

Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of

man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour

and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 5:6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

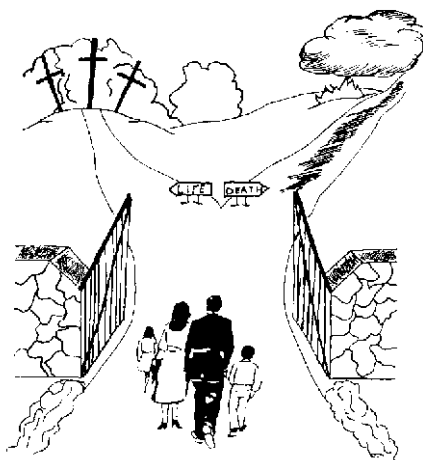
8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

11 To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

# The Trial of Your Faith



Brother Charlie Green

## Taking the Way of the Cross

In the day and age in which we live, I believe our faith is being tried and shaken. God wants to stir our pure minds. He will never allow

anything to come upon His people without advance warning. Without faith it is impossible to please God. It took faith to lift us from the quagmire of sin, and it took God's grace to draw and woo our hearts to

Christ. That same grace gave us faith in God and faith in His eternal Word. Faith is believing that God will do what the Bible promises He will do.

God will always bring to His

people the understanding and the strength they need. The enemy is seeking to devour whomever he can, but we can have the divine strength of God down in our hearts. The Spirit of God will enable us to overcome every trial of faith that comes our way. The flesh does not want to have any difficulty or to go through any form of suffering or trial. Sometimes the flesh becomes overwhelmed under heavy trials that bring sorrow, heartache, tears, and suffering. The flesh wants to run; but dear one, God has a divine purpose for every trial of suffering, every affliction, and every hard place. When He allows those sufferings to come our way, we need to hold still, be steadfast, and recognize that God has allowed it for a reason.

Again, 1 Peter 5:10 reads, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." You are going to suffer if you live for Christ. That is the way to the Cross. It took the suffering of Jesus, from the manger to the Cross, to bring salvation to a lost world. He suffered willingly, without saying a word. Christ had it settled within His heart, though He was the Son of God, that He was going to do the work that the Father had sent Him to do. He had to bring His own will into subjection, and He suffered every step of the way to the Cross.

If you are going to follow Christ, you might as well get it settled and firmly fixed in your heart that this is part of the cost you have to count. You are going to suffer along the way. It is usually because God sees some little imperfections in you and He wants to burn up the chaff.

### **The Perfection of Holiness**

In Philippians 3:14 the Apostle Paul let us know that he had to keep pressing toward the goal. He could not let down any place in his Christian experience. Enduring suffering

and trials of faith are part of the pressing that we must do. How we need to hold still and let God do His perfect work in our lives through suffering!

God always has a divine purpose in our suffering. After we have suffered awhile, through victorious suffering, God will bring us into perfection. Child of God, He wants to bring you into greater perfection and establish you in a greater manner. He wants to strengthen and to bring steadfastness to everyone who claims to be a child of God. The Lord never sends trials of suffering to discourage us. He allows them to come so that He can do a work of perfection upon us. This is the reason it takes a continual pressing. God wants to establish us and strengthen us in a greater way.

I repeat, God never sends a trial of suffering to bring discouragement, but to encourage greater perfection of holiness. He wants to make each of us more honorable vessels and of greater use in His service. Aren't you glad that He loves us so much?

I want to ask you a few questions concerning some areas that God wants to perfect in the lives of His people. Do you need more humility and lowliness of heart? Do you need to be more patient and more long-suffering with others? Do you need to be gentler and kinder in your conversations and in your actions? God will definitely send trials of faith so that His attributes can be added or improved upon in your life. He does not send trials or suffering to hurt you, but He sends them for your good and for your benefit. I have found in my Christian experience that when God sends me a trial of my faith, the enemy will bring something to try to cause me to take the trial in the wrong way or to cause me to look at it in the wrong way. You see, we can receive something in the wrong way, and just the reverse will work out of that trial from what God really intends it to work.

The Apostle Peter wrote in

1 Peter 4:1 states, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind. . . ." Along with this Christian experience comes suffering that you must endure just as Christ did. You must be willing to suffer, if need be, for your brothers and sisters and for a world that is lost and undone.

Why did Christ go through such suffering for us? He knew it was His Father's will. He came to do the Father's work. He lived as a man and spent three and a half years in the ministry. Then He took that lowly walk to the old rugged Cross. Jesus knew the kind of suffering He would have to endure before He left the shores of Glory, but He did it because of His love for lost humanity. Likewise, if you are genuinely saved and the Spirit of God is living in your heart, you will have the mind of Christ and be willing to suffer for the work of your Heavenly Father.

### **Being Partakers of Christ's Sufferings**

Peter penned in 1 Peter 4:12-19: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you [none of us likes fiery trials, but God knows what He is doing]: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached [or rebuked] for the name of Christ, happy are ye; [You will have sufferings and hard trials, but He will bring you through victoriously. You do not have to fall in defeat going through the fiery trials. God wants to encourage you.] for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be

ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. [Victory comes through the trial. If you will give God glory and praise Him in the hard place, victory will be sweet for you.] For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

When you go through trials of your faith, God is trying to see and to let you see how trustworthy you are. Serving God is easy when everything is going smoothly. Why do we serve Him? We serve Him because we love Him.

Peter was a wise preacher, and he was laying down certain principles that govern our Christian living. If we will apply them to our hearts and lives and allow them to become a part of us, we will not be defeated and have setbacks when God sends trials of our faith. The devil is trying to destroy the very foundation of Truth and shake our faith. Peter was giving a lesson on Christian living. If you will take hold of it, you will have greater victory.

Have you drifted away? What do you need to be revived? How can you get back in the state of perfection where God wants you to be? It is going to take an act of restoration. We serve God because we love Him and desire to do the Father's perfect will and the Father's work that is laid before us.

### **Having the Mind of Christ**

Jeremiah 10:23 says, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." We all have tried to walk our own way and do that which was right in our own eyes. God orders the steps of a righteous man. God is in complete, divine

control of our lives as the Creator.

Dear one, you need to be careful of how you look upon the walk of suffering that God allows to come into your individual life. Again, 1 Peter 4:19 reads, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

You need to live so that whether you are going through good times or bad times, you are going to trust God no matter what happens. You should not murmur and complain when He sees fit for you to go through the valley of suffering. Remember, He allows you to go through suffering for your own good. He is trying to bring you into greater perfection, to establish and strengthen you. He wants to establish you in your Christian experience. When God sends a difficult trial, sometimes maintaining the complete trust and confidence in Him that He wants you to have is hard on the flesh.

Christ suffered for us in the flesh, so Peter said to "arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (1 Peter 4:7). What kind of mind are we to have? We are to have the mind of Christ; in other words, the mind that caused Him to be willing to suffer for the cause of God. May the Lord help us to suffer so that the will of God might be done in our lives.

Someone may ask, "How can we have the mind of Christ when it comes to suffering?" Christ, the Son of God, suffered mockings, scourgings, being spit upon, and the agony of the Cross without being offended and without speaking one word back in His own defense. I repeat, Peter was saying to "arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

If you will take the trial of your faith in the right way, you will be settled and established in your Christian experience. You can have the mind of Christ when it comes to suffering. The Bible says we are

joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Salvation brings us into the position of kings and priests. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit gives the Christian the same power that Christ had. Romans 8:17 says, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." If you live for Christ, you will suffer persecutions and trials.

### **Godly Examples**

In the Word of God we have many examples of men who went through manifold temptations and trials and much suffering, yet they went through them victoriously. They allowed the trials of their faith to strengthen them in their work for God. God is trying to encourage you and to let you know that every trial of your faith that He sends is for your benefit and for His good purpose.

You may think that the people in Bible times were different from what you and I are, but they were no different. Those brethren were saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, and their fervent desire was to do God's will and to work for Him despite the hard trials they faced.

The Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 11:24-27: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." Did Paul fail in his trial of faith? No, the Apostle Paul did not fail.

Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered,

and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

The Apostle Paul did not allow anything to separate him from the love of Christ. The only way that you can receive the crown of life is to let God try your faith. That is one tool that the enemy tries to use against the people of God. Paul let us know in a Roman letter that the just shall live by faith. Faith is believing in God. It is through faith that we can go to the throne of grace with boldness.

James 1:12 says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." I am sure that you want to receive the crown of life that awaits you at the end of your life if you are faithful. James was letting you know that you must endure the temptations when you are tried. Why? God is trying to bring a perfection, and He wants to establish and strengthen you. He is trying to settle you.

Child of God, you have the Power Source within your life, and if you will let God keep it stirred within you, you can do many more wonderful works than Jesus did. Each of us has that power within us if we will unleash it and put it to work.

### **A Severe Trial of Faith**

I want you to look at the example of Daniel and the Hebrew children who were taken captive. Do you remember where those young men were? They were not sitting in a Church of God congregation where the Truth was heralded forth. They were down in Babylon and in bondage. Daniel 1:3-4 reads: "And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he

should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom. . . ."

Through the power of God, those young Hebrew men were established and strengthened. The king wanted them to eat of the food from his table, but they refused it. Verse 8 says, "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat. . . ." Daniel did not allow this trial to cause him to throw up his hands in defeat, despair, and hopelessness. He stayed true to God, and he was encouraged, strengthened, and established in a greater way.

Do you know the account of the three Hebrew children being thrown into the fiery furnace? Daniel 3:16-18 reads: "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter [they were going through a severe trial of their faith: the king wanted them to stop serving the eternal God and bow down to his image of gold].

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. [Those Hebrew boys did not become strong in faith overnight. God worked with them just as He works with you. He wants you to be established and strengthened in the Truth in a greater way than you were yesterday. He sees what lies ahead, and He knows what you are going to need tomorrow, next week, next month, and next year. This is the reason that God is trying to build up your faith, your trust, and your confidence in Him. He wants you to know that He will deliver you no matter what comes your way.]

"But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Those young men had solid faith in God and godly character. God knew they could be trusted to be faithful

to Him whatever the outcome. Their victory came because of their faith in God. Because of your faith in God, you can have the victory.

### **Unwavering Faith in God**

Another example of faith is recorded in Numbers, Chapter 13, where you can read of how Moses sent twelve spies to search Canaan land. When they returned, ten of those spies were filled with fear because of the giants who lived there, and they gave an evil report. Because of their lack of faith, they saw the giants to be far greater than the delivering hand of God. However, Joshua and Caleb had unwavering faith in God. God had told the Israelites to go up and possess the land. Since the congregation believed the ten spies who gave the bad report, they had to wander in the wilderness for forty years, because of their unbelief.

Joshua and Caleb had faith and confidence in God. He gave them grace and strength to survive the forty years of murmuring and complaining of the others. Joshua and Caleb endured the trial of their faith, and they never allowed it to hinder them from walking on and being strong for God.

Psalms 84:4-6 states: "Blessed [or happy] are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools." Blessed, or happy, are those who dwell in God's house, even though it may be a house of suffering. As long as we dwell in the tabernacle of flesh, we are going to have trials of our faith and suffer hard places.

The Psalmist let us know that we will be blessed, or happy, as long as we are dwelling in His house; we will be praising God. Hard circumstances should not stop our praises to God. It may be hard on the flesh, but we can still thank

and praise God when we go through hard places.

Many times when you pass through the valley of Baca, or sorrow, heartache and despair will come upon you. In those times you need to see the divine purpose in why God is allowing that to come your way. If you have the right attitude and spend time in your secret prayer closet, God will bring you through the valley of Baca.

While traveling through your valley of weeping, trials, sorrows, hard places, and things you cannot understand, you can have the assurance that Jesus Christ is touched by the feelings of your infirmities. He sees every tear you shed, and He is sitting on the right hand of the Father interceding for you. I am glad for the strength and the help that He sends. He intercedes to the Heavenly Father and pleads your case.

#### **Hold Steady in the Time of Adversity**

Psalm 84:7 reads, "They go from strength to strength, [Praise God, we can go from strength to strength. What does that mean? When the hard trials come, we do not have to be discouraged and throw up our hands and quit. He will give us the

grace and the strength to go from victory to victory.] every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." Verse 6 lets us know that we are just passing through. Thank God, we do not have to stay in the valley of Baca, or weeping.

Sometimes you may question: Is there no relief in sight? Is God really hearing my prayer? Is He really seeing all the tears? Does He really see when my heart is almost overwhelmed beneath the heavy burden that I am carrying? Yes, God knows. He is trying His best to encourage, strengthen, establish, and settle you. He is encouraging you to hold to His unchanging hand. He is saying, "Keep trusting Me; joy will come in the morning. You are just passing through. It is only a temporary situation." The trial that God sends your way is a test of your trustworthiness, to see if you will hold steady in the time of great adversity, in the time when there is much pressure. God wants to encourage your faith in a greater way than ever before.

Zechariah 13:1 says, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Psalm 46:4 states, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." What a beautiful river and what beautiful streams issue out of

that river! This water is healing. Whatever mankind stands in need of issues forth from this river. If you are living in sin, there is forgiveness, pardon, and cleansing. There is power in the blood to save you to the uttermost. Out of this river is relief from the heavy, terrible guilt of sin.

Oh, how thankful I was when the Lord lifted the heavy load of sin and guilt from my life. I am glad that God cast that sin in the sea of forgetfulness, never to be remembered against me again. That is a precious privilege! Is your heart overwhelmed? No matter how overwhelmed you may be, you can find peace and contentment and strength in the Lord.

James 1:2-4 reads, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." I pray that God has brought encouragement to your heart. If you will look at the trial as God's divine purpose and plan, He will give you strength to face whatever it is.

*(Cassette C-2093E)*

**"COMMIT thy way  
unto the LORD;  
TRUST also in him;  
and he shall  
BRING IT TO PASS."**

**Psalm 37:5**