

The Brightest Colors

by Charles E. Cowman

The sermon explores how affliction and trials can enhance the beauty and character of a Christian's life, much like vibrant colors in nature thrive in harsh conditions.

Scripture: Psalm 119:71, Romans 5:3, Hebrews 12:11, James 1:2, 1 Peter 1:6

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Trials And Tribulations"

Description

Charles E. Cowman preaches on the concept that afflictions and trials in life are necessary for spiritual growth and character development, drawing parallels to the vivid colors of lichens found on mountain peaks exposed to harsh weather. Just as the lichens exhibit their most brilliant colors in the face of storms, Christians shine brightest after enduring trials that refine and perfect their character. Afflictions clear away obscurity, perfecting the outlines of one's disposition, and ultimately bring brightness and blessings to life.

Transcript

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted" (Ps. 119:71).

It is a remarkable circumstance that the most brilliant colors of plants are to be seen on the highest mountains, in spots that are most exposed to the wildest weather. The brightest lichens and mosses, the loveliest gems of wild flowers, abound far up on the bleak, storm-scalped peak.

One of the richest displays of organic coloring I ever beheld was near the summit of Mount Chenebettaz, a hill about 10,000 feet high, immediately above the great St. Bernard Hospice. The whole face of an extensive rock was covered with a most vivid yellow lichen which shone in the sunshine like the golden battlement of an enchanted castle.

There, in that lofty region, amid the most frowning desolation, exposed to the fiercest tempest of the sky, this lichen exhibited a glory of color such as it never showed in the sheltered valley. I have two specimens of the same lichen before me while I write these lines, one from the great St. Bernard, and the other from the wall of a Scottish castle, deeply embossed among sycamore trees; and the difference in point of form and coloring between them is most striking.

The specimen nurtured amid the wild storms of the mountain peak is of a lovely primrose hue, and is smooth in texture and complete in outline, while the specimen nurtured amid the soft airs and the delicate showers of the lowland valley is of a dim rusty hue, and is scurfy in texture, and broken in outline.

And is it not so with the Christian who is afflicted, tempest-tossed, and not comforted? Till the storms and vicissitudes of God's providence beat upon him again and again, his character appears marred and clouded; but trials clear away the obscurity, perfect the outlines of his disposition, and give brightness and blessing to his life.

Amidst my list of blessings infinite

Stands this the foremost, that my heart has bled;

For all I bless Thee, most for the severe.

--Hugh Macmillan

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