

PRECEPT

PSALM 34:19

¹⁹ Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.

PSALM 119:71

⁷¹ It was good for me to be afflicted so that I could learn your statutes.

PROMISE

Afflictions come and go, but God's faithfulness stays the same today and forever. If not for God's faithfulness, we would not be able to overcome any troubles and trials that we have encountered in the past. Life, as we know it, is always uncertain, and problems arise from time to time, but our faithful God will not allow us to have problems beyond our capacity to handle them. He promises to provide us a way out of them, that's why we must always put our security in the faithfulness of God!

We were told of the story of Pastor Dave of People's Church, diagnosed with kidney failure at the age of 29. Upon knowing his condition, he opt to resign from being a pastor, but his lead pastor encouraged him to instead continue serving despite his illness. He fought his battle and continued serving the church for 41 years while being sick. If he is not in the hospital, he is in the church serving the Lord and others. Charles Spurgeon once said, "*The Lord gets His best soldiers out of the highlands of affliction.*" Afflictions are our training ground, that is our walking trail to exercise our faith. When we encounter them, let us think of how God is training us for we are one of his best soldiers. He always have a purpose for each of our afflictions.

GOD USES AFFLICTION TO CALL OUR ATTENTION. A lot of times, we only go to God when we are afflicted with problems. When we have no one else to turn to, God becomes our last resort. There are times God calls our attention using certain afflictions in order for us to be serious in our walk with Him, learn His instructions and decrees, and for us to follow Him. When we face afflictions, we must ask God what He wants us to learn instead of dwelling on the problem itself.

GOD USES AFFLICTION FOR REDIRECTION. Proverbs 20:30 tells us that, "*Sometimes it takes a painful experience to make us change our ways.*" In our stubbornness, God uses pain not only to call our attention, but also to redirect our path, change our ways, and transform our hearts. In facing afflictions, ask the Lord what He wants us to change; what He wants us to stop doing and start doing. Other times, He let's us experience trials because He wants us to slow down, take some rest, pause, and pray.

GOD USES AFFLICTION FOR A CELEBRATION. John 11:4 tells us, *Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."* This was the time Jesus learned about the medical condition of Lazarus, his friend. This verse is also true for many of us. A lot of times, there are sicknesses that God allows for people to glorify Him and to be a living testimony of His faithfulness and healing power. There are those people that when given afflictions, it leads them to depression, but for us children of God, let us proclaim that our God if faithful and can heal us, solve our problems, and deliver us from our battles. Richard Sibbes said, "*The winter prepares the earth for the spring, so do afflictions prepare the soul for glory.*" Remember to pray and let your afflictions be known to Him, have faith that He will help you overcome at all times, and surrender your life fully to Christ!

PRACTICE

1. Learning Experience. Share a time/situation where God delivered you from your affliction and how did you learn from it?

2. Application. Based on our discussion today, how does God want us to respond when we face afflictions? How can we help and encourage others to do the same?

PRAYER

I. Families

- Pray that families will read their Bibles and be together in worshipping God.

II. Leaders

- Pray that there would be love, humility, integrity, and accountability among our leaders.

III. Church

- Pray that churches across the globe will fulfil their purpose as light-houses for Christ!

IV. Giving

- Pray that we will be generous and have compassionate hearts for the poor and needy.

V. Salvation

- Pray that the body of Christ around the world will fervently pray for the salvation of all.

VI. Economy

- Pray that the economy would flourish and that companies would practice honourable work ethics.

VII. Canada

- Pray that those in authority in our nation would be given godly counsel & God-fearing advisors.