

## Put Troubles to Work

It is good for us to sometimes have troubles and hardships, for they remind us that we ought not look for comfort in any worldly thing. Indeed, we are strangers here. It is also good if we sometimes have to endure people speaking against us or thinking that we are bad, even when we do good things and have good intentions.

Such troubles teach us to be humble and protect us from pride. We often seek God more fervently when people have nothing but bad things to say about us and when they refuse to recognize the good that we do. Only God can see our hearts! Therefore, we ought to root ourselves in Him, so that we do not need to look for comfort elsewhere.

When a person of good will is tempted by evil or vexed by trying thoughts, he better understands his need for God. After all, we can do nothing good without Him. When saddened in our miseries and sufferings, we lament and pray. When we become weary of living any longer here on earth, we (like Paul) long to be set free, so as to be with the Lord. It is only then that a person knows for certain that perfect happiness and full peace cannot be found in this world, but only with our Savior.

Let us walk with Him here and now, and let us long to be with Him forevermore.

(Adapted from *The Imitation of Christ*, Book 1:11)

For further reflection:

So, how do respond in your sufferings? Do they drive you to God, or do they make you complain? And when people mistreat you, do you hold a grudge or try to get them back? Or, do you run to your loving Heavenly Father for comfort?

It is indeed a strange thing that God uses the suffering of this life as a major tool for our spiritual formation. Certainly, the whole idea that pain and sorrow, trial and temptation, can somehow be good is a very unpopular way to view life in our world today. But, the Bible teaches us that this is often the way God blesses us.

*“... we rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us.” (Romans 5:3-5)*

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds....” (James 1:2ff)*

*“But if you suffer for doing good and endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps.” (1 Peter 2:20-21)*

*“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” (2 Cor. 4:17)*

Friends, may we all turn to God when faced with the struggles of this life. They keep us humble and dependent upon our loving Heavenly Father. Turn to Jesus, walk with Him, and be blessed!

*Scott*