
God's Explanation for Difficulty

Radio Message by Dwight Porter, D.D.

Not only are we graciously warned of difficult times, God informs us of the proper reaction to them. "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

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" (I Peter 1:6,7). "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" (James 1:2-4).

God arranges for our personal benefit in all chastening and discipline. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:6, 10 -11). Behold the encouraging production of such chastening—Peaceable Fruit of Righteousness.

"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience" (Romans 5:3). "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us" (Romans 8:35-37).

No child of God escapes persecution. To be identified with the Christ, who was crucified for sinful men, means automatic hatred and persecution. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12).

God does not punish His children. Christ took all our punishment upon Himself and God does not demand further payment. He does discipline or chasten us and always for our good. There are two categories in all difficulties that come our way.

Deserved Difficulty

Divine discipline is the promise of a Loving Father in behalf of His children. We suffer with other believers as no Christian lives unto himself. "For as the body is one, and hath many members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit

are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it" (I Corinthians 12:12, 13, 26). "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" (Romans 14:7).

Undeserved Difficulty

The Lord uses suffering to bring His children to the place of obedience. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). Affliction is a learning process that comes direct from God. Don't cringe from it! "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (Psalms 119:71).

Someone is watching you! It may be members of your family, neighbors and church friends, who are observing your action and reaction. What better way to prove the Lord's Power than to see you move triumphantly through trials and tribulation! This was Paul's heart-throb in II Corinthians 11:24-31, "Of 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 journeying 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 watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? If I must need glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not." Still concerned about your little trials?

"Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" (II Cor. 4:9-13). Still concerned about your personal problems? Whose reproach are you suffering for? Is God able to see you through victoriously?

Another reason for undeserved difficulties is the training God puts us through for communication of comfort to others. If you will not learn in the midst of trials, you will have no ministry to others in the midst of their sorrow. How sad to see so many of God's children submerged in their own trials that they have no assistance to those for whom God is holding them responsible for encouragement

and comfort. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ, And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation' (II Cor. 1:3-6).

What an interesting passage of Scripture! Here we learn that comfort in the midst of our troubles is to be shared with others. Note it is not ours. We share the comfort of God with others. We have learned of it by personal experience. As a child of God, there are now sufferings of Christ and our consolation comes from Him.

How is God going to teach us the exercise of complete dependence upon Him? What necessary means will He use? "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (II Cor. 3:4, 5). Our witness for Jesus Christ becomes greater when we suffer chastening and stand the tests and trials to His praise and glory. "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore, I endure all things for the elect's sakes that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (II Tim. 2:8-10).

He Cares

Why should we be anxious carrying loads that God will take upon Himself? "Casting all your care upon Him; for he careth for you" (I Peter 5:7). Remember we are not to share our cares with Him. We are to roll them over on Him—ALL OF THEM!

When will you do it? You have nothing to worry about. Then why are you so anxious about a number of things? When will you put into practice this plain command? It is a deliberate act, once and for all. Cast all your cares upon the Lord. Why don't you do it right this moment? I urge you to find a place of prayer and name all your cares to the Lord, give them to Him, rise from your feet in triumph believing Him to care in your place and behalf. There is absolutely no reason for both you and God to be concerned.

Trials, persecutions, difficulties, testings and chastenings—expect them as child of God. Learn from them and be equipped to accomplish God's plan for your spending three-score and ten years of sojourn on this

earth. Let the Lord mold you, through your experiences, to declare a God of comfort to others. Little truth will be communicated through you unless God's provision is experientially real within your heart and life.

In God's Family?

The provisions of this message are for those who are members of God's family. I am not speaking of a church association. You must repent of your sin and cry out to God for deliverance of that which will damn your soul to Hell for all eternity. Christ died on the cross to take away your sin. "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin" (I John 3:5). Repent (by naming your sins to God as you turn to Him for Divine deliverance) and trust in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. "But as many as (can be you) received Him (Jesus Christ) to them (you) gave He power (or authority) to become the sons of God, even to them (can be you) that believe (trust upon) on His name. (Jesus Christ)" (John 1:12).

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