

Anybody Else Out There Going Through a Raging, Fiery Trial?

☒ You were walking by faith and not by sight down the narrow path that leads to life. One day at a time, you were pressing on toward the goal to win the prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling you upward. You had the peace of God that passes all understanding.

Suddenly, the narrow road constricted. The eyes of your faith waxed dim. One day at a time seemed like too much and the finish line too far off in the darkened distance. The peace turned to anxiety and you didn't understand how to get past where you are to where you are going—or even how to get there.

What in the world is happening? It's a trial—and not just any brand of trial. A raging fiery tribulation. A top to bottom faith examination. A fruit inspection. You are on audition for God on the way to the next level. The good news is you don't have to waste your pain. You can rejoice—and take a lesson from a High Priest who understands.

I remember a time when I found myself smack dab in the middle of a raging **season of testing and trials**. It almost seemed as if a new trial started before the last trial ended. It's tempting to get overwhelmed in those periods when trials begin to seem like a way of life instead of a small pothole on a lengthy highway. That's when we need to focus on the prize instead of the pothole.

“Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor,

right alongside God" (Heb. 12:2, MSG).

We're supposed to "study how He did it." So how did He do it? It may seem oversimplified, but biblical principles are cut and dried. Jesus remained **faithful to God's plan**, trusting Him completely. He endured being misunderstood, mocked, scourged and even crucified. He prayed all night when necessary, with a "nevertheless" mantra that we would all do well to adopt.

When the hurricane-force winds come to hurl satanic debris at your foundation and the torrential rains come to drench your destiny, will you remain faithful to God's plan? Our calling is to be faithful whether that circumstantial mountain we're trying to cast into the sea budes or not. Will we trust Him with our very lives in those wilderness places? Or will we head back to Egypt for comfort and wind up going around the same mountain again?

When Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter cut off the ear of a soldier seeking to seize his Lord. Jesus told Peter to put away his sword. "I am able right now to call my Father, and twelve companies—or more, if I want them—of fighting angels would be here, battle-ready. But if I did that, how would the Scriptures come true that say this is the way it has to be?" (Matt. 26:53).

So we see that Jesus remained faithful to God's plan, even when the stress caused Him to sweat blood, if not bullets. The Bible says God will not put more on us than we can bear. This is not a cliché. Jesus did not run away from His trials, and He didn't bury His head in the desert sand, either. Faithfulness to God often means faithfulness to continue to carry out our God-given responsibilities on the home front and in the local church.

No matter how hot the fire, we have no excuse to **forsake our calling**. How will the Scriptures be fulfilled if we all curl up in a fetal position and hide from the world like a

caterpillar who envelops itself in a cocoon while it changes? The testing of our faith works endurance in us. Those character-building days are as precious as gold; they bring the dross to the surface and purify our souls.

Jesus also exemplified endurance in trials. He Himself tells us in Luke 8:15 that those who endure to the end will be saved. God doesn't bring trials, but He will use them to train us. I've often said to myself, *If I just knew why I was going through all this, it wouldn't be as bad.*

At least when we go to the fitness center, workout and end up sore, we know that we are building strength and endurance in our physical bodies. Well, ultimately that is the same result of going through trials: strength and endurance in our spirits—and character in our souls. That should be enough to get us to rejoice.

Finally, Jesus prayed in the midst of His trial. The apostle James also tells us if we are suffering, we are to pray (James 5:13). And the apostle Paul backs him up in his epistle to the Philippians. Paul tells them peace comes from praying instead of getting wrought up over circumstances (Phil. 4:6). If we draw near to God, He will draw near to us. We may not always get an answer to our "Why, God, why?" petition, but trust means not always knowing why. Again, we can rest assured that the "why" boils down to building strength, endurance and character in us.

No matter what brand of trial we find ourselves in—health troubles, financial woes, relationship crises—if we will settle into the "nevertheless" mindset and seek to do His will, He will come to our rescue and work all things out together for our good. Jesus is always with us—even in the trials. He will never leave us. He will never forsake us. He understands the emotions we are experiencing because He has also experienced them.

Let me leave you with a couple Scriptures that remind us to rejoice: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (2 Cor. 2:14, KJV). Or how about this one? "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). Hallelujah!

It's been said that being in the midst of a trial can sometimes feel like getting thrown into boiling water. If you are like an egg, your affliction will make you hard-boiled and unresponsive to God's leading. If you are like a potato, you will emerge soft and pliable. Decide today to be like a potato, submit yourself to God, **resist the devil**. Not only will he flee from you, he will find a stronger opponent the next time he comes stalking.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including *The Heart of the Prophetic*. You can e-mail Jennifer at jennifer@charisma.com or visit her website [here](http://www.jenniferleclaire.com).