

3 Things Trials Reveal About Us

If you are going through a period of trials, then welcome to the league of overcomers; where it seems more and more people are going through challenging seasons. These times stretch our faith and press our endurance further than ever before.

A trial has various meanings, but it often speaks of a time where our faith and character is tried and put to the test. An adverse situation or troubling scenario rises against us that is completely out of our control. Unfavorable circumstances seek to create pressure, resisting the flow of faith and hope in our lives.

What do we do in these times? The Bible tells us to rejoice (James 1:2), but it seems that most people barely make it to being at peace, let alone get to the place of joy. Our first response is typically “why,” so we can figure out how to fix things and move on. But when we stop trying to take the quick way out, we can often find the trials we go through are times for us address three main things.

1. Trials challenge what you rely on. Everyone has their coping mechanisms they rely on to feel better. It may be money, food, entertainment, friends or financial stability. In a trying time, the typical things we rely on no longer bring any aid. The difficulty reveals where many of our nurturing aids are shallow and actually mask our ability to develop a deeper faith. Our relationships get hit. Our financial security is no longer certain. Our typical comfort becomes shaken.

The NIV translates 1 John 4:16 to say “and we know and rely on the love God has for us.” A trial is a time for us to rely on the love God has for us like never before. It is in these

seasons, where we weep until we have no tears left. We cry out to God until we have nothing left to say. We come to the end of ourselves. It is at this point that our reliance becomes more fully formed around the love of God and not the typical things we look to for security.

2. Trials challenge what you really believe. Remember the time someone shared their struggle and you gave them a pat answer or cliched response? That way of interacting gets stripped down when we go through our own trial. During a personal trial, what you really believe about God, yourself and your life really comes to the surface as your spiritual life gets hit at the core. All lip service gets confronted and what you really believe shows up. This is when things get real.

The trial creates an invitation for our faith to become real, strong and sure. Yet many people crumble, as the trial sifts them to a point that they fall back in their overcoming. Many go victim. Others shut down. Some go back to something that feels safer and more predictable. Yet at the same time, overcomers gets sharpened and rise to a new level. To the overcomer, trials are a season to rely on the love that God to a degree not previously possessed.

3. Trials reveal what needs changing. We cannot walk out of a trial without changing how we do life. Hardship and times of adversity challenge us to do life at a higher level. How we see ourselves needs to be upgraded. In fact, trials are often the precursor to a new level. Yet this upgraded life needs an upgraded "us" to manifest.

During many different trying times of my life, I have felt the leading of the Spirit gently saying, "The way you do life needs an upgrade." I learned that my thoughts, responses, beliefs, perspectives and actions needed some renovation. Limiting beliefs needed to be confronted while approaching trials with a new resilience needed to rise up.

When it seems we are going around the mountain or drudging through a dry wilderness of trials, this is a good time to bring shifts to ways of thinking and living that keep us stuck. I never want a trial to be a permanent condition, so a great question to ask can be, "What can change in me so that no matter what happens, I grow through this?"

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