

## **Weekly Devotions: THE REFINING FIRE OF TRIALS 2**

### **The Transforming Effect of Trials**

God loves us in spite of our sinfulness but because He loves us, He will not leave us in our sinfulness. He is concerned with who we are and how we live; He wants to build us up that we may walk by the Spirit instead of being led by the desires of the flesh. He wants to strengthen us so that we can live in freedom from sin. He wants to transform us from the inside out that we may be more and more like Christ.

In the bible sufferings of God's people have a purpose and play a positive transforming role in the Christian life. The God who calls us also sanctifies us and makes us holy. King David praised God for his afflictions; he said in Psalm 119: 67 & 71; "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep your word. ...It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes." David's trials taught him the importance of living by God's word.

In difficult times, the question we should ask is not why God is allowing this to happen but what He is teaching us and making us out to be through the difficult situation.

### **Read Rom 5: 1-5**

As a result of our salvation, we have peace with God (1), enter and stand firm in His grace (2a), and rejoice in hope to see God's glory (2b). We can also rejoice in trials and tribulations knowing that they lead to maturity and make us strong and steadfast (3). We can be sure of God's love even in the most difficult times as the Holy Spirit will pour His love into our hearts (5). Not only that our faith in God's love should not waver because since Christ had died for those are unworthy; He will not turn His back on us in our times of darkness.

### *Questions to Ponder*

1. What are the benefits of being justified by faith (1-3) and what do each of these mean to you?
2. According to Paul we should rejoice in our sufferings (2-3). Why? What rob us of peace, joy and hope in the midst of difficult circumstances? How do you maintain a positive attitude in times of difficulty?
3. How does Paul portray those for who Christ died? Paul said we can be sure of God's love for us in times of difficulty. What are two reasons for our confidence? How does the assurance that God loves us changes the way we respond to trials?