

## **LESSON 12: TRIALS IN LIFE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Some men are really good at speaking and can talk people out of the truth simply with their words. An example of this is many of the TV preachers today. They are great at rhetoric, but can lead masses away from the truth. The common basis of their teachings is that if you have faith in Jesus, then you will never have any money problems, health problems, or trials in your life. These preachers sometimes also speak heresy by trying to add things to the gospel. Some believe that Jesus Christ died to suffer in hell to pay the penalty for our sins. Paul clearly states that if you add anything to the blood of Jesus Christ then you are guilty of heresy and are cursed by God. It is important not to be swayed by great speakers, but cling to the truth of God's Word. Today, we are going to look into what Scripture has to say about trials in our lives.

### **TRIALS**

#### **Read James 1:2-4**

- ▶ What do these verses say about trials?
  - ❖ You don't rejoice over the trial, but you count it as joy.
  - ❖ You will meet trials of various kinds; therefore there are no limits as to what they may be.
  - ❖ The testing of your faith in Jesus Christ (not you) produces steadfastness.
    - Lost people do not get tested.

#### **Read Hebrews 12:2**

- ▶ How do we handle the trials in our lives?

We must look beyond the trial. This verse talks about how Jesus faced the ultimate trial in pain. Think about a time when you sinned and were shamed because of it. Jesus was filled up with that shame, embarrassment, and humiliation from every person that has ever been born. There was no joy in the cross for Jesus which is why He asked God if there was any other way. Jesus endured the cross because of the "joy set before Him" in knowing that through that trial, people for generations to come would be able to begin a new relationship with God through Jesus Christ and grow in His Word.

James says to handle trials in a similar fashion by looking for the joy to come which is the true testing of your faith. You will not have joy in the trials; otherwise, they would not be trials. You have to assume that no matter what you are facing, God can pull you through.

### **PURPOSE OF TRIALS**

#### **Read Proverbs 17:3 and Psalm 66:10-12**

- ▶ Why do we go through trials?

The analogy of a furnace is used in both sets of verses. If you have a rock filled with a bunch of different metals, and you want to get the silver out, then you burn it and melt all the other metals away and you are left with silver. Likewise, if Jesus Christ is in you and God wants to make sure at the end of the day you are left with a perfect stance of Jesus Christ, then he will put you through the furnace, so He burns out those impurities in your life.

Like a furnace, trials are going to burn and be difficult, but through these trials, God is pulling out what should not be in your life. To reach maturity in Christ, you must go through trials. This can be difficult to grasp, but you must understand this and be willing to suffer in order to grow closer to Jesus Christ.

**Read Romans 5:1-4, Romans 8:18, and Ephesians 2:4-7**

- ▶ What do these verses say about the reason for trials?

Romans 5 talks about the deepening of our faith in Jesus Christ because trials bring about “perseverance, proven character, and hope.”

Romans 8 mentions the fact that our suffering is nothing compared to the glory that is to be revealed. This coming glory is further defined in Ephesians 2 where God says that He will show us (Christians) off to eternity. Some day in the future, God will hold us up and show us off to eternity because of our redemption. Man was created as the highest created being and we crave that importance in our life that was lost through Adam and Eve. God wants to hold us up and go through every detail of our trials and say that we stood up for Him no matter how hard the trial.

*Example: Jesus sent out 70 men who began to see all these miracles. They come back excited about what they saw and tell Jesus everything. Jesus is also excited but tells them that He saw Satan fall from heaven because of the impact these men had on him. He warns them not to rejoice because the spirits are subject to them. On the other hand, He says to rejoice because their name is written down in heaven.*

The centerpiece of my rejoicing is my redemption so that I can handle the times when joy is removed through the trial because the joy that I know is coming one day is that I stand before God and He shows me off to the universe as a man that stood well for Him amidst of trial.

**IS THERE A LIMIT TO OUR SUFFERING?**

**Read Genesis 15:13**

- ▶ Is there a limit to our suffering?

God sets a time limit for your trials. In this passage, God tells Abram that his children will suffer for 400 years. Usually, trials are episodic, but some can have a lifetime effect. However there is either a time limit to the trial itself or a time limit to your adaptation to the trial.

*Example: Joni Eareckson Tada- As a girl, experienced a diving accident, broke her neck, and is paralyzed from the neck down. She will never be able to walk, but there was a timeframe where she learned to adapt and overcome the trial. She went on to share the Gospel with many.*

### **Read Genesis 50:19-21**

- ▶ How can our trials change our lives?

This is the passage where Joseph is talking to his brothers, years after they sold him into slavery. Joseph assures his brothers that it was God's work and not anyone's sin that caused everything to happen. Even though they meant it for bad, God used the circumstances for good. When God gets you through a trial and releases you, God will bless both you and those around you.

- ▶ What two truths regarding trials are illustrated in these verses?

1. God could have prevented it, but did not.

Any trial we experience, God either allows or causes to happen. This can be difficult to accept in the face of the trial, but ultimately we must accept it and turn to God because He is in the trial with us.

2. Some trials that come to you are because of your sin.

Joseph used the knowledge and insight that God gave him to mock his brothers and parents. This led to him being sold into slavery (the trials in his life) which God ultimately used for His glory.

### **CAUSES OF TRIALS**

#### **Read Matthew 24:9 and James 5:13-15**

- ▶ What are some of the causes of trials?

- ❖ Sin (**Genesis 50:19-21**)

- ❖ Standing up for Christ (**Matthew 24:9**)

- ❖ Problems in your life (**James 5:13-15**)

- Sometimes you will have problems in your life as a result of God disciplining you for sin. Once you are repentant, God can send somebody to pray for you and anoint you leading to the removal of the trial.

- ❖ To bring glory to God (seen in earlier passages)

## **WHEN TRIALS SEEM TO OVERCOME US**

There are times in our lives when trials are so painful and difficult that it seems impossible to utilize your faith. God has a special way of handling this.

### **Read Romans 8:26-28**

- ▶ What do we do when we cannot seem to withstand the trial?

There is nothing we can do, but the Holy Spirit has promised that He will intercede for us. Faith can never be burned away because even when it is difficult to utilize, the Holy Spirit steps in and God honors His prayer. Your faith is never lost and good comes out of the trial.

## **CONCLUSION**

All Christians will face trials for various reasons. We will not have joy in the trial, but in the coming joy promised by God. There is a time frame for our trials, and no matter how bad they are we cannot lose our faith because the Holy Spirit will intercede for us. Ultimately, we will endure the trial and God will show us His goodness by blessing us and others, while bringing us to greater maturity in Christ.