

Why so hard?

Hardships and tribulations

Jn 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Why is it necessary that we have tribulation? Why must there be trials and hardships, pain and suffering? Why do we have to go through these difficulties? Why do good people have to suffer?

Why? I have to come to the conclusion that it is not for us to know, why. And, as Jesus Himself reminds us, none of us are any good...

Mk 10:17-18 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

Let's dig in to why challenges come... trials and tribulations...

Ro 5:1-11 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh **patience**; And patience, **experience**; and experience, **hope**: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the **atonement**.

*Not only are we going to have tribulations, but we are to... bemoan them? Complain to others about them? Keep asking the Lord why we are having them? Ask the Lord to take them away from us? NO! We are to **glory in tribulations!** Why? To what end?*

- *Worketh patience – **worketh**, katergazomai; to work fully, i.e., accomplish. **Patience** - hypomonē; cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy. *Tribulations work fully in our lives to bring us to a state of cheerful, hopeful endurance.* In the NT, patience is the characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings. And patience leads to...*

- *Experience*, dokimē; test (abstractly or concretely); by implication, trustiness: — experience(-riment), proof, trial. And experience leads us to...
- *Hope*, elpis; from a primary elpō (to anticipate, usually with pleasure); to have an expectation (abstractly or concretely) or to have confidence in. In the Christian sense, joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation.
- *To the final end... joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ*, by whom we have now received the **atonement**. katallagē; exchange (figuratively, adjustment), i.e. restoration to (the divine) favor: — atonement, reconciliation(-ing).

Relationship

*So, now that we understand why we have tribulation, how do we persevere through these times? In a word... **relationship with the Father**. When Jesus was facing down the cross, what was the joy that He had? What was His joyful focus that allowed Him to forge ahead? [1. My Utmost 8/31] Doing that which His Father sent Him to do; that was His joy. We should not derive as our main source of joyfulness:*

- *Bodily health*
- *External happenings (new job, promotion, raise, new home, new car...)*
- *Not even in seeing God's work succeed*

We should not even rejoice in successful service, however we might define that, but rather in being rightly related to Jesus:

Lu 10:20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

We should rejoice in the communion with Him (Father God) that Jesus Himself had; in relationship with God. [My Utmost 8/30] And what do you think attacks this joy the most? [2. My Utmost 8/31]

Abundant Life

Jn 10:7-11 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more **abundantly***. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

perissos; (in the sense of beyond); superabundant (in quantity) or superior (in quality); by implication, excessive; exceeding abundantly above, more abundantly, advantage, exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure, more, superfluous, vehement(-ly).

Walk in the Light, have fellowship

Jn 12:35-36 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

1 Jn 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

As we walk in the light, our light shines brighter in this dark world, showing others the way to confession, repentance and abundant life in the Lord, drawing our joy from doing His will and in relationship with God the Father, and our elder brother, Jesus.

It seems that these days, it's so much about doing, but it's not... it's about relating.