you know who you are inside. Creator can't be seen either, but we know Him in the things He creates and we can know His help through times of strength we can't explain, or a feeling of love and peace. Sometimes we are unexpectedly gentle or patient or have the strength to deal with things that seem almost impossible to deal with. These are workings of the Spirit, God's Holy Spirit, because they are good things. **Fortitude of the Spirit** is His strength within our spirit when things around us are bad or hard.

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

James 1:12

The Creator is called “Love” in the Bible.

Anyone who does not love does not know God because God is love.

1 John 4:8

One of the words that describes fortitude is “steadfastness.” When you look this word up in the Bible, it is connected with many verses about God’s steadfast love. It means God’s love stays strong, it doesn’t quit, it keeps going. As a child of the Creator, no matter what you do, you are loved.

❖ DIGGING IN

Read 1 Corinthians 13 from the Bible.

Group Leader: *Have people take turns reading out loud if they are willing.*

- **How does reading this make you feel?**

- **Read it again. What stands out to you this time and why?**

- **Do these words of love bring you a sense of peace and rest?**

When we know we are loved and cared for, it makes having fortitude easier. We can be more at rest and not have to strive so hard because God loves us so much that He will do the fighting for us. We can have more peace. When we know His love, it helps us want to live better too and not want to do bad things like maybe we used to. The bad things are called sin.

The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.

Exodus 14:14

“Be still and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world.”

Psalm 46:10

So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.

Romans 8:6

The best kind of fortitude to have during hard times is fortitude of the Spirit - the strength of faith in a loving God. It is that kind of fortitude that allows us to move with peace through the low times of life.

Living with fortitude is different than living in survival mode. Fortitude is an inner strength that supports us and keeps us moving forward. Survival mode goes with victimization. Survival mode means believing that you are a victim and everything bad is coming to get you. Fortitude through Creator means knowing you are a victor and will get through this low time - and knowing that the love of God has not changed for you no matter how hard things are; you are loved.

As you mature in faith, spiritual fortitude gives you strength enough to allow yourself to rest and pray and trust God in the midst of your problems. You let Him fight for you to help you get through it because you have faith, somehow He will get you through. You are not a victim. God fights for you all the way to the day He calls you home to Himself.

We can choose to appreciate every little thing that is good. Some people are really good at that and those are the people you probably most like to be around. Those people have fortitude. They are determined to see good even when life is hard.

This isn't the Promised Land. This life isn't going to be easy. Trust God with all 24 hours. Put more things to rest and trust God with them; He promises that there is joy in the morning. It's a day by day process. Growing in fortitude with our faith

sees us through. We can keep growing because God's love is always there for us and He promises that nothing can separate us from Him.

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels or demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.

Romans 8:38 NLT

❖ **LOOKING FORWARD**

➤ **Where or in what do you want to have more fortitude tomorrow?**

❖ **CLOSE IN PRAYER**

Close in prayer thanking God for the strength of His love for us and that He fights for us so we don't have to carry those burdens. Ask Him to help us to have more in the way of His fortitude through His Holy Spirit.