

How to Be Strong in the Day of Adversity

Text: Prov. 24:10

➤ Intro:

- Most people see adversity as something that is bad and that it should be avoided at all cost.
- But adversity can be useful.
- It shows you who you really are and what character you have developed.
- In addition, it helps us to grow stronger.
- When Jeremiah was complaining about the adversity that he was facing, the Lord asked him how he ever expected to face big challenges if the little ones wearied him (**Jer.12:5**).
- The adversity that we face today is training us for the difficulties we will face tomorrow.
- Adversity can be our greatest motivation for spiritual growth or our deadliest means of discouragement.
- There is no way to avoid all adversity.
- The secret is how we respond to adversity when God sends it.
- In order to respond correctly we must seek to understand it.
- The more we can understand adversity the better we can stand against its powerful winds.
- Let me share with you three simple factors regarding adversity.

➤ I. Consider The Human Side Of Adversity

- Most people respond differently when adversity comes.
- But usually those responses will fall into one of three categories.
 - **The first response to adversity is to try to remove it.**
 - Instead of removing it.
 - We should allow it to reveal our weaknesses.
 - Every one of us have weaknesses that we do not like to talk about or deal with.
 - **The second response to adversity is to focus on the outward circumstances.**
 - Again we must look beyond the outward circumstances.
 - We need to realize that many times we are dealing with unseen spiritual powers (**Eph.6:12**).
 - It is a fact that Satan can hinder our work for Christ.
 - **The third response to adversity is to live by the power of the flesh.**
 - If we fight in the flesh, we will fail in the flesh.
 - We cannot win the battle of adversity apart from the power of the Holy Spirit that indwells every believer.

➤ II. Consider The Heavenly Side Of Adversity

- What are God's purposes for allowing adversity?
- I believe there are ways to many for me to mention in this one message.
- But let me mention a few and give you the Scripture references.

- **First, adversity is God's way of getting our attention.**
 - The stiffest competition for our time, attention, and affections are the cares of this world."
 - They choke out the Word of God and drown out the voice of the Holy Spirit (**Mt.13:18-23**).
 - While we are busy with our plans, goals, and hobbies.
 - God patiently works with us to get more of our time.
 - God's ultimate purpose in getting our attention is to conform us to the image of Christ.
 - On the basis of this, all adversity works for our good (Rom.8:28).
- **Second, adversity is our assurance that God loves us (Heb.12:6).**
 - Satan will try to convince us that God is angry at us and has forsaken us.
- **Third, adversity is God's call for self-examination.**
 - God established the regular observance of the Lord's Supper as a time and place for self-examination.
 - When this is neglected or abused, God will often allow physical adversity to motivate us to do what is right (**1 Cor. 11:28-32**).
- **Fourth, adversity is a reminder of our weaknesses.**
 - Only as we learn how to "glory in our infirmities" will we really be able to experience the power of Christ resting upon us (**2 Cor.12:7-10**).
 - When God works in power through our weaknesses, both we and others are free to give Him all the praise.
- **Fifth, adversity is our motivation to cry out to God.**
 - God responds to the cry of His children when they are in adversity (**Ps.34: 17**).
 - Adversity motivates us to cry out to God in the right ways.
 - We cry out to God with our voice (**Ps.3:4**);
 - We cry out to God daily (**Ps.86:3**);
 - We cry out to God in humility (**Ps.9:12**).
- **Sixth, adversity is God's method of purifying our faith.**
 - Faith is essential for living the Christian life.
 - Many times our faith is shallow and weak.
 - This faith must be strengthened to claim the promises of God (**1 Pet .1:6-7**).
- **Seventh, adversity is evidence of spiritual warfare.**
 - When adversity takes the form of confusion, suspicion, division and spiritual warfare is on.
 - We must put on our Christian armor and fight back (**Eph.6: 11 - 18**).
- **Eight, adversity is God's means of testing our work for Him.**
 - Every spiritual house and work must be tested to see what it is built of.

- The winds of adversity will bring down a work built with the things of the world.
- We must built our house upon the Rock of Christ (**Mt. 7:24-27**).
- **Ninth, adversity is God's way of sifting our friends.**
 - Adversity will always test your friendships.
 - It will reveal which friends are concerned about getting and which ones are concerned about giving.
 - A true friend will love at all times, especially during times of adversity (**Pro. 17:17**).
- **Tenth, adversity is our preparation to comfort others.**
 - God allows us to experience adversity so we can learn to comfort others (**2 Cor. 1:3-5**).
- **Eleventh, adversity is our signal to reevaluate our priorities.**
 - Wrong priorities may result in much painful adversity, not only for us but for all those who are effected by our lives.
 - When we fail to spend proper time with the Lord, adversity will come.
 - Sometimes adversity from 'wrong priorities is the result of trying to do more than God intends for you to do.
- **Twelfth, adversity is God's way of identifying us with Christ.**
 - Our Lord suffered more adversity than we could ever imagine.
 - When we suffer adversity we are following in His steps.

➤ **III. Consider The Helpful Side Of Adversity**

- The eagle is a great illustration of a Christian flying in the turbulent winds of adversity. (**Read -Isaiah 40:31**)
- Let me close by sharing some things that turbulent winds can do for the eagle.
 - **First, turbulent winds cause the eagle to fly higher.**
 - The stronger the wind the higher the eagle will fly.
 - These updrafts cause the eagle to fly at heights that are almost unbelievable.
 - **Second, turbulent winds give the eagle a larger view.**
 - He is able to see farther than other birds.
 - **Third, turbulent winds lift the eagle above harassment.**
 - He flies above all the other birds that often cause trouble.
 - **Fourth, turbulent winds allow the eagle to use less effort.**
 - He depends on the winds to help him.
 - His power comes from another source.
 - **Fifth, turbulent winds allows the eagle to stay up longer.**
 - **Sixth, turbulent winds allows the eagle to fly faster.**
 - It is God's desire that we be strong in the day of adversity.
 - The power of the Christian to rise above the pressures, trials, and temptations of life comes from the power of Christ.
 - During adversity, we must rest in Him.
 - May God help us to become Eagle Saints!