

"Why We Go Through Trials," Part 5 - 2 Corinthians 12:14-15 – May 7th, 2017

- Today's teaching will be part five of a series I've titled, "Why We Go Through Trials."
- For the benefit of those who may not have been with us from the beginning of this series, I'd like to do a quick recap of sorts.
- The reason being is that doing so will be germane to our understanding of what Paul is going to say in the text before us today.

1. Trials enable us to see what God is showing us (Verses 1-4)

- Paul describes in the third person being caught up to heaven where he heard inexpressible things no one is permitted to tell.

2. Trials protect us from pride and arrogance (Verses 5-7)

- He says to keep him from pride due to this great vision God gave him a thorn in his flesh a messenger of Satan, to torment him.

3. Trials keep us prayerfully dependent upon the Lord (Verses 8-10)

- Paul says God wouldn't take the thorn from him, because "God's grace is sufficient for His power is made perfect in weakness."

4. Trials produce perseverance in us (Verses 11-13)

- Here Paul tells them he persevered in demonstrating among them the marks of a true apostle, in signs, wonders and miracles.

5. Trials make us more like Christ (Verses 14-15)

- v14 Paul tells them he doesn't want to burden them the third time he visits them because he wants them and not their money.
- This because, he sees himself as a spiritual father and children don't lay up for their parents, parents lay up for their children.
- v15 He says he will gladly spend and be spent for their souls though the more abundantly he loves them, the less he is loved.

- The reason I only wanted to take and tackle two verses today is that becoming more Christ like is the main purpose of trials.
- Here, Paul rises from the pages of our Bibles as an example to us of one who has the heart of Jesus, in his Christ likeness.
- Like Jesus, Paul wanted nothing from them; he only wanted them, in his love for them, even though he was not loved by them.

Allan Redpath - "Paul is only a faint shadow of the Lord Jesus; and if these qualities are found in his life, it is only because they were found completely in the life of Jesus Christ our Lord."

- While we know that these Christ like qualities are found in Paul's life, the question becomes, how were they built into Paul's life.
- To answer this question, we need look no further than to the affliction that came by way of such painful trials in the Apostle life.
- In other words, all the pain and suffering Paul endured in those fiery trials served the purpose of making him more like Jesus.

Romans 8:28–29 (NKJV) — 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

- Here we're told that God's purpose in our trials is to conform us into the image of Christ, but it does not tell us how God does it.
- So now the question becomes how does God make us more Christ like and the answer though not popular is by way of trials.
- More specifically, the fiery affliction that comes vis-à-vis the testing of our faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes.

1 Peter 1:6–7 (NKJV) — 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Isaiah 48:10 (NKJV) — 10 Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

Jeremiah 18:1–4 (NKJV) — 1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: 2 "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words." 3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. 4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.

- When I was about 10-years old, I took piano lessons and my mom made me learn to play Hymn number 272, in our hymnal.
- Now, 45-years later, that hymn has become one of my favorite all time hymns, which is the hymn "Have Thine Own Way, Lord."
- I hope you'll kindly indulge me in closing as I share with you this hymn as well as the story behind this cherished hymn of old.

Jeremiah 18 sets the scene for this hymn written by Adelaide A. Pollard in 1902 after she was inspired by a simple prayer of an elderly woman at a prayer meeting: "It really doesn't matter what you do with us, Lord -- just have your way with our lives" "Have Thine Own Way, Lord" was composed during a time when Miss Pollard was trying to raise funds to make a trip to Africa. Her unsuccessful attempt to do this left her experiencing a "distress of soul." This crisis of the soul and the simple prayer of an elderly lady provided a setting for personal reflection on the will of God for her life. After the prayer meeting, she returned home and wrote the hymn as we sing it today.

Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way; thou art the Potter, I am the clay. Mold me and make me after Thy will, while I am waiting, yielded and still. Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way; Search me and try me, Master, today. Whiter than snow, Lord, Wash me just now, As in Thy presence Humbly I bow. Have Thine own way, Lord, Have Thine own way; Wounded and weary, Help me, I pray. Power, all power, Surely is Thine, Touch me and heal me, Savior divine. Have Thine own way, Lord, Have Thine own way; Hold o'er my being Absolute sway. Fill with Thy Spirit Till all shall see Christ only, always, Living in me.