

With Him in Trouble

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Often times I hear or read something about the reasons that Christians have trouble. It is explained that God allows trouble to conform the Christian to His own image, to chasten the Christian, or to cause him to grow so that he can be more useable for Christ. While these things are true, there is an important element that is often left out of these explanations. One almost gets the impression that God is up in Heaven turning up the fire to refine His child, or bearing down the pressure to mold His tool while it is up to us who are under this heat and pressure to bear up and endure it until it is ended.

As I study the Scriptures, I see an entirely different picture. Many times troubles do come our way allowed or sent by God. God does work all these things together for our good so that we will be conformed to the image of His Son (See Romans 8:28,29). But He does not just bear down upon us with heavy burdens and expect us to endure patiently with the strain because we will come out better and more useful for Him at the end.

There is a very precious promise that comes with the trials and troubles and burdens a Christian faces. That precious promise is God's presence.

Psalm 91:14,15 says, *"¹⁴Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. ¹⁵He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him."*

To be conscious of God's presence, our heart must be in tune with Him. Nevertheless, He is with us. God is not up in Heaven somewhere bearing down upon us and putting us in the furnace. He is with us under the pressure and walks with us through the flames. Here are a few verses that hold forth to us the precious promise of God's presence in times of trouble.

Troubles that Result from Chastening for Sin

"¹Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. ²Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1,2)

These verses of comfort from God to the children of Israel reveal His heart for His own. God may chasten. He may chasten sore. But He will never forsake. He waits with open arms and heart for us to turn back to Him. If we do, He is full of comfort. He speaks comfortably to us. He also gives us the promise that our sins are pardoned. They are gone. There is no more remembrance of them. He has forgiven. He is near. He will hold us safely and close to His heart.

“¹¹He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” (Isaiah 40:11)

Troubles that Mature Us

Sometimes trials come our way to mature us and help us grow to be more like Christ. Some of these types of trials are very hard. Yet, the Scripture assures us, *“Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 8:38,39) Furthermore, we have the same comfort and consolation as Paul that throughout all our trials God assures us, *“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”* (II Corinthians 12:9)

God will never leave us, and through all the trials He sends or allows to mature us and make us more like Him, His grace will be sufficient and His strength will be all we need.

Troubles as an Attack from Satan

Perhaps a trial has come upon us as a direct attack from Satan. Sometimes this is evident if no other reason for a trial can be discerned. Other evidences of this type of trial are that there seem to be unusual struggles in the thought life and emotions are overwhelmed and hard to control.

These are often the hardest difficulties to handle because we desire help and prayer from others, but we do not know how to explain to them what the trial is or what difficulties are on our heart. These are difficulties that make us feel very alone, even among Christian brothers and sisters. However, God has given us help, even for these trials.

God gave us truth to “gird our loins” or to give us strength. That truth is His word. He gave us righteousness as a breastplate to protect our hearts. He gave us the gospel so that we may have peace. The shield of faith He gave to quench the fiery darts of doubt and inner turmoil that the Devil throws at us. The helmet of salvation is given us to protect our minds and thought life. The sword of the Spirit, the word of God, is our offensive weapon. It is our tool of direct warfare. Its sharpness can cut even to the soul and spirit and can discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. It can hurt our spiritual enemy, Satan, leaving him weak so that he has no option but to retreat. Lastly, though not at all of least importance, God has given us prayer to help us persevere. (See Ephesians 6:10-18) Prayer is our place of refuge, near to the heart of God. *“The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.”* (Proverbs 18:10)

“Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.” (Psalm 57:1)

In the midst of an attack from the wicked one, God’s presence is our refuge, right under His wings and thus, right near to His heart.

Troubles that Glorify God

Sometimes there seems to be no reason at all for our trials. They just come. And yet, when there seems to be no reason, there is at least one reason – that God might be glorified. An example of this kind of trial can be found in John chapter nine, which tells the story of the man who was born blind. The disciples asked, *“Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?”*

Jesus answered, “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”

Jesus then sent the man to wash in the pool of Siloam. He did and was healed. The Pharisees were angry because Jesus had healed the man on the Sabbath day. Yet, the man stood up for Jesus to the Pharisees (See verses 17 and 30). This man’s parents did not stand up for him. The Pharisees cast him out of the synagogue. But Jesus did not forsake him. He came to him and said, *“Dost thou believe on the Son of God?”*

“³⁶He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?”

“³⁷And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

“³⁸And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.”

This man had great trials, yet God was glorified through them. For blessings, the man received a Savior and eternal life, the blessing of God’s presence in this life and in that which is to come.

In every trial we face, we have God’s presence with us all the way. He is our ever present help now and our assurance of eternal life with Him forever.