

# Our Light Affliction

by Aaron Hurst

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*The sermon emphasizes God's sovereignty in election, the significance of Jesus' sacrifice, and the hope found in His resurrection for believers.*

**Duration:** 1:39:06

**Scripture:** Job 42:5, Matthew 6:33, 1 Peter 1:1, 1 Peter 1:14

**Topics:** "Election"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the trials faced by Job in the Bible. He highlights how Job experienced two consecutive trials, with calamities befalling him one after another. The Chaldeans attacked and stole his camels, killing his servants, and then a great wind destroyed his eldest son's house, killing all his children. Despite these devastating events, the speaker encourages the audience to have hope and faith in God's promises. He emphasizes the importance of being mentally prepared, morally alert, and setting our hope on the grace that will be revealed through Jesus Christ. The sermon concludes with an invitation for the audience to share any testimonies or experiences of God's work in their lives.

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## Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Father in Heaven, we praise You, Lord.

You're our rock, You're our shield, You're our buckler, You're our high tower. Father, we run unto You and there we are safe, sheltered under the almighty everlasting arms of God, sheltered in the cleft of the rock. Hallelujah.

Father, this morning it is a joy. It is a joy to raise up our voices in praise and worship and adoration to our God. Father, to just sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the

Lord.

Father in Heaven, we do thank You, Lord, for this privilege, this opportunity that You have given unto us another day, Father, another morning. Mercy's new and Father, it's the Lord's day and we get to be here, Father. Thank You, Lord.

Thank You, Lord. Father, we do ask Your blessing now upon each one here. Father, upon those listening in on the message, Father, wherever they be, Lord.

Oh God, we need You, Lord. We need Your blessing, Father. We need Your strengthening, Lord.

Your quickening by Your Spirit, Lord. Your divine enabling, God. So, Father, today we ask for that blessing in the name of Jesus, our Savior, our Lord.

We commit this service to You. Have mercy upon the preacher, Lord. Oh God, just grant utterance and feed Thy people.

Thank You, Lord. We trust You for these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

You may be seated. Greet you all in Jesus' name this morning. Welcome.

Welcome to the local body here. This is your first time here this morning. A special welcome to you, visitors.

Glad you have come to worship the Lord with us. I was just so blessed this morning by the songs. It just seemed to flow.

The heart of the message that God has given to me this morning. So, by the grace of God, with the help of the Lord, we want to look into the book of Peter. So, you can open your Bibles with me this morning.

To 1st Peter and the 1st chapter. You know, the Word of God is pure. It is a tried word.

It is a sure word. It's a firm foundation. The Word of God is quick, meaning it's alive.

And it's powerful. The Word of God can do that which no man can do. Through the Spirit of God.

The power of God. The Word of God is a beautiful balance. I know we do a lot of topical preaching here.

But this morning, with the grace of God, I'd like to just take a walk through 1st Peter, 1st chapter. And just take it verse by verse. And just take the balance of Scripture, you know.

That's something that I've really been blessed with in my growing up days. We would read a text. And then preach from that text.

And oh, I know it went out to different subjects, you know. But I think that's good. That gives us a balance of the Word.

Which sometimes I've been challenged by the Lord. That is there certain portions of Scripture or certain doctrines that we are weak on. Because we just sort of preach topically.

So, I love to preach topical. It's easier for me. I have to admit that, I think.

But, by God's grace, we want to look into the Word of God this morning. And just take the meat, the potatoes, the peaches, the cream. And just let Him give us a balanced meal.

Amen? So, let's do that by the grace of God. Beginning in chapter 1 of 1st Peter, verse 1. 1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

Through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you and peace be multiplied. One more thing I wanted to mention, lest you think I'm going long.

We're going to have the main message first. So, just bear with me this morning. And then we have some testimonies to hear.

And so, we're just sort of reordering things a bit this morning. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout. You know, this message is for all.

It's not just to a certain few. He's not just focusing in on the Corinthian church and saying, well, there's some need here and I need to get some direction there. But He's saying to the strangers scattered throughout.

You know, as the church was scattered and there was persecution and they weren't all able to be together. And he writes a letter of exhortation, of admonition, of encouragement, of instruction to the strangers scattered throughout in many different parts. And so, the word this morning is to all of us.

To all those who are strangers and pilgrims in this world. All those who are part of the family of God. And if you're not born again and you're not part of the family, I know the word of the Lord has something for you too this morning.

He says in verse 2 that, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and springing of the blood of Jesus Christ. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. Here we see a deep attribute of God in that God through His foreknowledge knew that you would be here this morning.

He knew that I would be here this morning. God is able through His foreknowledge to see what we will do. What we will choose.

But yet, He is so wise that God can know all those things and yet give you and I a choice. Isn't that amazing? I have a little bit of a reading here I'd like to share that I picked up from John Wesley in my studies. This whole matter of election, of predestination has been a debate down through history.

Between some believers. John Wesley wrote this. Strictly speaking, there is no foreknowledge no more than afterknowledge with God.

See for us, after the fact that we have seen and we have the afterknowledge, oh yes, then we can say, oh yes, I can now understand that. But God's foreknowledge with Him is no more difficult than afterknowledge. Because God is eternal.

All things are known to God as present from eternity past to eternity future. Praise the Lord. Election in the scriptural sense is God's doing anything that our merit or power has no part in it.

We are not saved this morning because of our merit. Amen? It's not because I deserved it. If God gave me what I deserved, I'd be in hell.

I'd be lost without hope. But God in His wisdom and His everlasting love laid the foundation even before the world that salvation should come through His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus. Election in the scriptural sense is God's doing anything that our merit or power has no part in.

The true predestination or foreappointment or foreknowledge of God is he that believeth shall be saved from the guilt and power of sin. Number one, he that believeth shall be saved from the guilt and power of sin. Number two, he that endureth unto the end shall be saved eternally.

Number three, they who receive the precious gift of faith thereby become the sons of God. You see, God's election and promises are made reality in our lives to him that believeth. God has before ordained all of these things.

I mean, it's too high for me. You know, if I could bring God down to my level, He wouldn't be God anymore. Throughout scripture, we see that every part of this appointment of God, promise and duty go hand in hand.

All is free gift and such is the gift. It's free gift. We didn't earn it.

No man is saved by works of righteousness. None. It's free gift.

Hallelujah. It's free gift. Such is the gift.

That it depends in the final issue of our future obedience to the heavenly call. Other predestination than this, either to life eternal or death eternal, scripture knows not of, says John Wesley. Predestination that says you are predestinated and God has foreelected and ordained you to be saved or to be lost is cruel respect of persons, says Wesley.

It is unjust regard of one and unjust disregard of another. It is partiality. It is not infinite justice.

It is inconsistent with the express written word of God that speaks of God's universal offers of grace, of His invitations, of His promises that He's given to all. How many times in the Bible do you read, whosoever will, whosoever believeth? How many times? I did a little study on that once. I don't have it with me this morning.

But I believe it was well over a hundred times. Would God be just if He bids us choose life and then damns us for not choosing it? If we didn't have a choice? Would that be a just God? Oh, these things are high and mighty. But this morning, the promise stands sure.

That as many as receive Him, gave He power to become the sons of God. That whosoever shall confess with his mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shall believe in his heart that God has raised him from the dead, shall be saved. And God in His wisdom can say that He knew all of those things before we ever made a choice.

Before ever even the world was formed, before ever even I was born or you were born. So God is a great big God. God is an awesome God.

God is a terrible God. God is a just God. God is a jealous God.

But God is a God of justice and equity. Sometimes the people said, God, you're not just. You're not equal.

God is just. God is equal. God's ways are right.

Today, you can choose. Just like Joshua said, Choose you this day whom you will serve. Just like Elijah said, If God be God, let Him be God.

If Baal be God, then Baal. Then go serve Him. But they cried out to Baal all day long.

And they cut themselves and nothing happened. But then Elijah settled confidence in God. Oh, I love that picture.

At the time of the evening sacrifice, just arranged all the stones on the altar. And he just said, Oh, Lord God, let it now be known that Thou art the true God of Heaven. Send the fire, Lord.

No shouting, no leaping, no dancing, no cutting himself. Just confidence, steady, steadfast, in the almighty, eternal God, who cannot lie and who has promised. He'll do what He said.

Praise the Lord. Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit. We are sanctified through the Spirit.

If ye through the Spirit demortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Sanctified, sanctification is the work of the Spirit. Having begun in the Spirit, having been born again by the Spirit of God, it is futility to try to be perfected in the flesh.

But if ye through the Spirit demortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Glory. Through the Spirit.

Through the Spirit. Sanctification of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit which He has given.

If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. Sobering words. True words.

But if ye be born again of the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in you, oh then, that same Spirit that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall also quicken this mortal body by that same Spirit that dwelleth in you. Sanctification of the Spirit. Unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Oh, this is beautiful. There's a whole sermon just right there. I'm just so grateful to God for His Word.

It is so beautiful. Through sanctification, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah for the blood.

You know the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat. Hallelujah, the blood has been shed. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That no longer do we need to go and sacrifice bulls and goats and calves and pigeons and doves. But we come now by a new and living way. Through Jesus Christ.

Through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Grace unto you and peace. Be multiplied.

Hallelujah. Verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

Blessing, glory, and honor be unto the Lamb forever and ever.

Hallelujah. According to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively living hope. Praise God.

A lively living hope. You know it's sad to see people without hope in this world. But you meet them all the time.

Without God, without hope in the world and just dejected, depressed, on drugs, antidepressant drugs, on all kinds of programs. But all what they need is life in Jesus. The sentence of death hangs over their head.

They know not Christ. They are without God. And they are miserable.

Even their pleasures, even in their laughter, it's so short. And at night, they are empty. We have a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

You see, the resurrection is what changed everything. And they went everywhere, you can read in the book of Acts, preaching the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And that message is what got their heads in trouble.

And that's what cast them into prison. We are going through the book of Acts right now and it's just a, it's just a stirring my soul again, you know. The boldness by which they preached this Jesus, whom you crucified, has God raised up.

You know, well, they could have left some of those things out and softened the message, but they didn't. Because, you see, in the resurrection is where the power is. The resurrection of Jesus Christ.

That same spirit that raised up Christ dwells in you. That resurrection power dwells in you. Oh.

So, they threatened them and they told them, don't preach anymore in that name of Jesus. You know, just be quiet about Him. But they couldn't do it.

They said, we can't help but speak. Oh Lord, may we have a baptism of boldness like that. Like they did.

Because of the resurrection power of Jesus in us. They took knowledge. They've been with Jesus.

Couldn't hide it. It just came out all over. The lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Our God lives. The gods of the religions of the world are dead. They're just men.

Or they're just idols. I saw something the other day that it just was a very grievous thing. You know.

I don't remember all the details, but a person was in great distress and they were bowing down before a Buddha. You know, and I just had to think, you know, that poor soul. Men bow down to the works of their own hands.

And cry out to an idol that cannot hear. That cannot speak. You know.

A dumb idol, it says. An idol that is dumb. He has nothing to offer.

But who's going to tell him? Who's going to tell him that Jesus lives? That Jesus Christ died for their sins and made atonement for their sins. And you know, there they are, polishing up this old Buddha for a great festival. You know.

A lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And then he goes on to speak about the inheritance. Verse 4. To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

It's reserved there for you. It's reserved in heaven. We've got to wait a little longer for our rewards.

But that's okay. It's reserved there for you. It's safe there.

It's secure. It's beyond the reach of change and decay. And it's unfading.

And it's reserved in heaven for you. You know, the Bible speaks a lot about our inheritance. We have the earnest of our inheritance of the Spirit of Christ now.

But brothers and sisters, we haven't seen nothing yet. Oh, thank you, Jesus. I don't remember the song.

But this week there was a group of young people in the studio singing. And they sang a song about heaven. And it just was so powerful, so beautiful.

And it just broke my heart. And it made me think, you know, we should speak more about heaven, I believe. We, you know, longing for heaven.

Homesick for heaven. Let's make it to a home in this world. Thank you, Jesus.

The inheritance is there waiting. It's reserved for you. Who are kept by the power of God.

Through faith unto salvation. Ready to be revealed in the last time. You know, it just seems like Peter is just by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Putting all this forth. Then he's going to get down to some real practical issues. For where we live.

And see, I believe we need that. I believe this is on purpose. God didn't make a mistake here.

God's laying all these beautiful things out. That we can behold and take a look at the greatness and awesomeness of God. And the reward that is reserved there.

And the blessing and the power and all of that. And he's going to get down to some real practical things. This is lovely.

It's kept there. Reserved in heaven. Psalms tells us, Hallelujah.

That's Psalm 31, 19. Paul had this testimony. He said, See, Paul knew.

It's reserved there. He said, I'm ready to be offered. The time of my departure is at hand.

I have no worries, no fears. Because I know. God has laid out the crown of righteousness.

For me and not for me only. But for all those who love His appearing. It's kept there by the power of God.

And he says, And as I looked at that being kept by the power of God. It's a strong word. That word kept.

It's being guarded. It's being garrisoned. Like a garrison around it.

Protecting this thing. Guarding it. Keeping it.

By God's power. Through faith. Till we finally on that great day.

That final day. We're going to inherit it. You know here on earth.

You might have an inheritance coming your way. But you know something could happen. That inheritance could be lost.

Some people get very bitter. Because I was supposed to be in the line of the inheritance. And I knew I had it coming.

But then. The company went sour. And things went down.

And we lost everything. The stock market plunged. And we lost everything.

Not so with God's inheritance. Hallelujah. It's reserved in heaven.

It is guarded. It is kept by God's power. You know God is faithful.

His power is sufficient. He is able. Tells us in Samuel.

First Samuel 2.9. He will keep the feet of his saints. And the wicked shall be silent in darkness. For by strength shall no man prevail.

He will keep the feet of his saints. Psalm 37.23 tells us. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.

And he delighteth in his way. Though he fall. He shall not be utterly cast down.

For the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. Praise God. They that trust in the Lord.

Shall be as Mount Zion. Which cannot be removed. But abideth forever.

As the mountains are round about Jerusalem. So the Lord is round about his people. And he will keep his people from henceforth forever.

And here's one that's such a precious one. I know we've shared this verse many times. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.

Every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment. Thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.

And their righteousness is of me. Sayeth the Lord. Praise God.

Kept by the power of God. Jesus said. I give unto them eternal life.

They shall never perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all.

And no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. And I and my Father are one. Are you standing on the promises this morning? Sweet are the promises.

Praise you Lord. Kept by the power of God. Through faith.

Through faith. Verse 6 he says. Wherein ye greatly rejoice.

You greatly rejoice. You know you just look at all that God has done for you. And it causes your heart to rejoice.

Greatly rejoicing. Exceedingly glad. It's a good thing to give thanks to the Lord.

It's a good thing to bless His name. It's a good thing to rejoice in God. And the joy of the Lord is your strength.

You know. God reminded His people. When they were beginning to get downcast.

And they were looking at all their problems. He reminded them. The joy of the Lord is your strength.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice. Though. Though.

Now for a season. If need be. Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.

I think we can identify with that too. Can't we? Though now for a season. If need be.

Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations. Trials. Testings.

Sufferings. Misunderstandings. In 2nd Corinthians.

Paul said it this way. For a season. You know.

Now for a season. He says. Our light affliction which is but for a moment.

Worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I like his perspective. He says.

It's a light affliction. But it has a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory. I have to confess.

I get that reverse sometimes. I think it's a heavy affliction. And it's got a big weight.

But he says. It's a light affliction. And it's but for a moment.

And if we can see past the affliction. And see beyond the testing and the temptation. Oh there's a far more exceeding weight of glory gonna come forth.

And it's but for a moment. It came to pass. A light affliction.

It's but for a moment. The season of heaviness. Through manifold temptations.

How long does that season last? I believe you and I have something to do with that. Don't we? That season. You know.

Paul said. It's but a moment. Cause I see.

I see reward through suffering. I see gold at the end of this trial. I shall come forth as gold.

Heaviness. It's not unusual. For children of God to have trials and testings.

That cause them to be in heaviness. In Psalms. The Psalm writer said.

My soul melteth for heaviness. Strengthen thou me according to thy word. God prophesied in Isaiah 61.

The spirit of the Lord is upon me. Speaking of Jesus. Because the Lord has anointed me to preach the good tidings unto the meek.

He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted. And proclaim liberty to the captives. And the opening of the prison house to them that are bound.

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. And the day of vengeance of our God. To comfort all that mourn.

To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion. You mean there is mourning in Zion? Yes. There is mourning in Zion.

God's people face many things. But He says. To give unto them beauty for ashes.

The oil of joy for mourning. And the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. That they might be called the trees of righteousness.

The planning of the Lord. That He might be glorified. Hallelujah.

You know. Manifold temptations. Many folded temptations.

Many varied temptations. Many different trials. My trials and temptations are not the same as yours.

Yours are not the same as mine. Many are the afflictions of the righteous. But the Lord delivers them out of them all.

What are your afflictions? What are your temptations? Have you been in the season of heaviness? Lift up your eyes unto God. See past the present circumstance. To the hand of God.

He sits as a purifier of the sons of Levi. It says therein. Is it Joel? See all of these trials.

All of these temptations. All of these testings. God allows for a purpose.

You know. It's not. It should not come as a surprise.

He says in the world you shall have tribulation. Said the Lord Jesus. But be of good cheer.

I have overcome the world. You know. It's interesting how God puts it.

He says rejoice. He says be of good cheer. He says I give you.

I give you the oil of joy for mourning. The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. You know.

It's just. And I look there at the testimony of Paul in Corinthians. Where he was beaten.

He was cast in prison. And he was just went through so many distresses and persecutions. But yet his testimony was.

It's but just a light thing. It's but just a small thing compared to the glory. That God wants to work in our lives.

Are you heavy this morning? Let's look in verse 7. He says the trial of your faith. Being much more precious than a gold that perishes. Though it be tried with fire.

Might be found unto praise. Honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. The trial of your faith.

Paul speaking to the Christians there in the book of Acts. He says he went confirming the souls of the disciples. And exhorting them to continue in the faith.

And that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom. Don't think it strange beloved. Peter says later.

In this first Peter. He says don't think it strange concerning the fiery trial. We should try you as though some strange things happened.

You know while our temptations and our trials and testings are unique and different. Don't think it strange. Don't think it unusual or extraordinary to just yourself.

As though this is unique just to me. Nobody else has any trials. No one else has any sufferings or temptations.

Don't think it strange. When the fiery trials come. As though some strange thing happened.

Something very unusual happened. But here he says again. This is first Peter 4.12. If you want to turn there.

But rejoice. I mean look at how we are to deal with trials. And with suffering.

He says rejoice. Rejoice in as much as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings. That when his glory shall be revealed.

You may be glad also with exceeding joy. You see God has a purpose in mind. That we should be tried.

And that we should come forth as gold. Job said. He knoweth the way that I take.

And when he has tried me. I shall come forth as gold. My foot has held his steps.

His way have I kept and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips. I have esteemed his words.

Of his mouth more than my necessary food. Beautiful. Psalms tells us.

Psalms 66.10. Says O God. For Thou O God has proved us. And Thou has tried us as silver is tried.

Thou brought us into the net. Thou laid affliction upon our loins. Thou has caused men to ride over our heads.

We went through fire and through water. But Thou brought us out into a wealthy place. All glory.

You see when we can see the trial. As coming from the Lord. That his hand has allowed this.

Then we can bear it. But if I think it's my brother. Or I think it's this other person.

And we start looking at that person or that circumstance. Then many times we can't get through it. We just can't get beyond it.

But the Psalmist said. Thou has caused men to ride over our heads. And we went through fire and through water.

But Thou has brought us out into a wealthy place. I will go to the house with burnt offerings. I will pay Thee my vows which my lips have uttered.

And my mouth has spoken when I was in trouble. You know often what happens is. Through a trial we are brought to the end of ourself.

And if we've been trying to work out holiness. And sanctification through the flesh. And through trying to do better.

And all of these different things. God just allows us to go through more trials, more trials. Till he gets us to the place.

Where we are down on our face. And then we say. Okay Lord.

Whatever you say. Whatever you want. Here's my life.

And we make vows to God. Have you ever done that? We've heard the testimonies many times. You know.

Lord if you'll just let me live. If you'll get me out of this. I will serve you the rest of my life.

I remember this one testimony. Of a man. Who felt the call of God on his life.

That God was calling him to be a preacher. But he said. I don't want to be a preacher.

But yet God kept speaking to his heart. But he kept saying. No Lord.

God allowed different circumstances in his life to come along. Small things at first. Then bigger things.

And every time those circumstances came along. And those trials and those testings. He felt he knew.

You know. God is after me. But he kept saying.

No Lord. Until one day. He was flat on his back in the hospital.

With maybe a 50-50 chance to live. And in his semi-consciousness on his hospital bed. As he came to.

And realized the grave condition he was in. He said. Lord.

I'll do anything. Lord. I'll serve you.

And there he made vows to God. As it were. You know.

He committed himself to God wholly. Well the psalmist here says. You know.

When the water was going over my head. When the fire was burning around me. And men were riding over our heads.

And I was in that end of the road of my self abilities. And I was just finished. There I made vows to God.  
And the Lord who brought me out. I'm going to the tabernacle. I'm going to the temple.  
And I'm going to pay the vows I have made. So I just want to encourage you this morning. You know.  
God is a loving God. He's a loving Father. But don't you resist him.  
Because you never know. When the hour of his grace. Will be finished for you.  
And it will be over. But this man awoke. And he had another opportunity.  
And on his first sermon he preached. Yes. He was ordained.  
First sermon he preached. He gave his testimony. And that was his testimony.  
What I showed there. Some of that. He says.  
I will go. Unto thy house. And I will pay thee the vows that I have made.  
That my lips have uttered. That my mouth has spoken. When I was in trouble.  
So this morning. If you've made vows to God. If you've uttered things in the time of your pit of distress.  
And a time of your affliction. Don't be slack. To pay.  
What you have committed to God. He says. I'll go to the house of the Lord.  
I will offer. Bullocks and goats and rams. But you know.  
That's not what God requires today. God says. Come.  
Come unto me. And offer up yourself. Offer up your body.  
Offer up your talents. Offer up your gifts. Offer up who you are.  
Your reputation. Everything. To God.  
A living sacrifice. Wholly devoted to God. For his service.  
And you know. When you do that. When you put the offering on the altar.  
Then the fire will fall. Oh. Bless God.  
You know. Trials. Are designed by God.  
To purify us. To bring out the beauty of holiness in us. It's more precious.  
Than gold. That perishes. But I've also seen trials.  
You know. God said. He will prove thee.  
He said to Israel. He will prove thee to see. Whether ye love God or not.

Whether ye will obey him. Whether you will follow him or not. And so, trials may make us more into the image of Jesus, or as a worldly term is, they may break us and sometimes people become bitter and turn away from God.

But you know, we all have the same opportunities. God is righteous, God is just. He measures out the trial according to just what He knows we can bear.

If we don't bear what is righteous, if we don't bear it, it's because we didn't take the way of escape that God gave us and the grace that God offered us. Trials. I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver. Isaiah 48.10 James tells it this way, Blessed is the man that endures temptation. For when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to them that love him.

Oh, let us look at our trials in that light. Then they will look so different. 1 Peter 7. The trial of your faith be much more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Whom having not seen ye loved, in whom though now ye see him not yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. My Lord, please forgive me for the times I've just given in, you know, to feeling sorry for myself in the trial. But if we just be able to see it from God's point of view, and I'm not talking about just saying praise the Lord, hallelujah, you know.

Yeah, there's times for weeping. Weeping may endure for a night, may endure for some weeks sometimes. Oh, but then afterward.

Afterward, those that have been exercised unto godliness and brokenness and, you know, full surrender. Oh, afterward, the beautiful fruit to those that have been exercised thereby. I was listening to a tape the other day, and brother was sharing that, you know, if we flunk the test, what does the teacher do? Gotta take it over again, right? Well, brothers and sisters, in the school of Christ, it's the same way.

When we resist, and we lash out at the people, and we rrrr, this and that, you know. God says, oh, we're gonna have to go through this again, son. Because I wanna see you come through this thing, I wanna purify, bring out gold, purge out the dross.

It's a beautiful thing to behold. Praise God. Verse 9, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently. Who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. Searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify.

When it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Oh, down through the history of God's people, God, by His holy inspiration, moved upon the prophets. And the prophets, over hundreds of years, were prophesying of the Christ that should come.

You know, to me, I just can't grasp how someone who is a devout Jew, and loves the scriptures, and believes them. And sees all those prophecies of the Messiah, stretching throughout all those different major and minor prophets. They all prophesied of His coming.

They prophesied of His suffering. They prophesied of His glory that should follow, of His resurrection. And that He should make atonement for the sins of mankind.

You know, all those things are so beautifully prophesied. But it seems to me like, you know, in the Old Testament days, before Jesus came, I mean the prophets. There was a diligent search.

There was a looking forward. Oh, when is He going to come? You know, and all, they were just lining up and comparing different prophecies. And looking at them.

And, you know, just, ah, when is God going to do this thing that He has promised, that He has spoken? And there was a diligent search and inquiry made. They knew it. They saw it.

They saw it through the eye of faith. They prophesied it. But they didn't see it in reality.

Like we see it unfolded today. Now we look back. Oh, they were searching what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify.

See, it was the Spirit of God in them working. And they were prophesying under the anointing of the Spirit. Holy men of God, moved by the Holy Ghost, wrote as God inspired their hearts.

Well, I'm writing about the same thing that this prophet wrote 400 years before me. Lord! God! You know, I mean, it, it, I believe they were so excited. Sometimes they just could hardly contain themselves.

It was revealed, verse 12, unto whom it was revealed, not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which things the angels desire to look into. The mystery of the gospel. The angels watching.

I mean just, I think, I mean all of heaven just watching, beholding. Prophets prophesying, angels watching, looking into it. Can you imagine when God said, Gabriel, chief angel, it's time to go and carry the message to the handmaid of the Lord, Mary.

Ah! Can you imagine the excitement in heaven? All of the angels watching, looking into. I mean, maybe I'm overplaying this thing, but I don't think so. I tell you, brothers, this mystery of the gospel that was hidden in times past, you know, and they were just watching this thing.

When is God Almighty going to fulfill His word that He has promised and He cannot lie? It's going to happen. Glory, it has happened. My, wherefore, my brethren, my sisters, verse 13, wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind.

Now, He comes back down to earth again. Hallelujah. Gird up the loins of your mind.

Be sober and hope to the end of the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gird up, brace up your minds. Be sober, be circumspect, be morally alert.

Set your hope wholly, unchangingly on the grace that is coming to you through Jesus Christ. Oh, it's beautiful. You know, I think we really need a good grasp of heaven and the inheritance and the promises upon our heart.

Lest we get weary, you know, and we start getting so busy minding earthly things we forget about the heavenly. Too much, I know we don't forget, but, you know, it gets out of balance. Can I say it that way? Wherefore, gird up.

You know, it's like a soldier girding on his sword, girding up his robes so that he's ready to run, ready to fight. Brothers and sisters, gird up. Gird up the loins of your mind.

You know, as a man thinketh. You know, and in the mind is where the battle rages many times. In the mind, out of the heart and into the mind.

I believe those two are, you know, pretty much interchangeable. Out of the heart proceedeth, you know, and in the mind, you know, that's where lust is conceived and sin is conceived in the heart, you know. And all those things happening there.

Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts and murders and adulteries and fornications and thefts and, you know, all those things in the heart. He says, see that all of these things are reserved in heaven for you and what all God has done. Gird up the loins of your mind.

Oh, Christian soldiers, gird up the loins of your mind and be sober. Be sober. Jesus said, take heed to yourselves.

Let that any times your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life. Take heed. Gird up the loins of your mind.

Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For then sleep, sleep in the night, and let it be drunken or drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and of love and for an helmet the hope of salvation.

Be sober. You know, there's a lot to laugh at in the world. The world is laughing their way through life.

Don't want to think about anything serious. Don't talk to me about death. Don't talk to me about judgment.

Don't talk to me about hell. Don't talk to me about eternity. We just want to have a good time and laugh our way through life.

Give us more thrill rides. Give us more exciting games to play. Give us more things that stir our flesh and, you know, just want to go on and have fun.

Just live in pleasure. Don't bother us. But the Christian, be sober.

Gird up the loins of your mind. Guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Don't let the world encroach and impress in upon you with all of the cares, all of the pleasures, all of the other things entering into your heart and your mind.

But your mind is so full, you can't even think about God. Can't even take time to think about eternity. Gird up the loins of your mind, brothers, sisters, for we're in a war.

This world is not a playground. It's a battlefield. It's a battlefield.

Be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ as obedient children. Obedient children. Obedient children of God.

See, this whole matter of obedience, this whole matter of faith, if we can just unconditionally, eternally, securely be saved, we don't have to worry about obedience so much. Because I'm saved and it doesn't matter what I do, I'm going to heaven. But the Bible says, be sober as obedient children.

And Jesus said, not all those who say, Lord, Lord, and honor me with their lips are going to enter heaven. But those who do the will of the Father which is in heaven, those who are obedient, those who hear these sayings of mine and do them, they're like a wise man who builds his house on a rock and it stands. But those who hear it and don't do it are like a man building his house on a sand.

And then the floods come and the winds blow and beat upon that house. And it falls. It falls.

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts and your ignorance. I don't know what your former lusts are. I don't know what they were.

But wherever there's a formality, wherever there's an identifying and a familiarity with a former lust, is where the devil will come back in to try to bring you down. The man who was a drunkard stays away from the bar. He stays away from social drinking.

He doesn't even go near it. He doesn't see how close he can get. Because he knows that's a former lust.

I want nothing to do with that. I cannot get close to that. Maybe you may, but I may not.

Maybe you can go to the bar to witness to people. Or maybe you can do certain things, but maybe I can't. You may say, well, you're just a weak brother.

You ought to be able to overcome that thing. Well, maybe I should. I believe God's grace is sufficient for us, but yet we do not tempt God.

And go into situations where we put ourselves in tempting places. Maybe you need to go with two other brothers. Then you have some accountability and you have some soldiers beside you to help you and to support you.

But what is your former lust? What is it? What is that former conversation? Fashioning yourselves according to the former lust. Meaning being molded or fashioned after or copied or patterned after that former lust. He says, as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lust.

Colossians tells us, mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth. Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concubines, covetousness which is idolatry. For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.

In the which ye also walked some time when ye lived in them. But now put off all these. Anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth and lie not one to another.

Seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds. See, for some people a former lust might be, you were a joker. You had a dirty mouth.

You liked to make people laugh. And you were witty and quick. It's a former lust.

And now, as a child of God, when you are in weakness and the tempter comes and throws that in there, that might be your area where you need to crucify and put off that old man with his deeds. Maybe for

another, it was moral issues. Maybe it was immorality.

And you need to mortify, put to death and make no provision for the lust of the flesh. None. Because it's a former lust.

It's a weakness. And if we don't get rid of all those Philistines, speaking of a word picture, they're gonna become pricks and thorns in your side. And they're gonna bring you back into bondage again.

You know, we're not strong enough to deal with those things. There's only one way to deal with them. That is through repentance and confession and renouncing the world and the devil and those hidden things of darkness.

And breaking all ties. Not suffering one of them to live. Don't let one former lust remain in the recesses of your heart.

Former lust, maybe you were an angry person. Maybe you were an angry man. And it's a former lust.

And you need the power of God to break that thing. As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lust in your ignorance. Maybe you just exaggerated things.

You like to color the story. The fish was this big. You know, I don't know what your former lust is.

Maybe it was making a lot of money. You dreamed of making a lot of money. And a covetous heart.

Is Jesus Christ first in your life? Or is it money? You cannot serve God in memon. You cannot serve God in money. Maybe a former lust is I'm gonna be a truck driver.

I'm gonna get me that Peterbilt. Spit polish clean. Everything painted chrome.

And I'm gonna drive down the road. And when I get to that point, I'll be king on the mountain. Maybe it's just you.

Maybe it's just me. I can't wait to wear the clothes I wanna wear. Comb my hair the way I wanna comb it.

Go the places I wanna go. Do the things I wanna do. And that's what you're living for.

That's your lust. Gird up the loins of your mind. My brother.

My sister. Be sober. As obedient children.

Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lust in your ignorance. Don't go back to that old familiarity. But as he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

In all manner of life. In every aspect and walk of life. Be ye holy.

Because it is written. Be ye holy. For I am holy.

Sayeth the Lord. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate. Sayeth the Lord.

And touch not the unclean thing. And I will receive you. And I will be a father unto you.

And ye shall be my sons and daughters. Sayeth the Lord Almighty. Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. You see, it's very practical. Be ye holy.

As I am holy. Sayeth the Lord. Well, we can never be holy like God.

Walk in obedience to what the Lord has shown you. Walk in humbleness, yieldedness to God. Cleansing yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit.

Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. And God says, I will be a father unto you. And ye shall be my sons and daughters.

Sayeth the Lord Almighty. Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Holiness is not an option for a few.

It's the requirement of Almighty God. Let's kneel together in prayer. Father, we thank you for your word.

We thank you for the beautiful balance we find in your word. The encouragement it is to our hearts, Lord. The warnings it speaks to us, Lord.

The admonitions it gives us, Father. The light it shines into our hearts, Lord. You don't leave us wondering who you are.

How great you are. How mighty you are. How able you are and willing to help us in our times of need.

But you also don't leave us not knowing what you require of us. So, Father, I just pray today, Lord, please use this word of yours. Father, to just speak to our hearts.

To encourage us. To deliver us out of the hand of the enemy, Lord. Out of a former lust.

Out of anything that would be holding us captive, Lord. And Father, I pray for those who are going through trials. Strange trials they might feel it is.

I pray you will bless them. Encourage their hearts, Lord. That they can see beyond the trial.

To the almighty, loving Father in Heaven. Who just orders the trials according as what is best and right. And that they can rejoice in the midst of the trial.

Oh, Father, have your way in the rest of the service. We just give it to you, Lord. Bless the sharing time, the testimonies.

All of it, Lord. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, praise the Lord this morning. I can say I was challenged and blessed with the word of God as it came forth. And I do agree, as our brother shared, that it is good for us sometimes to just take the word of God.

Line by line, verse by verse, and just let it speak to our hearts. And I really appreciated that this morning. Because, you know, if we just go through the scriptures and we just pick and choose here and there.

Well, eventually we're going to miss out on some things, as our brother shared. We're going to miss out and we're going to get lopsided. And I so appreciate how God, in His wisdom, put together His word.

And He didn't just tell us what to do, but He also gives us many examples and many illustrations of what He means when He says this. In light of what Brother Aaron was sharing here about trials and enduring trials, I just felt led to share one of these things that God showed me recently as I was reading in the book of James. Just reading through the word.

And I came to this verse here in James chapter 5, verse 10. It reads, And you know, there's some of the theology today that as soon as a bit of affliction comes into their life, they think it's an attack from the devil. And you know, it may be.

But it says here, He says, And then the next verse says, It goes on to say, And I just thought about that and I said, Lord, what's this all about? What's this mean? We're supposed to take for an example of suffering affliction. So, as Brother Aaron shared this morning, trials and afflictions are going to come. If you have turned your back to the world and you have committed in your heart to follow Christ, we must expect affliction to follow.

There will be affliction at one point or another in our lives. But then we can go to the book of Job and take for an example of how to relate to it. And this is what was such a blessing to me as I went to the book of Job chapter one.

And I'm just going to skip through it because I know you could almost have a whole message on this thing. But I want to get to a point that that was just so beautiful to me here in verse eight. It seemed like God was having a conversation with Satan.

And he said, did you consider my servant Job that there is none like him in the earth, that he's perfect and upright and one that fears God and eschews evil? And then Satan said, well, does Job fear God for naught? I mean, don't you have a hedge about him that no one, you know, I can't even get to him. You've got him so wrapped about with your protection that I can't even get to him. So of course he's going to fear you.

To me, there's a truth here. If we are in Christ, there is a protection about us. There is a protection about us that Satan cannot get to us unless God says, go ahead.

I'm going to let you in here and let you go in and try to, you know, go ahead and test him. So God gave Satan permission to go down and test Job. But he said, just don't touch him.

In the beginning here, he said, don't touch him. And then there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in the eldest brother's house. And a messenger came on the job and said the oxen were plowing and the asses were feeding beside him.

And the civilians fell upon them and took them away. And he said, I say, yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword. And I only escaped alone to tell thee.

And you would think, that's a big trial. That's a big trial. All of his children gone just like that.

And you'd think, well, if he'd had some time, you know, he could probably get through that. You know, with some time and just, you know, time as a way of healing things, he could get through it. But it says, while he was yet speaking, he no more than heard what this messenger said.

It says, another came and said that the fire of God has fallen from heaven and burned up all the sheep and the servants and consumed them. And I only escaped to tell thee. There was two trials, one right on top of the other one.

And as if that wasn't enough, it says, while he was yet speaking, there came another. And says, the Chaldeans made out three bands and fell upon the camels and have carried them away. Yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword.

And I only escaped to tell thee. And while he was yet speaking, there came also another and said, thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in the eldest brother's house. And behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness and smote the four corners of the house.

And it fell upon the young men. They are dead. And I only escaped alone to tell thee.

If there was ever a man that could have said, I'm being attacked by the devil, it was Job. And he really was. I mean, the devil was behind all this.

But see, God had said, go ahead. And I mean, he could have... How would we respond today if something like that would happen? He would have had opportunity to go out and rebuke the devil. But really, it was God that said, Satan, you can go ahead.

Let's look at his response. All of these things, one after another after another, came upon him. Major trials in his life.

It says, Job arose. He rent his mantle. He shaved his head.

And it says, he fell upon the ground and he worshipped. He worshipped. That's so beautiful to me.

And he says, naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

What a beautiful response. Job here, in this condition, he acknowledged his helplessness. He acknowledged who he was.

He is a man. Without God, he's helpless. He's at the mercy of God.

And so, it says here, in all of this, Job sinned not. And neither did he charge God foolishly. Job didn't sin by blaming God.

Job didn't sin by blaming the devil. But he just bowed his heart and he worshipped God. And in all of this, he sinned not.

And of course, we could go on and see, you know, how God was with him all throughout that trial. But we don't want to lose sight that God has a purpose in these things. God has a purpose in Job's life.

He has a purpose when he allows things into our life. That gold, if it's going to be pure, it must be tried. And he tries it with fire, difficult things.

So, as we face difficult things in our life, what's the attitude of our heart? Do we just come to God and worship? Blessed be the name of the Lord. The Lord giveth. The Lord taketh away.

That was so beautiful to me as I was reading in the New Testament. And came to this place of suffering affliction. And then were instructed to consider the prophets.

And here we can, you know, and specifically it mentioned Job in that situation. That was so beautiful to me. How clearly God shows us, okay, you face this in your life.

Here's how you respond to it. You face this. Here's what you do.

And so, the word of God is full of these things that we can build our lives upon. It's a firm foundation. And that's so beautiful.

So, again, I just really appreciated the message and all that was shared. Maybe God spoke something to your heart. And you'd like to share with us.

Maybe a confession, testimony, something that God did in your life. Ushers, if you could get microphones, raise your hands. We'll get a microphone to you.

Anybody? In the back, there's one. And up here, there's one. Go ahead, Brother Dean.

Amen. I was so blessed by that message this morning. You know, when you ponder on the holiness of God.

I think there's scripture there that he's shared on. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience. Now, I'm blessed that, you know, the holiness of God and the sanctifying power of God leads us into obedience.

Leads us into being a pure and holy people. And the exciting thing about that, that I find, is what was shared here, is how God does that. And how He does do that according to His promises.

And He does that according to His good pleasure. The passage that goes with it is there in Romans 8. I was going to read a little bit of that. It's kind of like a parallel scripture to this.

For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. And here kind of goes with what he shared there at the beginning, and it's a beautiful truth. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called. And whom He called, them He also justified. And whom He justified, them He also glorified.

And here's a really good line here. What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? There's such confidence in the holiness of God and His promises. And then real quick here at the end, there's a beautiful section there that says at 35, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long.

We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen. I think that goes with what you're saying there too, Malan. That in all these things, we can trust in a living God who has promised us and will bring us into a holy people acceptable to Him.

I bless the Lord for the message. Amen. And you know, that's joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I mean, we need to desire to understand more of that mystery of the great power that is in Christ and the salvation and protection. That's beautiful. Up here there was a hand.

Amen. I was blessed again today by Brother Aaron and encouraged. And especially by when he mentioned about choices.

You know, even those choices. God knows the choices we're going to make. I just want to give Him, you know.

He knows the choices I'm going to make, but I want to surrender that part to God. Because I can't make those choices on my own. And then about praying, about when he mentioned about their Mount Carmel.

You know, the humbleness and brokenness of prayer, the lowliness of prayer. And then I had to think of this verse in Matthew 6, 6. Where it says to pray to thy Father. And so often, you know, we get wrapped up in this thing about the devil, like you were sharing.

And how often do we give him credit when we, you know, in times past. And I believe I've erred in this in times past. In rebuking him when I believe that isn't the Lord and God's place.

But we need to focus on, I want to focus on God, my Creator. Brother Andy here. Was the microphone in the back somewhere? Okay, go ahead brother.

Three words in this passage really bring joy and hope to me. And maybe they will to you too if you're in the middle of a trial. But in verse 6 it says, You greatly rejoice though now for a season if need be.

Those are three words that we quickly pass over when we read. But they tell us something about the one who is behind or who is superintending all of those trials. It says that there is not a single one of them that is needless.

Not a single one is purposeless, meaningless suffering. So, I know that there are some families among us that are going through suffering right now. And pain and trial.

I have to think of the Allman family. I, you know, my heart goes out to them. And there's others here.

You know, these words give us hope. They encourage us to go on because there is not a single trial that is purposeless, needless, fruitless suffering. God has a meaning behind it all.

And there was another thought that I had in this passage where it talked about the prophets. It's a little more complicated to explain. But it talks about these prophets who, you know, they just were diligently trying to figure out what things the spirit was telling them.

And God told them, No, don't worry about it. That's for some time down the line. It's not really for you, in other words.

It's for somebody else. And you'll find out what it's all about down the line. But, you know, every single one of those prophets that it tells us of is now in the presence of the Lord.

And they do understand what it was all about with perfect understanding. They stand there and their understanding is perfectly illuminated. And then it goes on to say, in verse 13, Now, I'm not contending the fact that there is present grace.

There is present grace. But this grace here, I believe, is talking about a future grace. Just like it talks about the revelation of Jesus Christ earlier at the appearing of Jesus Christ in verse 7. That's something that hasn't happened yet.

This grace is the grace that will be revealed to us when we finally stand in His presence like those prophets. And we will finally understand what the need was. If need be.

What the reason behind it all was. And we can just hang on and cling to that. And cling to Jesus until we get to that day.

Praise God. Amen. Another few words in that scripture.

It says, Though now for a season, God knows just how much it takes. And I'm not an old man, but I can testify that I've been in the middle of trials that I didn't know how I was ever going to get through this thing. And you know when you're in the middle of that thing, it looks a lot more complicated than what it really is.

And sometimes you just have to give that thing to God. Then after a while, you're through it. And you say, hmm, you know.

And so, you see how God allows just enough. And He will deliver us. And that should give us courage that if we find ourselves again in the middle of a trial, we know that this is only going to be a first season.

It's going to come to pass. It's not going to go on forever. And we can just take the attitude of Job.

And worship God and blessed be the name of the Lord. He will see us through. Someone else? Okay, there was a hand up here.

I was resting on the message too. One of the things that I've thought about when we go through trials and life seems like it's going kind of slow. There's a song that has blessed me recently in regarding to that.

Just to be able, while you're going through a trial, to look to God and to know that He's still on the throne. He's still in control. And He's the one that will still, you know, He'll bring this thing to pass.

The song that has blessed me is the song, Be Still My Soul. I don't know the whole verse, but the line that stuck out to me was, Be still my soul, the winds and waves still know His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below. In the back first.

Yeah, you, go ahead. I have a request to make of everybody. They call it in a lot of those trials and struggling to find my way.

And I just ask everyone to remember me in prayer. I've asked it before and can see the light more afterwards. So I just ask it again and I hope you don't get tired of praying for me.

I just want to do as the scripture says this morning and honor my elder, our elder, for his labor in the word. Thank you, Brother Aaron, for your hard work. Even at the beginning of your message, you confessed that it's easier to do topical preaching, but that you had taken on this challenge to do expository preaching and

thank you for your labor of love.

I was very blessed and I was blessed to see how, Brother Malin, your comments have tied in and complimented the message as well. As I listened to the message this morning, I was reminded of God's afflictions in my own life, in light of the afflictions that Peter speaks of and Malin, you spoke of in the book of Job. And the thought came to mind that Job was allowed to be afflicted for a reason.

And as Brother Andy shared, sometimes we don't always know those reasons. But there was a young prophet who spoke into Job's life that God did not rebuke. He was not numbered in those three.

It was Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad. The young man's name was Elihu. And Elihu exhorted Job for self-righteousness.

And when God begins his speech of rebuke to Job, he begins with, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? There was an ignorant sin there, I believe. Elihu pointed out the fact that it is God who imputes righteousness through faith. And at the end, after Job has humbly listened to God's loving rebuke and the whirlwind, Job mirrors back God's own words.

He says, Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have uttered that I understood not. Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Here I beseech thee, and I will speak.

I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. There again, Job quoting God's words. And then Job says, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the air.

But now mine eyes see thee. And I just thank the Lord for the message. In 1 Peter, Brother Aaron brought out verse 14 that says, As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.

I can remember as a new zealous Christian, Leading behind my world of competition in sports. But discovering a new competition in my peers in Bible college. And it was a subtle competition, but it was one of, Who's going to grow up and graduate and get the degree and build the biggest church for God? Who's going to win the most souls for God? And coming from a home life where I didn't have an unconditional father's love, A subtle lie began to creep in that my father in heaven had a conditional love for me.

And I can remember setting foot on campus. Bible college wasn't enough, so I had to get the degree in seminary. And I can remember setting foot on that campus and seeing one of the largest churches in America up the road.

And whispering to one of my peers, I'm going to pastor that church someday. And those seeds that began early in Bible college were now starting to bloom in seminary. And God's gracious affliction began in seminary.

Praise God I didn't make it through those courses. About half way I began to see that my simple faith, That simple unconditional love of my heavenly father, I traded it and was continuing to trade it for selfish ambition. God didn't save me to become a performer.

He saved me because he loved me. And I just thank God for the message this morning. It says as obedient children, not fasting yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.

You know I have a little flock now. I've got six children and a precious wife. I can't describe the joy that I find in sharing a family devotion and laying down the ambitions of my young man's dreams.

God loves us saints. Because we are in the beloved. Period.

And I thank God like Job. I just didn't know. I was ignorant.

But he loved me enough to afflict me and show me that there was something far better than performing for God. And that is allowing God to love me. And that out of the overflow of that love.

Loving the few that he gives me. And for now it's my wife and children. And the few perhaps that he will bring across my path.

Thank you Lord Jesus for your love. I just want to take this time to thank everybody for praying for us through this major trial that the Lord has put us through. And you know there's a lot of things that we can do negative about the situation that we were in.

I mean we can say that it's all God's fault. That the devil had his way with the situation that we're in. But I praise God that me and my wife both.

I can see us not even giving him a foothold. I mean we're just giving all the glory to God that he had a reason for this. And we might not know why right now.

But someday we will know when we see Joshua in heaven. And we're just thankful for the love of God that he's given us to make it through this. And I dread the thought of what would have happened if we didn't have Jesus in our hearts.

That if we were with the world and something like this would have happened. I think it would have been so devastating for us. And it just gives us the peace to know that we might not know why right now.

But someday we will know why. And once again we just want to thank you for all the prayers and so many cards that we received. And we're just thankful.

Amen. God bless you Larry. You go through this time.

You might not understand now. But God can still give you that peace that passes all understanding. Keep your hearts and minds by Christ.

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