

# STRETCHING OUR FAITH

## (Faith Tested Series, Part 3)

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## THE LORD'S FLOCK GROW DIGEST

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God is out to S-T-R-E-T-C-H us!

When our faith is stretched, it grows and becomes stronger. Spiritually, stretching leads us closer to God and likewise strengthens us to do His perfect will. The Bible details story after story of men and women who learned to stretch spiritually, and in doing so, set the example for us: Abraham, Moses, David, Job, Esther, Mary the Mother of Jesus, Peter, among many others. They all inspire us to be challenged by and respond to the scriptural principle of stretching so that we can be strengthened in our faith.

In Isaiah 54:2, God's people were encouraged to "lengthen the chords" and "strengthen the stakes" in order to grow and expand into the new life that He had prepared for them. God challenged them to go through the "expanding and the stretching, the lengthening and the strengthening" in order to see the reward that God promised.

### The Biblical Pattern of Stretching

1. **Life is full of problems and challenges.** Just like Joseph in the Old Testament, we also face frustrations, crises, sickness, poverty, spiritual warfare, consequences of sin and unhealthy relationship.
2. **God gives us promises and choices.** a) Job was blessed in greater ways after the testing than he had been before (Job 42:13, 16, 17). God gives us hope that there are answers and solutions to our aches and pains. b) Peter faced a lot of problems and learned to respond to God's promises by making right choices.

### Some Truths about Stretching

1. Most people do not stretch until they are forced to do so or do not stretch daily even if they were stretched in the past; they need to be motivated first before they stretch or feel uncomfortable when they stretch.
2. Few people who stretch all their lives, inspire future generations.

### Being Stretched by God

1. God wants to stretch us into His image (*how we survive*). Jesus stretches us so we will act, talk, love, minister like Him.
2. God wants to stretch our vision (*how we view life*). Jesus did this to Simon Peter - to see beyond his boats

and nets, to a vision that made him a man of God.

3. God wants to stretch our hearts (*how we process life*). Proverbs 4:23 tells us that from the heart comes the issues of life. Do we turn our heartaches and pains over to God and ask Him to stretch and strengthen us so we can so we can respond the way He wants us to? (1 Peter 1:6-7)
4. God wants to stretch our abilities (*how we function*). God not only gives us talents, gifts, abilities for ministry work, but His power and spirit enable us to do it better than we ever could on our own (1 Peter 4:9-15).
5. God wants to stretch our influence (*how we minister to others*). How we respond to people when we are under pressure says a lot about how we are letting God stretch us into the image of Christ (1 Peter 3:15).

### Apostle Peter's Spiritual Journey

Luke 5:1-11 illustrated how Peter, a fisherman, became "challenge-able, change-able and stretch-able." He was a man like a lot of us – not perfect, a little rough around the edges, but he was a man who learned lessons well, a man who allowed himself to be changed, matured, strengthened so that God could use him.

### Conclusion:

Being spiritually stretched is never easy. But stretching makes us flexible to be used in the hands of God. He assures us that even through the pain and pressure of stretching, He is right there with us. We can run the spiritual race with endurance to victoriously reach His intended goal.

### Reflection:

When God stretches your faith, do you move closer in, or you move farther away from Him? Why?

### Prayer:

Lord, help us to fully trust You and develop a faith that is willing to be stretched and strengthened so that we won't break when beaten, but rather, we may be made stronger by the experience of trusting You. Give us the grace to believe You for greater things and no longer allow doubt, fear and worry to control us. In Jesus' Name. AMEN!

**SCRIBES MINISTRY:** Transcribed by: Helen Angeles-Del Mundo

<https://lordsflock.org/teachings/digests>

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