

NECESSARY TRIALS ?

The letter of 1 Peter explains the beginning, middle, and end of the “living hope” that sustains believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

“New birth” in Jesus has a beginning – being made spiritually alive by the Holy Spirit to new life in Christ – as you trust in Him alone for salvation, through repentance and faith.

This new life also has a middle – the rest of your earthly life in Christ as you grow in God’s grace. The outcome is a glorious eternity in the Lord’s presence.

But why is this middle period so difficult ?

1 Peter 1:6-8 encourages believers to rejoice in their salvation even if they are grieved by necessary trials.

Faith is refined by trials in the same way gold is refined by fire. Our faith is more precious than gold, and trials are necessary to authenticate the genuineness of faith.

Otherwise, if it was simply a risk-reward transaction, would you abandon faith as soon as difficulties come?

Many people are tempted to follow an easier line of thinking that says God only promises an easy road. But that’s not what the Bible teaches. Someone has aptly said, “In the end, the biggest problem with ‘prosperity theology’ is not that it promises too much, but that it promises far too little.”

Earthly prosperity offers only temporary relief. But Jesus offers real riches – eternal salvation from sin. That’s why the new birth brings a new perspective on our earthly lives.

Some suffering comes from our own foolishness or downright disobedience of God’s Word. It’s a consequence of listening to the world, the flesh, or the devil – outward influences of worldly thinking, inward influences of fleshly desires, or the twisting of truth subtly whispered by the enemy of our souls.

But the outcome of trusting God through trials is stronger faith. We gain experiential knowledge of God’s power, presence, and peace. This authenticates faith, and shows it as genuine – because only a divine reality could sustain us through life’s difficulties.

This also gives your faith authenticity when you share it with others.

Think about a seed lovingly placed into the ground, carefully placed in a cradle of soil to receive necessary moisture and nutrients and light. Suddenly darkness and pressure come when the gardener covers and tamps the seed – but that’s not the end, it’s only the beginning of amazing transformation.

In the same way, God has divine purpose in trials. That’s why we can rejoice – because anything God takes us to He will take us through.

Going through trials by trusting God is what Jesus did to save us. When we follow Him by trusting too, it shows that our faith is real and that we are being transformed to live forever with Him.

That’s good news – and next time we’ll explore the process and progress of being transformed.

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