

Weathering the Winds of Adversity . . .

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits. Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.” (James 1:2–12)

When turbulent trials blow across the sunny skies of your life, how do you respond? Do you stew and fret, searching for solutions? Instead, realize that the presence of trials in your life reveals that God may be trying to get a message through to you. Maybe your tendency is to deny the facts, blame others, or simply sink into self-pity. Regardless of the weather report, realize that the Spirit of Christ is living in you and gives you power to live above the winds of any adversity.

—June Hunt

Truths about Trials

Trials are experienced by everyone.

*“Do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.”
(1 Peter 4:12)*

Trials have a divine purpose.

*“We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame.”
(Romans 5:3–5)*

Trials last only for a while.

*“In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials.”
(1 Peter 1:6)*

Trials are controlled by God.

*“God . . . will not let you be tempted beyond your ability.”
(1 Corinthians 10:13)*

**Trials strengthen you
in your weaknesses.**

*“For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities.
For when I am weak, then I am strong.”
(2 Corinthians 12:10)*

**Trials come with God’s grace
for endurance.**

*“My grace is sufficient for you,
for my power is made perfect in weakness.”
(2 Corinthians 12:9)*

Called to Trials and Suffering

Called to Commitment—God calls you to endure the pain of unjust suffering because of your commitment to follow Christ. (1 Peter 2:19–21)

Called to Correction—God disciplines you because He loves you—you are His beloved child. (Hebrews 12:7)

Called to Compassion—God views suffering as the school of experience that can give you a heart of compassion for others. (2 Corinthians 1:3–5)

Called to Conflict—God calls you to take a stand for truth and righteousness in the midst of wrong. Those who choose to live godly lives in the midst of worldly values will be criticized and persecuted. (2 Timothy 3:12)

Called to Christlikeness—God designs refining fires that cleanse your character and conform you to the image of Christ. (Romans 8:29)

Called to Conquer—God allows Satan to tempt and attack you, just as he did Christ, in order that you can stand against the enemy and live out of your victorious position in Christ. (Romans 8:37)

“All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”
(2 Timothy 3:12)

Key Verse to Memorize

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.”
(Isaiah 43:2)

Key Passage to Read and Reread

James 1:1–12

Winter . . . Suffering the Chills of Pain

The cold winds of sorrow, tears, and heartache blow into the lives of everyone, but as a Christian, you have a blanket of strength in knowing that . . .

God loves you. (Romans 8:38–39)

God is with you. (Hebrews 13:5)

God cares about your struggle. (1 Peter 5:7)

God controls your circumstances. (Daniel 2:20–23)

God is trustworthy. (Romans 11:33)

God gives sufficient grace. (2 Corinthians 9:8)

God has your future in His hands. (Isaiah 43:18–19)

Spring . . . Sowing Seeds of Purpose

God has been preparing the soil of your heart through trials and suffering. You can sow the seeds of . . .

Thankfulness—Thank God for what He is doing in your life. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

Joy—Rejoice in the Lord, knowing that the outcome is in God’s hands. (Romans 5:3)

Humility—Know that God gives grace to the brokenhearted. (James 4:6)

Wisdom—Saturate your mind with Scripture. (Psalm 119:15–16)

Prayer—Do not worry, but pray about everything. (Philippians 4:6–7)

Endurance—Look to the Lord for deliverance. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Trust—Entrust yourself to God, who judges justly. (1 Peter 2:23)

Obedience—Learn to hear and obey God’s voice. (2 John 6)

Praise—Focus on God’s greatness, not on your circumstances. (Hebrews 13:15)

“We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance.”
(Romans 5:3)

Summer . . . Living in the Sunshine of Provision

Realize that the presence of trials in your life reveals that God may be trying to get a message through to you.

- **Know** that there is power in God's Word, and memorize and quote Romans 6:1–2 when you are tempted to sin.

Tell yourself: "Shall I go on sinning? By no means! I am dead to sin. How can I live in it any longer?" (Romans 6:1–2)

- **Know** that the Spirit of Christ lives in you.

Tell yourself: "I have the power of Christ in me!" (Romans 8:10–11)

Fall . . . Reaping the Harvest of God's Promise

Responding properly to your trials reaps a large return. To the extent that you allow the Master Tiller to work through the rocky, unproductive ground in your life, you will grow in patience and perfection.

Related Topics . . .

- Depression:
Walking from Darkness into the Dawn
- Evil & Suffering . . . Why?
Is God Fair?
- Spiritual Warfare:
Strategy for the Battle
- Success through Failure:
From Stumbling Stones to Stepping Stones
- Worry:
The Joy Stealer

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Trials:
Seasons of Suffering.

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