



*Divinely Blessed & Restored*

## **Trials & Tribulations**®

*by Sis. Doris B. Ryans*



I don't know about you, but when I think about trials and tribulations, these weren't at the top of the list of things I want to have happening in my life. But, whether I want to or not, whether you want to or not, suffering and trials are a fact of life if we are Christians. And, they are **not** to be viewed negatively. Yes, I said, trials and temptations are not to be viewed negatively! I didn't make that up, the word tells us in I Peter 4:12-13: *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering.... but rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ.....NIV.* The scripture is telling us that when we are suffering, as partakers (as someone sharing) in Christ's suffering, we should be glad and have joy because we have something in common with Christ. Although challenging and difficult, is something you must deal with while maintaining joy in your hearts. Now, that's a pretty tall order and sometimes difficult to fill!!! But I often recall something I read awhile back, "If God brought me to it, He will bring me through it!!! Lets examine why we have trials and tribulations:

*I Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. KJV*

- ✓ **To build our Christian Character:** Trials and tribulations give us compassion. When we have endured, we can empathize with others to a greater degree. Enduring pain and adversity develop Christ like characteristics of patience, faith, compassion and love.
- ✓ **To Build our Faith Muscles:** Romans 12:3 Tells us every man is given a measure of faith. This faith must be developed by hearing, reading and studying the word of God so it becomes a part of us, just as natural food becomes a part of our physical body, when we eat.

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What natural food is to the physical man, the Word is to the spiritual man. Faith in God is continual day after day, hour after hour, and minute by minute. It means trusting and relying upon him to provide us with every single thing we need regardless of circumstances, obstacles or people. Our challenge is to hold our position and to keep the faith during our times of trials. The question "Why?" is the most often asked question when going through trials and tribulations. We must guard against this tendency and if we find our faith slipping, we must immediately renew our mind. How do you do this? By getting into the Word.

- ✓ **To show His restoration power:** As Christians, regardless of what we are going through, we can't focus on our trials and tribulations, we must focus upon our restoration and our Reward!! Luke 18: 29,30 reads:....*verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, & in the world to come life everlasting. KJV*He's telling us that whatever we give up for the kingdom of God, we will be repaid. He will not only restore whatever we have lost but will give us more than we can image. We will be rewarded now in the present time & later in eternal life.
- ✓ **To provide our testimony:** Difficult times prepare us to minister to others and provide us with a testimony that is our own story not someone else's. You talk passionately about life experience you have lived!!
- ✓ **To draw us closer to the Lord:** As children, when you have a problem where do you go for help? Whose arms do you want to feel around you as a child if you are upset, hurting, scared? The arms of your mother or your father. Crises in our life bring us closer to our heavenly father - God. Times of trials and tribulations help us to see our limited power and increase our dependency on God.

*I Peter 4:12-13 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. KJV*

**Self-Evaluation:** Trials and tribulations allow us to see our self, our commitment, and our ability to withstand. Are you weak-kneed? Does your faith waver? God wants to know that we will still praise, pray, sing, and preach through trials and tribulations. How we react during these times of trials provide an honest evaluation of the foundation we are standing upon. It's easy to be Christ-like; loving, good attitude, and pleasant behavior when everything is going well. But the true test is how Christ-like; loving, pleasant, joyful you remain when you are in those

"tough spots" in your life. God wants to know and show to us are we really what we profess to be.

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When you accept Christ as your personal Savior, you sign on to trials and tribulations. No matter what, you cannot avoid them on your Christian journey. The Word tells us in John 16:33, .... *In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. KJV* Yet, we still have a hard time accepting this part of our Christian walk. If we truly understand what trials and tribulations are about, we will not focus upon the situation we are in and keep our minds heaven bound. I Peter 5:10 tells us: *But the God of all grace, who hath called us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. KJV* In closing, I'd like to offer you Dr. Millicent Hunter's perspective on trials and tribulations from her book "Don't Die in the Winter. She states trials and tribulations:

- They bless us, not burden us
- They develop us, not destroy us
- They cleanse us, not corrupt us
- They refine us, not ruin us
- They mold us, not break us
- They train us, not torture us

So, the next time you are in the midst of a storm, remember, *"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."* *Psalms 30:5 KJV*

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# November

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