

# Advancing Through Adversity

**September Sermon Series**

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# Recognizing and Appreciating God's Purposes For Adversity

## Lesson Four

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# Scripture Lesson One:

## James 1:2-4 (NKJV)



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**My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.**

**Scripture Lesson Two:**  
**Romans 5:3–6 (NKJV)**

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**And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.**

**Trials are a means through which God works to accomplish His will in our lives: to shape us so that we reflect the character of Christ.**

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# **Eight Purposes for Adversity:**

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# **1. Adversity Gets Our Attention.**



**When adversity comes, we are  
forced to face problems and  
pressures that are too big for us to  
resolve.**

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**“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30).**

**Adversity is a classroom in  
which we can learn more of  
Christ and become more like  
Him.**

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**“Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies’ triumph over me” (Psalm 25:1–2).**

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**“A small perspective on God  
produces big problems.”**

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## **2. Adversity Reminds Us of Our Weaknesses.**



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**“Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.**



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**Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Corinthians 12:7–10).**

**“Sometimes you don’t realize your own strength until you come face to face with your greatest weaknesses.”**

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# **3. Adversity Motivates Us to Cry Out to God.**



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- We are to cry out to God with our voice. “I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill” (Psalm 3:4).
  - We can cry out to God for mercy each day. “Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily” (Psalm 86:3).

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- **We are to cry out to God in humility. “. . . He forgetteth not the cry of the humble” (Psalm 9:12).**
  - **We are to cry out to God with a pure heart. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Psalm 66:18).**

**4. Adversity Is an Assurance of  
God's Fatherly Love and Care.**

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**Because the LORD disciplines the one, he loves,  
and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.“  
Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you  
as his children. For what children are not  
disciplined by their father? If you are not  
disciplined-and everyone undergoes discipline-  
then you are not legitimate, not true sons and  
daughters at all.**

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**No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. <sup>12</sup>Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. <sup>13</sup>"Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed. Hebrews 12:6-8, 11-13 (NIV)**



# **5. Adversity Strengthens Our Hatred for Sin.**



**The pain of adversity helps us  
recognize the deception of sin.**

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**Do not be deceived, God is not mocked;  
for whatever a man sows, that he will also  
reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of  
the flesh reap corruption, but he who  
sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit  
reap everlasting life. Galatians 6:7-8  
(NKJV)**

**If we could only perceive the  
final cost of our sin, we would  
shrink from committing it.**

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**“Sins are like credit cards,  
enjoy now pay later.”**

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# **6. Adversity Is A Call for Self-Examination.**



**“As many as I love, I rebuke  
and chasten be zealous  
therefore, and  
repent” (Revelation 3:19).**

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**God's Word should be our  
guide in self-examination.**

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- **Proverbs 28:13, Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.**
  - **Proverbs 17:13, Evil will never leave the house of one who pays back evil for good.**

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**1 Corinthians 11:28-30, Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and several have fallen asleep.**

**“Spiritual progress is born out  
of self-awareness.”**



# **7. Adversity Tests Our Friendships.**



**Proverbs 17:17, “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”**

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**“In life we never lose friends, we  
only learn who the true friends  
are.”**



# **8. Adversity Prepares Us to Comfort Others.**



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**2 Corinthians 1:3-5, Praise be to the God and Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.**



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**2 Corinthians 4:8-12, We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.**

**“No character is ultimately tested  
until it has suffered.”**



**“We cannot control the winds,  
but we can adjust our sails.”**

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