

# "PURIFIED, MADE WHITE, AND TRIED"

"If WE suffer, we shall also reign with him." "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." "Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness,"

The words of a song are: "You bear no cross, you'll wear no crown." It is hard for us to suffer and take it patiently. Though we may suffer much for Christ's sake, yet often we lose the reward and the blessing of God through a lack of taking our trials joyfully and receiving them as from the hand of God. Jesus said, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven."

God puts the test and trial upon our lives in the place where it is most needful for us (and, as a rule, this is where it causes the most suffering), until He gets us to the place where we are patient in these tests and trials. What do we need more than patience? There may be some trials in our lives that we are perfectly immune to, because we have been tested out on those lines, and have consecrated to the depths; but the thing that is continually grieving us is our being persecuted or tried in our weakest place. These tests will continue to come until God perfects us to the extent that we can stand them just as well as anything else.

## Our Substitute

God caused His Son to be made "perfect through sufferings" — not that He was not already perfect. He was the Captain of our salvation. Yet He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that He might stand at the right hand of the Father, a perfect High Priest, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities"; that He might "succour them that are tempted"; that He might make intercession for the weak. Few know how weak they are. We are made strong only through our great High Priest who sits at the right hand of God the Father.

A chain is no stronger than its weakest link. Some are strong on some lines and very weak on other lines; but by the great plan of God's salvation, power comes down into weak, frail humanity and gives grace to strengthen the weakest place in our life and character. Christ is today our High Priest at the throne. Through His life, His death, His resurrection, and through all that He suffered while here, He has made it possible for us to live without sin, and for us not to fail at our weakest point.

When you are almost overwhelmed and swallowed up as with a flood, He raises up the Standard in the midst, and enables you to buckle on the armor a little tighter, to put on the shield of faith a little firmer, and go forward in the power of God. Our strength is made perfect in weakness.

There is an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in Heaven for you "who are kept by the power of God through faith" (1 Peter 1:1-5). This is the only way for us to be kept — "by the power of God through faith." Our shortcomings are bridged; out of weakness we are made strong, through the power of God.

## Purified by Suffering

We are living in most terrible, most awful days. The power of darkness and unbelief is sweeping the earth. It is our privilege so to live and to lay hold on the Word of God and the faith of the Son of Man that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. There is nothing that brings out the mettle, the character in the human heart, like test and trial.

If you want to get the fragrance out of a rose, crush the petals and the perfume will flow out. The same is true of the child of God; just crush him with trial, let the test come where it will, and as sure as God dwells in the heart, you will see that out of that crushed life will come forth fragrance and beauty. God's ways are far above our ways. Why should we draw back from the hand of God when He is permitting to come to us that which will bring forth fruit and perfection in our life?

"All things work together for good to them that love God," just as much today as in the past. In the midst of heavy pressure we have always proved that that truth still holds. God's Word is sure. Turn to anything else, and it is shifting sand. You cannot afford to build on anything but the Word of God. You cannot afford to build your

foundation and leave one stone out. If you do, it will crash under heavy pressure; but when your faith is in the immutable Word of God, and your consecration is made according to the plan God laid down, He will honor you in every test.

The trial of your faith is "much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire." Solomon said, "The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts." Do you know what heat it requires to melt the silver and bring it out of the ore? The gold has to go through still greater heat, and more and more, until it becomes so purified that the refiner can look down into it and see his own image.

God is going to let the furnace heat be turned on until the gold is purified sufficiently for Christ to look down and see His own image in our lives. It is not necessarily some great calamity that might come, but the little tests that God permits to come, one way and another, and sometimes from many different quarters at once, that will purify us.

We are not speaking of sin and carnality, but of the testing of God's children. Many have allowed sin to creep into their hearts — backbiting, fault-finding, failing to keep their vows unto the Lord. These things have been a wedge that has opened their heart. Satan has entered, and they have lost the Spirit, the grace of God, out of their hearts. God is calling them to "repent, and do the first works." The Blood of Jesus Christ destroys sin, actual sin and inbred sin.

Our sins are forgiven, and we stand justified before God; the Blood is applied the second time, and carnality is destroyed.

Remember, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (I Corinthians 10:13). If we are saved, the Blood is on our heart, and there is a way of escape provided for every one to be kept who is under the Blood. Thousands have proved there is grace to meet every test and temptation. You can escape every temptation if you will lay hold on God when the test comes. Be patient, take it joyfully, just wait and let God work it out. When the test and trial comes, take time to pray and commune with God.

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons." God has given us the privilege of going through hard places for Him; and often in His all-wise judgment He permits suffering to come that He may perfect us. Affliction or sickness may come to try our faith. If God does not answer at once, go down before Him, examine your heart, consecrate, and find out where the trouble lies. Never question God, but hold on in faith, and God will meet you in your consecration.

Job, in his terrible affliction, "fell down upon the ground, and worshipped." Not many are thanking God for tests, and for permitting them to prove His grace in the face of an unbelieving world. In all his trial, "Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." How many, in a trial, lose the victory by complaining and pouring their troubles into the ears of others. God does not want us to seek sympathy, but to be true and faithful to Him, and let the living, abiding Word be our strength and comfort at such times.