



# THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

## PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

### Learn To Grow Through Adversity

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February 7, 2018

**James 1:1-12** Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about. Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

#### What is God's purpose for us?

God's purpose for us is to be more like our Lord Jesus Christ in our daily lives and to reflect more of Him and less of us. Sometimes, we become complacent in our Christian growth. We feel that we no longer have to grow spiritually or go deeper in our walk with God. Thus, God allows adversity in our lives to move us forward in our walk with Him and eventually allow us to grow. How we respond to our trials will either make or break us. Why do we want to quit when we encounter troubles, trials or adversity? People quit going to church, reading the bible, serving God, praying and talking to Him. Many have expressed bitterness that God is unfair. There are those who feel that God owes them something, but through His mercy and abounding grace, He shows us His blessings. In addition, if we submit ourselves to God in times of adversity, we will discover something about God and about ourselves.

Lessons learned about God -

- He has a purpose for every trial that comes into our life because nothing happens to us without God's approval or purpose.
- He has the power to work things out for our good.

**Romans 8:28 - <sup>8</sup> And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

Lessons learned about God:

- makes all things work for our good and our benefit, since His perspective is not similar to ours
- promises His presence in times of adversity despite our pain and trial
- sees the future.
- never leaves nor forsakes us

**Hebrews 13:5 <sup>5</sup> Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."**

When faced with adversity, we discover:

- some things about ourselves.
- our view of who God really is.
- our weaknesses and strengths .
- our level of maturity
- our priorities .

God wants us to

grow through adversity

become stronger and more determined,  
serve Him and to change in order to be more like Jesus in our lives

**God tests us to bring out the best in us, but Satan tempts to bring out the worst in us.**

### **FACTS OF LIFE THAT WE MUST FACE AND ACCEPT**

**Fact # 1 THE REALITY OF TRIALS** - problems are inevitable, unpredictable, and countless. Trials are unplanned; so we seldom anticipate the problems we face in life.

JAMES 1:2 "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,"

JOHN 16:33-34 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

1 PETER 4:12-13 "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange things were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ. Keep on rejoicing, so that at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation."

### **Fact # 2 THE REASONS FOR OUR TRIALS**

JAMES 1:3-4-3 the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work, so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. God is doing something in your life. Our trials have a purpose. Pain can be productive; pressure can produce; and suffering can accomplish something. Adversity has value in our lives.

### **THREE (3) PURPOSES OF PROBLEMS IN YOUR LIFE**

1. Problems purify our faith - God is much more interested in building disciples.
2. Problems produce perseverance (*tiyaga*) in our lives through the ability to hold on, to hang in there, to stay under pressure and to stay put until the purpose is accomplished

**HEBREWS 12:2** – 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3. Problems make us spiritually matured to be like Jesus. The testing of our faith produces perseverance that we may be matured and complete, not lacking anything. God is much more interested in building my character than in making me comfortable..

### **TWO (2) WAYS THAT GOD MAKES US LIKE JESUS**

1. Through His Word
2. Through the circumstances of our life.

### **WE ARE EXACTLY WHERE GOD WANTS US TO BE . WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING LIKE JESUS**

**ROMANS 8:28-29** – And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

**Fact # 3 THE RESPONSE TO TRIALS-** Our response to our trials determines the OUTCOME of our trials

1. Respond with JOY.
2. Respond with PRAYER – **WHEN PRAYING:- Ask for wisdom** to handle the trial. Wisdom is the ability to properly apply and use the knowledge. We have to correctly handle our trials & adversity. God will always supply us with the grace that is needed to overcome all our trials.

**WHEN PRAYING:- Ask in faith**

**Fact # 4 THE REWARD OF THE TRIAL-** The rewards will go to those who quietly put up with difficult situations and develop the character of Jesus Christ in their life. God not only wants us to receive the reward; He also wants us to love Him more. God wants to crown us with eternal life. In conclusion, we can grow through adversity if we will face the facts of life, that trials are a part of life; have a purpose in life; provoke a response; and bring forth a reward.

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