

Eternal Treasures in Suffering

March 22, 2020

Deep and Genuine Humility

- *Being reduced to utter helplessness is the most liberating cleansing from the pride of self-lordship and self-sufficiency.*

2 Chronicles 20:12 ESV

12 For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

- *Until we come to Him as dependent as a little child, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Matthew 18:1-4 ESV

1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

2 And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them

3 and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Spiritual Desperation

- *The suffering of trials is the impetus and fuel to seek and cling to God like never before.*

Psalms 63:8 ESV

8 My soul clings (*cleave, stick to, keep fast, joined to, stay close*) to you; your right hand upholds me.

2 Corinthians 1:8-10 ESV

8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.

9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.

10 He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and He will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.

Luke 8:43-46 ESV

43 And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone.

44 She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased.

45 And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you!"

46 But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me."

Divine Strength

- *God places us in trials specifically to weaken us. He will target our strength so we learn how to draw on His strength and not trust in ourselves.*

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 ESV

7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.

8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me.

9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Divine Wisdom

- *When confusion has dismantled all human logic and ingenuity, that's when you're free to hear God's voice.*

2 Chronicles 20:12 ESV

12 For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

James 1:5-8 ESV

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Vision for the Invisible

- *God is never closer than in times of pain and suffering.*
- *With the anguish of the moment, when we draw close to God in the pain, He will open our eyes to see and to know what others cannot see.*

Hebrews 12:1-2 ESV

1 ...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 looking to Jesus...who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 ESV

16 So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,

18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Acts 7:54-60 ESV

54 Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him.

55 But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

56 And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

57 But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him.

58 Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

60 And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Longing for the Heavenly

- *By the life experience of not only the bad but also the good, we learn that this earthly life can never satisfy. It will always leave us lifeless and empty.*
- *The inevitable disappointment of this life leaves us hungry and searching for life, joy and peace.*

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 ESV

10 And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil.

11 Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

Hebrews 11:13-16 ESV

13 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

14 For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.

15 If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return.

16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

Patient Endurance

- *Spiritual endurance is developed the same way as physical endurance, repetitive and prolonged resistance.*

Hebrews 3:14 NASB

14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,

Hebrews 6:11-12 ESV

11 And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end,

12 so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 10:35-39 ESV

35 Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.

36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

37 For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay;

38 but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

Compassion for Others

- *Although you may sympathize, it is impossible to be moved with genuine compassion until you have felt the pain for yourself.*

2 Corinthians 1:3-6 ESV

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

5 For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.

6 If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer.

Hebrews 4:15-16 ESV

15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Intimacy with God

- *Casting your care upon the Lord is not dropping off your shopping list. It is wrestling with God (which is really wrestling with yourself) until the burden is literally transferred and you have the perfect peace of absolute surrender. Jesus wrestled three times in Gethsemane. Jacob wrestled with God all night. That is where intimacy with God is birthed and grows.*

Philippians 4:6-7 ESV

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 1:12 ESV

12 I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.

Genesis 32:24-26 ESV

24 And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.

25 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him.

26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."