

The Christian Arsenal

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HOW TO PROFIT FROM YOUR PROBLEMS Developing a Faith that Works

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Part 2 of 7
James 1:2-6

“Consider it pure joy, my brethren, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.” James 1:2-6 (NIV)

Your attitude is determined by your understanding. Rejoicing is not just positive thinking but based on some facts of life.

I. FOUR FACTS OF LIFE YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. Problems are inevitable.

“...whenever you face trials...”

Problems are not an elective in life – they are a required course.

Scott Peck’s book, The Road Less Traveled: The first sentence is “Life is difficult.”

2. Problems are unpredictable.

“...whenever you face problems...”

Greek word “peripipto” – means to fall into unexpectedly

3. Problems are of many kinds.

“... trials of many kinds ...”

There are problems of many shades and varieties. They vary in intensity, variety, and duration.

4. Problems are purposeful.

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“Realize that they (trials) come ... to produce in you ...” (Phillips)

THREE PURPOSES FOR PROBLEMS (vs 3-4)

- Problems purify my faith.

“You know that the testing of your faith...”

Christians are like tea bags. They aren't good for anything until they are in some hot water.

Job said: *“He has tested me through the refining fire and I have come out as pure gold.”*

- Problems purify my patience.

“...the testing of your faith develops perseverance...”

Greek word, “hupomona” – to remain under

- Problems sanctify my character.

“So that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”

God's ultimate goal for you is to grow up and be mature.

God is much more interested in building my character than in making me comfortable.

TWO WAYS THAT GOD MAKES US LIKE JESUS

1. Through the word of God.

“Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth.” John 17:17

“The Word makes us like Jesus” James 1:22 ff

2. Through the circumstances of life.

“We know that all things work together for good if we love God and are called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow He did predestine to become conformed to the image of the Son of God.”

Romans 8:28,29

Why do all things work together for good? In order to make me like Christ!

II. HOW TO HANDLE YOUR PROBLEMS.

1. REJOICE

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“Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials ...” (v.1)

Victor Frankl said: “They stripped me naked. They took everything – my wedding ring, watch. I stood there naked and all of a sudden realized at that moment that although they could take everything away from me – my wife, my family, my possessions – they could not take away my freedom to choose how I was going to respond.”

“I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” Psalm 34:1

2. **REQUEST**

“If any of you lack wisdom, you should ask God who gives generously to all without finding fault and it will be given to him.” (v. 5)

Wisdom is “seeing life from God’s point of view.”

3. **RELAX**

“But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt ...” (v. 6)

You need to pray for two things:

- Wisdom to understand the trial
- Faith to endure the trial

God says the devil wants to use problems to defeat you. But God wants to use problems to develop you.

“Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial! When he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him.” (v. 12)