

**“What good are problems?”
Psa. 119:71,72**

Big Idea - God is far more interested in your character than your comfort.

“My troubles turned out all for the best—they forced me to learn from your decrees. Truth from your mouth means more to me than striking it rich in a gold mine.” Psalm 119:71-72

Life is a series of problem-solving opportunities. Job said that man is born unto troubles as the sparks fly upward.

The problems you face will either defeat you or develop you - depending on how you respond to them.

Unfortunately, most people fail to see how God wants to use problems for good in their lives. They react foolishly and resent their problems rather than pausing to consider what benefit they might bring.

Paul said in Romans 8:28 that God is working all things together for good to those who love Him...

God wants to use the problems, the tests, the troubles in your life to:

Show you are His child

Hebrews 12:6 “For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.”

7 As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father?

8 If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all.”

Matthew 13:20 “But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.”

Romans 8:35 Can anything separate us from the love Christ has for us? Can troubles or problems or sufferings or hunger or nakedness or danger or violent death?

2 Corinthians 6:4 "But in every way we show we are servants of God: in accepting many hard things, in troubles, in difficulties, and in great problems."

Test you

Genesis 22:1 "After these things God tested Abraham's faith. God said to him, "Abraham!" And he answered, "Here I am."

People are like teabags ... if you want to know what's inside them, just drop them into hot water! Has God ever tested your faith with a problem?

What do problems reveal about you?

Teach you

Psalms 119:67 "Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.
71 *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.*

Some lessons we learn only through pain and failure. It's likely that as a child your parents told you not to touch a hot stove. But you probably learned by being burned.

Sometimes we only learn the value of something – health, money, a relationship - by losing it.

Protect you

Genesis 50:20 "You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people."

A problem can be a blessing in disguise if it prevents you from being harmed by something more serious. I read about a man who was fired for refusing to do something unethical that his boss asked him to do. His unemployment was a problem - but it saved him from being convicted and sent to prison a year later when his boss' actions were uncovered.

Perfect you.

James 1:2 “My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy,

3 because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience.

4 Let your patience show itself perfectly in what you do. Then you will be perfect and complete and will have everything you need.”

“We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us—they help us learn to be patient.”

And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady.”

Romans 5:3-4

Problems, when responded to correctly, are character builders. God is far more interested in your character than your comfort.

Help you trust the Lord better and pray more!

Romans 8:26 And in the same way—by our faith —the Holy Spirit helps us with our daily problems and in our praying. For we don’t even know what we should pray for nor how to pray as we should, but the Holy Spirit prays for us with such feeling that it cannot be expressed in words.

Galatians 6:2 Share each other’s troubles and problems, and so obey our Lord’s command.

3 If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.

Colossians 2:6 “...now just as you trusted Christ to save you, trust him, too, for each day’s problems; live in vital union with him.”

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding.