

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, through it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

1 Peter 1:6-7

Our true joy comes as we make place for God in our life. When God is in our plans, in our activities, in our relationships and in our hearts that is when we will know true joy.

Though God is in the process of refining our faith through trials, they are only for a season. Our faith will not be destroyed when we place our hope in God. When going through fiery trials don't listen to the voice of the world and become disappointed because of your trials. Listen to the voice of our God and rejoice!

Why should a believer rejoice during trials? Do you find it to be difficult? If so why?



Going Forward

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17

It's the Word of God by which we are purified. The cause of the fire is not as important as how we respond to it. The LORD corrects those he loves and we are receiving God's love and mercy when being refined by fire.

Fire does not only bring heat, pressure, and destruction. It also clears debris, releases nourishment, and stimulates new growth. During a forest fire the fire will open up the top of the canopy allowing the sun to come through to stimulate the new growth on the forest floor.

Like wise, going through the fire will open up the heavens. Allowing God's light to shine down upon us. God is using trial by fire to solve old problems in a new way. Sometimes that new thing is a renewal of the mind, other times its a new thing He is doing in our life.

There are times it takes situations like going through the fire to open up our eyes, like it did for Manasseh. It's because those situations often help push us to go deeper in our walk with God.

Refining our faith through trials is only for a season and we know that it's part of God's process of removing impurity's in our life. During times of trials we need to have some spiritual perseverance by maintaining our hope while doing our best to not become discouraged.

Because it's in those times that we need to trust in his promises, remember His unfailing love and faithfulness, and draw close to Him in prayer.

If your find yourself in a trial then God has not abandoned the fight for you. He is pressing in. Hopefully you can see now that God uses trials to bring about something new. I want to encourage you to keep pressing forward because there are new things for you on the horizon.

In your spiritual journal write what God is saying to you on your heart. What is God saying about a change of perspective? Why should you draw close to Him? What may He have in-store for you on the horizon?



In Short:

- Because God is with us; we should fear not.
- Trial by fire is a good thing.

Walking Through The Fire

“For everyone shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.”

Mark 9:49

Jesus's message is that everyone will go through the testing by fire. As believers sacrifice themselves to God they should not expect to bypass the walk through the fire that God sends for their purification.

Walking through the fire can be frightening for a believer. But, we should not fear the purifying process of God. Because God has sent us a comforter, the Holy Spirit to be with us. His spirit is there to help us as we go through the purifying process.

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you; when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon you.”

Isaiah 43:2

As we walk through the fire God is at our side. He leads us through the fire with a deeper knowledge of the gospel truth and will give us divine strength that is needed to enable us to undergo trials and persecutions.

Notice that in Mark 9:49 Jesus states that everyone will be salted with fire. Yet, here in Zachariah God states that it's only a third that He will bring through the fire. In other words God is saying that all will enter but only a third will survive.

Do you find comfort knowing that God is at your side during trials and persecutions? Why?



Being Focus

“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion.’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; then I will turn My hand against the little ones. And it shall come to pass in all the land’ says the LORD, ‘that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it: I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘This is My people’; and each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”

Zachariah 13:8-9

Striking the Shepherd is a reference to Jesus. It's easy to find ourselves scattered by the attractions, temptations, or cares of the world and there will come times when we all will become scattered at some point in our life.

Living in the world comes with many distractions that can cloud our spiritual morals, behaviors, and judgments. Yet, God is able to change our direction through His refining process. Being refined removes all the impurities and helps us focus on our relationship with God.

Has there been a point when you was scattered? Did someone or something help you recover?



God's Love and Mercy

"For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives... Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

Hebrews 12:6 & 11

A good example when God help someone in the Old Testament by chastening or a "fiery trial" is when God helped Manasseh.

Manasseh became the King in Jerusalem and did evil in the sight of the LORD. He had rebuilt the high places, raised up altars and wooden images of idols and had put them in the house of God. Even after all this abominations God still called out to Manasseh to help him but he wouldn't listen.

"The LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, and bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God."

2 Chronicles 33:10-13

The lesson we can learn from Manasseh's example is that even when we are doing evil in the sight of the LORD we are still able to be purified.

The simple truth is, we are receiving God's love and mercy when being refined by fire. God's love and chastening is not lacking in harmony with each other. Because they are two complementary and necessary aspects of proper training.

Why is chastening or trials seen as God's love? What is something we can learn from Manasseh's example?



Having Perseverance

"My Brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful."

James 5:10-11

In The New Strong's Concordance it states that the Greek word used here for "perseverance" is "hupōmōnē, hoop-om-on-ay"; ... Hupōmōnē is the temper which does not easily succumb under suffering and is opposed to cowardice or despondency." (Strong, 2010, pg. 259)

Having perseverance (or patience) is being able to reject the depression of our spirits that can come about by the loss of courage or hope. It is an incident to the service of the gospel and is what helps perfects our character. Perseverance during a trial is not an easy task. Yet, we are asked to have courage as we face difficulty's, oppositions, and pains.

Having courage and patience will allow time for healing and restoration. Since our recovery is a process that may take time to complete; God is not asking us to over look our trials but to embrace them.

In what ways can a believer achieve spiritual perseverance? Have you been able to embrace your own trials? If so why?



Our Light Afflictions

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

As we entrust our lives into Gods hands there is simultaneously two processes at work. In one of his hands, God is looking after our outward physical bodies as they are deteriorating. In his other hand, He is looking after our spirits as they are being renewed day-by-day.

As Christians our main focus should be looking at things that are unseen in this world. Because covetousness to our possessions and/or relying upon our own self-righteousness is a serious offence against the gospels truth.

The things we possess today will be done away with tomorrow. But, what God has cultivated within us through development or improvement will last forever!

There may come times in our walk with God where he will remove us from things for our own good.

"Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: 'Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent out of this place for their own good, into the land of the Chaldeans. For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up.'"

Jeremiah 24:5-6

Just because God has removed these things from us doesn't mean he won't restore them again. Going through trials of light afflictions is part of God's process of removing impurity's in our life.

Many times in my own life God had used trials for the renewal of my mind that caused my prospective on things to change. After this renewal, He would then restore some of the things back to me.

Do you believe that God has removed some things in your own life for your own good? Why?



Rejoicing Through The Fire

"For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or if we are of sound mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."

2 Corinthians 5:13-15

Be careful to not look at your trials from a worldly prospective. The world tells us that as we go through trials we should trust our gut, follow our hearts, do what feels natural, or do what makes us happy. Because they claim what makes us happy can't be wrong. But, be careful to not take broken advice from a broken world.

The world's voice tells us that our happiness and joy comes from what our income is, what we possess, what others think about us, and what our status is. But, from a spiritual prospective all this advice is false. True joy comes from having a relationship with God. God's voice through his Word tells us that our joy doesn't come from the external but from the internal.