

Partners In Courage, January 2013

Make The Most Of Your Trials

Sermon by Wes Daughenbaugh

INTRODUCTION: God has been adjusting my attitude toward trials. This is necessary because a good attitude will help us make the most of them—while a bad attitude toward them would enable the enemy and maximize the negative effects of the trials.

It is possible to see trials, persecutions, tribulations, insults and the like as dragons we can train and ride. Perhaps you've seen Hollywood movies where people train and ride dragons. The closest thing you'll ever get to that is to harness the power of a trial and ride that thing to victory instead of being devoured by it's fire and teeth. **HERE ARE SEVEN WAYS GOD USES TRIALS.**

1. GOD USES TRIALS TO DRAW YOU INTO HIS PRESENCE.

**** Annie Schisler has published some books of her prophetic visions and I've been studying these. She writes, "In prayer I was given to intercede for the people in strong cryings. After a while He took me away unto Himself and showed me how He sent forth a special force—as it were a chariot—to bring man unto Himself. This force He used to bring all of His own ever nearer and closer to Himself. This chariot was not made of fire but of special forces, which were tribulations, trials, pains and sufferings.

The Lord Himself, was occupied with the placing or with the drawing of these forces and His purpose was to bring His own unto Himself in order that He might reveal Himself and allow His word concerning Himself and His being to shine forth to them. These forces came into operation by His word alone. He did not allow any other, not even the people themselves, this responsibility. He alone ordained and sent forth these forces, which like homing chariots would ever draw and bring His own ones ever nearer unto Himself.

Nor would He permit anyone else to withdraw these forces until they had done their good work. Before His set time no one was allowed to touch them for they must accomplish that for which they were sent forth and must not cease until the chariot returned to His very door. Whether it be pain or sufferings, problems or dark clouds, trials or persecutions or any other force of tribulation, all were sent forth from Him. And he was quite ready and willing to send forth even more, and one after another, in order to be certain that His people should reach Him.

As they reached Him they must then be separated from that force and trial. They must no longer abide in His chariot but alight from it and come into His house, as it were. Although He had no pleasure in sending forth these forces, He took great pleasure in bringing His own ones unto Himself.

Nevertheless, He did not desire them to stop in the way and begin to behold the chariot. They must not look at the pressures He was using, for to do so resulted in a delaying of the journey. These forces would do their work effectively and certainly, but His people must keep on traveling forward, ever keeping their eyes upon Him and upon their destination and not on the forces He was using.

The Lord concerned Himself with the withdrawing of these forces at the right moment when the chariot of the forces of tribulation would be dismissed having fulfilled its task and having brought His own to the place He desired." (I SAW THE LORD, book 3, page 58-59)

**** Our perspective would be, "If He loves me so—why doesn't He just bless me a whole bunch? Why all this difficulty?" Then we start looking at the chariot, grumbling about the chariot, maybe even cursing the chariot and thus remaining IN the chariot when we should have alighted from it and went INTO HIS HOUSE TO BE WITH HIM!

**** Take a brief look at Leah, Jacob and Rachel. These three would build the nation of Israel through whom God would reveal Himself to the world as Redeemer and Savior. But all three had very difficult trials.

Leah was given in marriage to Jacob in trickery by her cheating father, Laban. Jacob had worked seven years for her sister, Rachel. So the Bible says, “The Lord saw that Leah was not loved.” This trial drew her close to God. She bore six sons and named them spiritual names, Ruben—“The Lord has seen my misery.” Simeon—“The Lord has heard that I was unloved.” Levi—“Surely my husband will be attached to me now.” Judah—“Now I will praise the Lord.” Issachar—“The Lord has rewarded me.” Zebulun—“God has presented me with a precious gift.” Six of the gates of the Heavenly City are inscribed with the names of her sons! (Rev. 21:12) Jesus is from the lion from the “tribe of Judah.”

**** Jacob’s trial was having a boss that constantly cheated him. Gen. 31:38 “I have been with you for twenty years now. Your sheep and goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten rams from your flocks. I did not bring you animals torn by wild beasts; I bore the loss myself. And you demanded payment from me for whatever was stolen by day or night. This was my situation: The heat consumed me in the daytime and the cold at night, and sleep fled from my eyes. It was like this for the twenty years I was in your household. I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks, and you changed my wages ten times. If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been with me, you would surely have sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen my hardship and the toil of my hands, and last night he rebuked you.” (Genesis 31:38-42)

This trial of getting constantly cheated in wages resulted in Jacob coming so close to the Lord that he could believe for a genetic miracle. His wages were to be only the spotted or speckled sheep that was the offspring of only solid colored animals—thus, no natural chance of any pay. Jacob peeled wooden rods and put them in the watering troughs when the strong were breeding and they bore spotted and speckled offspring. Thus, in the six years this went on he became very wealthy and came to know God intimately.

***** Rachel had the trial of being barren for nearly 20 years. She, too, earnestly sought God. This resulted in her giving birth, finally, to Joseph—who became the savior of the whole family.

**** Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:5 **The Lord had closed her womb. And because the Lord had closed her womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her.** Barren, with a rival wife who was a real emotional pain—and the Lord caused it to be so. But this caused Hannah to seek God far more earnestly than any woman of her generation. She came into God’s house, interceded earnestly and was miraculously healed. She gave birth to Samuel—one of the greatest Old Testament prophets and several other children besides.

GOD LOVED ALL THESE PEOPLE—yet each one had particular trials and painful situations. These situations drove them to seek God—and in finding a miracle solution they found more than that—they found a RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD that was far superior to any physical blessing.

2. GOD USES TRIALS TO MAKE MIRACLES.

Notice the wording of Deut. 7:19 You saw with your own eyes **the great trials**, the miraculous signs and wonders, the mighty hand and outstretched arm, with which the LORD your God brought you out. The LORD your God will do the same to all the peoples you now fear.

Before the miracle of the ten plagues on Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea and the food from the sky and the water from the rock—there was the great trials of slavery, having their baby boys thrown to the crocodiles, being told to make brick without straw and the like.

Psa. 105:23-25 Then Israel entered Egypt; Jacob lived as an alien in the land of Ham. The LORD made his people very fruitful; he made them too numerous for their foes, **whose hearts he turned to hate his people, to conspire against his servants.**

First came the great trials, and then came the miraculous signs, wonders and God's mighty outstretched arm—the deliverance God taking a nation for Himself out of another nation as a witness to the whole world.

**** If God is going to make a miracle, He always starts with a trial—a problem, and then mixes grace with it to make a miracle. Therefore, this is another reason not to despise your trials.

3. GOD USES TRIALS TO TRAIN YOU TO KNOW NO IMPOSSIBILITY.

*** We would think that having trials means that God DOESN'T love us. The contrary is true. If you are pleasing to God—you WILL have trials. They are often the mark of God's APPROVAL!

Luke 6:22-23 **Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. “Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.**

1Pet. 4:14 **If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.**

Jesus Himself had trials. Luke 22:28 **“You are those who have stood by me in my trials.”**

Heb. 12:5-6 And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: “My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because **the Lord disciplines those he loves**, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.”

Heb. 12:7-11 “Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” (Discipline means rigorous training.)

**** ***To share in His holiness means that we will know no impossibility--because that's the first definition of holiness.*** Moses didn't speak to the rock but struck it and God said, “You didn't trust me enough to honor me as Holy in the sight of the Israelites” (Numbers. 20:12). Holy—the first definition, means—NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM.

To be trained in Holiness means we are ordained to run into all kinds of situations that SEEM impossible because we're being TRAINED in holiness! We're being TRAINED because we are dearly loved children. We are being trained to KNOW NO IMPOSSIBILITY!

4. GOD USES TRIALS TO SEPARATE THE RIGHTEOUS FROM THE UNRIGHTEOUS.

Annie Schisler writes, “The Lord showed me a mixed multitude: sons of light and sons of darkness. The Lord was desiring to draw near to His own and reveal Himself to them and tell them who He was and what He could do for them. Nevertheless, He did not desire those who were not His to be present at such a time. He did not want them to see or know the intimate scenes of self-revelation and love He desired to give to His own ones.

Therefore, He sent forth strange, hard dealings to them all, dealings that hurt and offended and caused pain. ***Although His own were under the same dealings, also, yet I saw that in an invisible manner He was caring for them lest they should receive any injury.*** Thus His owns were really not hurt at all, yet the others were injured and this made them rise up and withdraw themselves from His own. In this way He took out those intruders and then He was able to draw

near to the sons of light in His love and reveal Himself to them in a greater and more intimate way.’ (Hard Dealings of God, page 50, book 3 of I SAW THE LORD.)

Compare this with 2Pet. 2:4-9 “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— **if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.**”

**** Trials sort of corral the unrighteous in a holding pen of earthly punishment while they await the judgment day and eternal punishment. But the godly are delivered OUT of that corral. They are in it—at first—but because they are given grace they escape.

Luke 21:36 **Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”**

1Cor. 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; **but will with the temptation also make a way to escape**, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

5. GOD USES TRIALS TO JUSTIFY EXALTING YOU IN GLORIOUS WAYS

2Cor. 4:17-18 **For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.**

2Tim. 2:1 KJV **If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*:**

Annie Schisler writes, “In prayer, God lifted me up into Himself and again showed me the great storm of evil and persecution that is coming upon all the earth. For the first time He showed it to me as He sees it, and not as I have seen it through my own eyes. To Him this storm was a most beautiful and glorious working out of His perfect will, which was bringing forth great blessing and not the destruction I had hitherto seen. In spite of being such a tremendous storm, nevertheless, it was not evil at all, but was filled with goodness. Seeing the storm as God sees it took away all the horror I had felt before concerning it.

Before it had appeared tragic and evil to me, and its image had haunted my natural thoughts because of its evil portents and terrible power, darkness, destruction and pain. I now saw an entirely different image: the storm as it really is—a wonderful and powerful wave of His cleaning power and grace which is bringing forth rich blessings.

Those evil forces that God had loosed into the storm went forth wearing themselves out. This continued until all save one, which was stronger than the rest, were worn out completely. This stronger one had tremendous power and rose up till it enclosed everything and everyone in its grasp.

At this point in its development—the peak of its power and extent—a great disaster of tremendous magnitude took place, which was not defined to me. But this great disaster, a mighty loosing of the Spirit of God was brought forth upon the earth, so that its final result was tremendous grace and blessing.” (GOD’S VIEW OF THE STORM, Book 4, page 58, from I SAW THE LORD.)

“He showed me that even as the storm of persecution and evil progressed unto the purification and perfecting of His own ones a tremendous joy was kindled in Him. As He brought them forth unto the fulfillment of their perfection, His joy greatly increased and grew.

He further showed me that right now, during this present time, there is a general preparation which He is giving to all His own ones, which will bring forth many and mighty changes in their

spiritual beings. It is a wonderful beautifying process: the in-working and the absorption of His person, in order that they may be able to partake of Him. (THE BEAUTIFYING PROCESS, Book 4, Page 68 of I SAW THE LORD)

6. & 7. GOD USES TRIALS TO DEVELOP YOUR CHARACTER AND STRENGTH.

Blessings may be a reward for character—but they don't develop character. Trials cause us to run to God—find His way of reacting—and in the process develop His character. Then the trials are eventually OVERCOME so that we are called OVERCOMERS.

James 1:2-4 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, 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.

Annie Schisler writes, “From one place to another, the world would be shaken like an earthquake. However, God will use this state of turmoil to awaken new opportunities for His own. The commotion and the darkness surrounding us, is gloriously contrasted by showing the triumph of His purpose above all! The hour, which seemed destined to darkness and chaos, would result in complete victory and expectation for His own! ***Those who belong to Him will rejoice in trials as if it were the hour of greatest grace they have ever lived.*** They will see that it brings healing and recovery to all nations and will not be destructive as the devil would have wanted. The Lord will bring a new spiritual awakening. This revival would be an expression of God's mercy to His own in every nation marked by Him, bringing His people and others back to His ways. With great satisfaction in my spirit, I could see that all this process of judgments was necessary to restore and raise again His will in His own and in the world. (VISIONS FROM ON HIGH II, PAGE 17-18)

*** Why would God's people rejoice in trials as if it were the hour of greatest grace they have ever lived? **Because it will be the hour of greatest grace!**

*** **GOD USES TRIALS TO INCREASE OUR STRENGTH**

Is. 40:29-31 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

2Cor. 12:7-10 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there **was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.** Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

**** God gave permission for a strong messenger of Satan to be assigned to always oppose the Apostle Paul. God knew that if Paul was overwhelmed he would totally depend upon God. God would give grace that would make the messenger of Satan embarrassed, defeated and overcome. God would mix in grace to problems, making miracles and grace into Paul, making him AN OVERCOMER.

THIS CALLS FOR RIGHT RESPONSES TO TRIALS

Wrong responses to trials, tribulations, insults, persecutions and troubles would at the minimum thwart our development. But there is a danger that wrong responses could cause people to get angry with God and move away from Him rather than moving close to Him.

Luke 8:13 Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.

1. THE FIRST RESPONSE TO TRIALS: EARNESTLY SEEK GOD.

**** Roots of a plant seek water. Spiritual roots seek God. People who do not seek God in the time of testing have no root—and thus, they fall away. So the first response to any trial, problem, difficulty, opposition, irritation etc is to **SEEK GOD**. Draw near to God. He can mix grace with the problem—turning it into a miracle. He can put the grace in you—making you bigger than the problem—mightier than the opposition. But He gives that grace to those who earnestly seek Him.

Heb. 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

**** God will release grace when you seek Him. “My grace is sufficient.” He will mix the grace with your problem, or put the grace in you—or both! The result will be miracles and overcoming victory to all who earnestly seek God!

Ezek. 21:13 “Testing will surely come.”

Heb. 3:7-11 So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried me and for forty years saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

Heb. 3:12-14 See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, **unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God**. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.

*** **WHATEVER YOUR TRIAL IS—JUST RUN TO GOD. SEEK HIM.**

2. THE SECOND RESPONSE TO TRIALS: EAGERLY EXPECT GRACE!

**** A right response means that we will view trials not in unbelief, fear, horror, despair and discouragement—but in expectant joy. **GOD WILL BE FAITHFUL TO MIX GRACE EITHER WITH THE PROBLEM OR INTO US, OR BOTH.** Therefore praising and rejoicing confirms that we truly believe and expect this release of Grace.

Cor. 12:9-10. **But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

Psa. 5:3 **In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.**

Psa. 86:7 **In the day of my trouble I will call to you, for you will answer me.**

3. THE THIRD RESPONSE TO TRIALS: BECOME MORE GRACIOUS.

**** Sure, God will mix grace with the problem and make a miracle. But even better is the mixing of grace into our character that makes us **GRACIOUS**. This means we would respond in kindness and love to people who are causing us trouble. We would overflow with patience, kindness, good deeds, thoughtfulness, helpfulness, forgiveness and all gracious character traits. God **WANTS** us to become gracious, like He is.

Luke 6:27-31 **“But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you.**

Luke 6:32-36 **“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even ‘sinners’ love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even ‘sinners’ do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even ‘sinners’ lend to ‘sinners,’ expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then**

your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

1Pet. 3:9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

THIS RELEASE OF GRACE SHOULD MAKE US GRACIOUS. Loving those who are mistreating us just strengthens God’s character and power in our lives and may turn these folks to repentance and life. Abraham Lincoln said, “Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?”

4. THE FOURTH RESPONSE TO TRIALS: SHARE THE TRIALS OF OTHERS.

The fourth right response is to encourage others in their trials. We cannot be like the Hindus or Muslims who think that the suffering of others is no concern of ours because “Allah’s will is being done” or because “They are reaping the results of Karma and past sins.” Other religions give excuses of how to avoid feeling the pain of others.

While we cannot stop God’s dealings with people that causes them to seek God we must not avoid helping them—but rather SEEK GOD WITH THEM, entering into their trials and SHARING them so that both they and us are benefited. YOU SEE, IF WE SHARE IN THEIR TRIALS WE CAN GET MORE GRACE OURSELVES!

**** God gave Paul a messenger of Satan to buffet him and cause him to greatly seek God in utter dependency. His friends in Philippi could do nothing to stop this messenger of Satan from buffeting Paul. The only they could do was to SHARE in his afflictions.

Phil. 4:14-17 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account.

**** For over three years God has been teaching me to pray for the needs of others as if those were my own needs. I call this SHOPPING FOR GOD. I put their needs in my “prayer cart” knowing I have Jesus’ name to use as a debit card to pay for miracles I could not provide for. My job it to fill the prayer cart. God’s job is to empty it so that I can fill it again.

Prov. 11:25 A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. Gal. 6:2 Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

CLOSING: Trials won’t last forever. Remember, Paul said, **“Our light and MOMENTARY troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all”** (2 Cor. 4:17).

Psa. 71:20 Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up.

Psa. 34:6 This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.

Psa. 34:17-19 The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all;

Acts 7:9-10 “Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt; so he made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace.”

2Th. 1:6-10 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

Rev. 21:3-14 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

WHAT WILL YOU TAKE OUT OF THIS MESSAGE?

1. A new attitude toward trials—no more complaining but rather rejoicing.
2. An eager expectancy as you believe God will add grace either to the problem or to you!
3. A great peace—knowing God is in control of all these things and will use them all for our good—even what the devil meant to be destructive.
4. A quick spiritual reflex to SEEK GOD and draw close to Him. Remember—ride the chariot to God—then hop off it and come into His presence. Don’t look at the trial--keep your eyes on God.
5. A increased compassion to SHARE in the troubles of other Christians so that we get MORE AND MORE GRACE—not just for our own problems, but for theirs as well.

6. Sweet comfort that can be used to comfort multitudes of others
2Cor. 1:3-7 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

7. Intimacy with God—with all the peace, joy, provision, power and life that goes with it.

REMEMBER—THERE ARE JUST FOUR RIGHT RESPONSES TO TRIALS. CAN YOU NAME THEM? MEMORIZE THEM NOW SO THAT YOU CAN PRACTICE THEM DAILY.

1. Seek God—ride that chariot of a trial right into God’s presence.
2. Expect Grace to be mixed into the problem to make a miracle or to be mixed into you to make an overcomer—or both! **Therefore—we rejoice in the trials not because we love trials but because we earnestly expect God’s faithfulness to Mix in His Grace!**
3. React in graciousness—in Christ-like character. What a wonderful thing for His grace to do—transform us into Christ-like people who are merciful and He is merciful, responsible as He is responsible, faithful as He is faithful, kind as He is kind, tender as He is tender.
4. Share in the trials of others—with that eager anticipation that you’ll not only get your portion of grace for your trials—but you’ll get even more grace to overcome their trials. Therefore, we are not afraid to share in the trials of others. We do not fear being overwhelmed.

ONE LAST THOUGHT: The gates to the New Jerusalem are made of one solid pearl each (REV. 21:21). A pearl comes from the right response to an irritation. Perhaps you are going through a great trial. As you rightly respond with God’s grace, your irritation, like the sand in an oyster, might become a big enough pearl to be a GATEWAY TO HEAVEN, so to speak. So cover your irritation (trial) with those four right responses and let a beautiful transformation occur that may help many others to enter into God’s presence.

I LOVE YOU. GOD BLESS YOU.