

How God Uses Problems

Romans 5:1-5

Introduction: "Tribulation worketh patience"... WOW! I stopped praying for patience when I read that. One preacher friend of mine said he could never be a doctor because didn't have any "Patience."

As a pastor I hear this complaint all of the time, sometimes it even comes from my own lips, "Why doesn't God help me in my troubles?" This is a legitimate question to ask. A lot of Christians tend to be afraid of asking God why, or earnestly seek to resolve their crisis. Thinking I do not have enough faith or I would not go through this. Or I do not want others to know, for they would think bad of me or that I caused it.

We must adjust the way we perceive life. Even as Christian sometimes we have faulty views and expectations we pick up by listening to bad teaching and bad advice and then there is the influence of our culture. First of all bad things do happen! And they happen to good people (in the way we see good, in God's eyes of course all have sinned and there is no good, except what Christ brings us). We will go through trials, troubles, and tribulations. So what we have to do is figure out what we do when it happens.

People react to trouble in several different ways. Some grumble, others gripe, many growl, a few groan; then there are those who grieve and thank the Lord; then some grow.

The problems you face will either defeat you or develop you - depending on how you respond to them. Here are five ways God uses problems in your life:

1. To DIRECT you.

Sometimes God must light a fire under you to get you moving. Problems often point us in a new direction and motivate us to change. Is God trying to get your attention?

Proverbs 20:30 *The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.*

2. To INSPECT you.

People are like tea bags. . . 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?

James 1:2-3 *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

3. To CORRECT you.

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. ". .

Psalms 119:71-72 *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*

4. To PROTECT you.

A problem can be a blessing in disguise if it prevents you from being harmed by something more serious. Last year a friend was fired for refusing to do something unethical that his boss had asked him to do. His unemployment was a problem - but it saved him from being convicted and sent to prison a year later when management's actions were eventually discovered.

Genesis 50:20 *But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*

Here's the whole point: God is at work in your life - even when you do not recognize it or understand it. But it's much easier and profitable when you cooperate with Him!