

Navigating Life's Trials

1 Peter 1:3-7 KJV

[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. THERE IS A DIVINE PURPOSE IN LIFE'S TRIALS

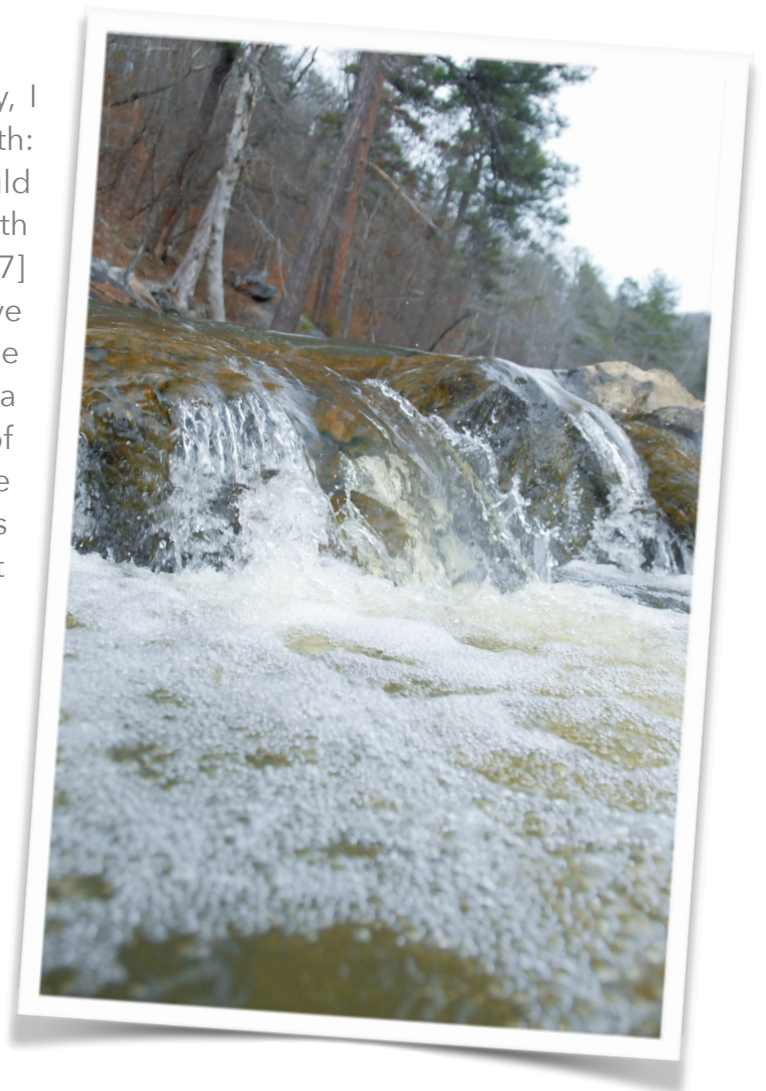
Sometimes there might seem to be an absence of purpose. Our lack of understanding about our circumstances does not mean we have no purpose or that the purpose is blurred.

James 1:2-8 KJV

[2] My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; [3] Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. [4] But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. [5] If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. [6] But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. [7] For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. [8] A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

2 Corinthians 12:6-10 KJV

[6] For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. [7] And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. [8] For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. [9] And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.



THE DIVINE PURPOSE

Primary Purpose - to build Christ-like character in us

God is not going to give up on us. He will spend our whole lives molding and shaping us to become Christ-like in our actions and feelings towards him. The Lord isn't looking for perfect people but those who are committed to a lifestyle of obedience, surrender, and purity.

To develop Christlike Character:

1. **He controls every trial** - He sets the limit because His goal is to transform us not needlessly hurt us. According to 1 Corinthians 10:13, the Lord will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able.
2. **He designs trials to fit us** - He knows exactly what's required to get our attention and fulfill His purpose. In every situation, His actions are motivated by intimate knowledge of us, and personal love for us.
3. **He uses chastisement** - As a loving Father, He disciplines us in order to develop character within us. Although pain is involved, it's not given for punishment but for training.
4. **He uses afflictions** - These are not the result of sin or rebellion but are simply trials which come to us because of our environment. Since we all have human bodies and live in a fallen world, even godly people get sick and have accidents. However, each affliction is an opportunity for God to display the surpassing greatness of His power in us.
5. **God's trials are progressive** - He builds character and faith in us by increasing the pressure and intensity of the adversity in our lives. What we couldn't endure ten years ago, we can now handle because our trust in God has grown.

Secondary Purpose - Cleansing, purifying, sanctified

The quicker we understand what God is up to in our life, the less intensity the issue will be. Although we may never know the specific reason for each difficulty in our lives, we can know the Lord's secondary purposes.

1. **God wants us to turn to him automatically** - getting us to be where he wants us to be. He wants us to be totally dedicated to him. We may have beliefs, attitudes, or actions, which are not only hurting us but are also damaging our relationship with God and with others. His goal is to cleanse us by revealing our sin and drawing us to confession and repentance.
2. **God uses trials to test our faith in him** - but not so God will see what we do, rather he does this so we see what we will do. God grows our faith using small situations that require little faith, then increases the pressure by allowing more complex events in our life so we learn a greater trust in him to overcome. Untried faith is unreliable.
3. **God uses trials to test our devotion to him** - Obedience is a good indicator of devotion, will we still obey God even though we see temporary advantage in choosing our own way? We don't need to understand all God is doing; we just have to obey and watch Him work.



2. HOW GOD ACCOMPLISHES HIS PURPOSE

1. God is in control and controls everything, he is omnipotent. He will not put on us more than we can bear.
2. God designs each trial to suit his purpose in our lives, each trial is specific to our weakness and designed to better our character.
3. God uses two primary processes in order to bring us to him: chastisement for willful sins and afflictions.
4. God's trials are progressive. They correlate to our current abilities. Some trials we couldn't handle earlier in our faith but as we grow, so will the type of trial. The stronger our faith, the better witness we become to others.
5. God measures our progress by how we deal with trials. Our progress shows how well we live a Godly life. God never has no purpose for something, he molds us constantly building us up into a Christ-like obedience.
6. God loves us enough to never give up on us no matter how long it takes to learn our lesson and rough we travel the road to reach him.
7. God is faithful to us as an example of how faithful we should be to him.

