

How Trials Can Help You Fall More in Love With Jesus

We grow in the tough times, not the easy times. Hard places will always come in our journey with the Lord. We cannot escape them but need to face them, for they are part of the process of becoming perfect in Him. If you choose to run from them, you will seriously hinder your growth.

As you overcome different obstacles, you will be stronger and more compassionate. You will fall more in love with Jesus. If you have come out of hardships and do not feel this way, you have probably not recovered from offense. Recovery is your choice. Some people get hurt and never recover. As cruel as this may sound, it was their choice.

Jesus learned obedience by the things He suffered. Peter learned obedience by the things he suffered. Paul learned obedience by the things he suffered. What about you? Have you learned? Or are you hard, calloused, cold, bitter and resentful? Then you did not learn obedience.

Yes, it's true that there are some offenses that will not go away like "water off a duck's back." You will have to work through them, striving to get free. But in that process you will grow and mature.

Maturity does not come easily. If it did, all would attain it. Few reach this level of life because of the resistance they face. There's resistance because the course of our society is not godly but selfish. The world is dominated by the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2).

As a result, to enter into the maturity of Christ there will be hardships that come from standing against the flow of selfishness.

Paul had returned to three cities where he birthed churches. His purpose was to strengthen the souls of the disciples. However, it is interesting to see how he strengthened them. He encouraged them by “exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God’ ” (Acts 14:22).

He did not promise them a life of ease. He did not promise them success according to the world’s standards. He showed them that if they were going to finish their course with joy, they were going to meet up with much resistance that he called tribulation.

If you are rowing on a river against the current, you will have to row continuously in order to progress against the flow of the river. If you stop rowing and relax, you will eventually flow with the current. Even so, when we are determined to go God’s way we will meet up many tribulations. The trials will all show the answer to one main question: Are you going to look out for yourself as the world does, or are you going to live a self-denied life?

Remember that when we lose our life for the sake of Jesus, we will find His life. Learn to fix your focus on the end result, not the struggle.

Peter put it so well: “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy” (1 Peter 4:12-13).

Notice that he compares the extent of suffering to the extent of rejoicing. How can you rejoice to that extent? When His glory is revealed, you will be glorified with Him. This glorifying is to the degree that you allow Him to perfect His character within you. So don’t look at the offense. Look at

the coming glory. Hallelujah!

✖ Adapted from *The Bait of Satan: Living Free from the Deadly Trap of Offense* by John Bevere, copyright 2014. This best-selling book first published in 1994 exposes one of the most deceptive snares Satan uses to get believers out of the will of God—offense. With declaration-style prayers and testimonials from people whose lives have been changed by this message, this book will inspire you to stay free from offense and its destructive power. To order your copy [click here](#).

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 03/03/2014

This week fix your focus on the end results of your faith and not the struggle. Declare that you will rejoice even in your trials, tribulations and suffering as you look to the revelation of His glory and the perfecting of His character within you. Continue to pray that God's people would unite in prayer and purpose, revival would sweep through the nation, and that the Lord of the harvest would send more laborers into His harvest fields. Remember those suffering from the ravages of the weather and ask God how you can be a blessing to them. Pray for Israel's continued protection and that it would fulfill God's plan and purpose. Remember the persecuted church and pray for those in authority over you. 2 Chron. 7:14; Acts 14:22; 1 Peter 4:12-13.