

Weekly Devotions: THE REFINING FIRE OF TRIALS 3

God is At Work Even in Our Pain

James Stewart, a pastor and New Testament professor, said that if there were no suffering, there would be no fortitude and strength. If there were no discipline and hardship, we would not learn patience and endurance. If there is no darkness, we would not appreciate His light. He said; "It takes a world with trouble in it to train men and women for their high calling as sons and daughters of God Almighty, and to carve upon their souls the likeness of Christ."

God works through our failure as much as through our success, through pain as much as through joy. Tough as it is, we should try not to see trials as something senseless and meaningless. God has a purpose in letting us walk through darkness. Having said that, evil does not come from God for He is holy. But God may allow trials and tribulation to come our way to give us new meaning and purpose in life.

Read Rom 8: 28-35

Paul did not say in verse 28 that all things would somehow work together for good, as some commentators wrongly interpreted. Paul made 4 faith statements about what we can be convinced of in our times of darkness, that:

- God is at work in our lives.
- God is at work for the good of His people.
- God works for our good in all things (good as well as bad incidents).
- God works for the good of those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose.

We may not understand what God is doing but we can be sure that in every situation He is working towards what is best for us. The basis of our confidence is that He had sent His Son to die for us. We now belong to Him and He will not abandon us.

Questions to Ponder

1. Who can be sure that God would work in all things for their good? How can you use Romans 8: 28 to encourage someone facing trial?
2. What are the five questions Paul asked in verses 31-35? Which of these questions speak to you personally?
3. Why is Paul confident that God will take care of His people and does not condemn them (31-34)? What does v. 35 tell you about God's love for you and what comfort does it give you when things are tough?