

P

ERSEVERANCE

R.I.P.P.E.D.

Workout



Tough times, disappointments, pain and suffering. Life is full of hardship — it is an unavoidable fact. Whether it be physical affliction, emotional anguish, or even death itself, we all face obstacles and circumstances which become trials to our faith. In dealing with our struggles in life we are called to persevere and press on even in the face of life's storms. How are we do to this? How do we persevere?

THINK ABOUT IT

The first thing we must make a note of together is that something seems very **wrong** with the pain and suffering we find in our world. We sense in our souls that the world is not as it is intended to be. This is precisely the Biblical view of the world.



SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD — AND WE KNOW IT

The Bible teaches that God created the world good and without sin and pain. Sin was birthed in the hearts of human beings as they chose to rebel against God and his ways. This sin put the human race in a state of alienation and rebellion against God and the resulting world which we inherited is fallen. The word fallen means that this world is now characterized by sin and death, rather than life and goodness as God originally made things. The good news is that this position is neither permanent or triumphant. God will prevail in the end, renew all things, and judge all evil in the world. There is a day coming where all weeping, death, and pain shall cease.

Read **Revelation 21:1-5**

THERE IS A PURPOSE, THERE IS HOPE

Although we all will face various trials and tribulations we can have great hope even amidst our struggles.

Read together the first chapter of the book **1 Peter**

Why does the apostle Peter tell us that we may have hope in the midst of trials?

What is the reason for our trials?

What do you think it means for your faith to be "proved genuine?"

PURPOSES FOR TRIALS

What purposes can you think of for God to allow you to go through trials and difficulties?

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PRAY ABOUT IT — ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION

- A** Lord, thank you that you are even Sovereign in the midst of my trials, that you indeed have a good plan for all of this.
- C** I confess Father that I tend to want to run from you when I go through hard times. Help me to persevere and trust in your goodness in the midst of the storms of life.
- T** Thank you God that we have a living hope and that even our death is not our end. We thank you for the inheritance we have with you in the Kingdom of Heaven.
- S** God help us to learn from our trials, to love our brothers and sisters who are in pain, to rejoice with those who rejoice, but to mourn with those who are mourning (**Romans 12:15**).

WORK IT OUT — SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Dealing with Injury and Disappointment

All athletes at some point in their career will face adversity. Be it a disappointment with a performance, lack of playing time, or a dreaded injury, disappointment can be part of the game.

In dealing with our own trials, be they large (the death of loved ones, serious illness) or small (lack of playing time) we need to keep a few principles in mind.



1. Trials will come—expect them, they are a guaranteed part of life—this is revealed to us in **1 Peter 4:12-19**.
2. God has a purpose for this specific trial and desires for you to persevere in Him.
3. You will become either **bitter** or **better** as a result — choose to be taught by the Lord in the midst of your trial.
4. Our pain is no good reason to sin and “go negative” — this only compounds our problems.

1 PETER 4:19 “So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good .”

WALKING WITH OTHERS WHO ARE GOING THROUGH TRIALS

There are times in life when our friends and loved ones go through great difficulties. In these times we may be a great blessing to them. However, such situations must be handled with grace, wisdom, and patience. The following are some suggestions for loving others well in the midst of trials.

Romans 12:15 exhorts us to mourn with those who mourn — in the midst of tragedy do not act as if things are just OK. They are not; we must mourn with those who mourn. Do not play God and pretend to know “Why this has happened to you,” Do listen well, yet talk little — avoid saying insensitive things. You can speak truth in time as the person avails themselves to you (i.e., God is in control, this will ultimately work out for good etc.) but we must start with a loving presence and an empathetic ear.

“THE GOSPEL FOR US”

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase;
To added affliction, He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials His multiplied peace.

His Love has no limit, His Grace has no measure,
His power has no boundary know unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth and giveth and giveth again!

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed e’re the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources
Our Father’s full giving has only begun.

Annie Johnston Flint, “He Giveth More Grace” quoted
in Ravi Zacharias, Cries of the Heart (Nashville, TN:
Word Publishing 1998) 74-75.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

1 Peter 1:6-8