

Joyce Meyer: How God Rewards Our Suffering

I don't know anyone who gets excited about going through hardship, and yet it's unavoidable in everyone's life at some time or other. When trouble comes, a natural response is "Why is this happening?" or "I can't believe this is happening to me!"

But the Bible tells us that hard times are actually good for us. James 1:2-3 says, "My brothers, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith develops patience."

These verses are saying that we can learn to go through hard times with joy and hope, knowing God will use them to make us better in the end.

Resist the Urge to Run

When things get tough, our initial reaction is to want to run from the pain and escape the situation, but what we need to do is take a firm stand in our faith and face it. Jesus promises us in John 16:33 that if we will trust Him in the midst of the struggle, we can have peace and confidence that we will overcome it because He is on our side!

Now we don't just overcome the problem, but in the process of going through it, God uses the very thing that is causing our pain to develop endurance, patience and perseverance in our soul. This is how we build our faith in God and grow up spiritually.

The Value of Patience and Endurance

The Greek dictionary says patience is a fruit of the Spirit that grows only under trial. In fact, the word *patience* comes

from the root word *hupone*, which means “to remain under.”

Patience has to do with being steadfast, disciplined and committed—not running from difficult things, but sticking with them all the way through. It’s about having a good attitude while you’re waiting for your breakthrough or the fulfillment of something you desire.

Patience has a lot to do with endurance. I’ve come up with my own definition of endurance: “to outlast the enemy.” It reminds me not to give up when I’m weary because I never want to give in to the temptations Satan brings my way or let him win the battle.

We all get weary at times and wonder if we’ll ever get our breakthrough when we’ve been fighting the same battles for a long time. But the ones who refuse to give up are the ones who will have a testimony in the end!

The Test of My Quality

In 1 Peter 4:12, we see that painful experiences test the quality of our faith. When our quality is tested, we learn things about ourselves, because we don’t really know what we would do in a tough situation until we’re in it. God allows us to go through hard times to reveal what’s in our hearts.

I remember a season in my life when I was praying for God to change me and make me more patient, sweet, merciful and loving. He answered my prayer at the grocery store.

I used to be very impatient when it was time to check out at the supermarket, and I somehow managed to pick the slow line every time. I can vividly remember one day when there was a new clerk being trained, and everything was taking longer than usual. I was frustrated, and I made sure they knew it! I sighed loudly and mumbled under my breath.

These times at the grocery store were tests meant to develop

patience and endurance in my soul. Over time, as I continued to grow in my relationship with God, I began to pass these tests more often. I came to the point where I could wait in the slow line with a good attitude—without opening my mouth or making a complaint.

The Reward Always Outweighs the Pain

My example of developing patience at the grocery store may seem trivial compared to the trial you're facing today. But I want to encourage you to find comfort in the truth that God is with you and He knows exactly what you're going through. He loves you more than you know, and He has the answers you desperately need.

There have been many times when I've walked through devastating pain, and Galatians 6:9 has been an encouragement to me. It says, "And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not give up."

And God promises in Romans 8:28 that if we will trust Him and keep doing what is right in each situation, He will work it all out for our good. He will take every moment of pain and use it to develop priceless fruit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control in our soul (Gal. 5:22-23).

That's more than enough reason to keep going, one day at a time, and to never give up! {eoa}

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 100 books, including *Battlefield of the Mind* and *Your Battles Belong to the Lord (FaithWords)*. She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit .

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