

How to Handle Adversity

by Manley Beasley

Manley Beasley teaches that adversity is a divinely permitted tool for spiritual growth and redemption in the life of a believer.

Duration: 33:57

Scripture: Romans 11:36, Colossians 1:13

Topics: "Adversity"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of understanding and handling adversity in the Christian life. He emphasizes that all adversity is permitted by God and has a purpose in our lives. The preacher refers to the story of Joseph from the Bible as an example of how God used adversity to bless and shape Joseph's life. He also highlights that God often speaks to us through our family, finances, and health, and that when we experience adversity in these areas, it is a sign that we need to pay attention to our spiritual condition.

Transcript

I'm glad I have the attitude about adversity that I do. If I didn't, I'd be in trouble this week, wouldn't I? I'm sure you feel like you've seen all of my adversities, but you haven't. This has been one of the most unusual weeks of my life, as far as God letting me have burdens.

I think every day I get a new one, and it's really been something. I told Bill tonight, I said, I'm going to preach to myself. I said, if no one else is involved in this sermon tonight, I'm going to be involved.

I said, it's what I need, so I'm going to preach to myself. I always like to do that. I don't know about you, but I get helped when I preach to myself.

I never take a meeting unless the pastor and the church allows me to bring the books and tapes that we have out here on the table. The reason for that is that I say a lot with just seed thoughts in these meetings, and it has to be followed up. Believe me, it does have to be followed up.

We bring the books and the tapes to do that follow-up work. It obviously does a good follow-up work. The Lord always blesses, and I hope that you will pick up some of the books and the tapes and get involved in this matter of trusting the Lord.

I haven't even been able to preach a message on trusting the Lord, and it's not because I don't think you can handle it. It's just the fact that I haven't had time to get to it because the Lord has had me dealing in other areas. Anyway, there's an album out there just on faith alone, ten messages on faith.

I tell people that I have everything I know about faith on those tapes, but the Lord has given me some more stuff recently that I don't have on there. So that's not altogether true, but most everything I know is on those tapes. Now, tonight I want to go back to the outline that I started giving you earlier in the week, Sunday night, in fact, and talking about when I said there were seven basic laws that govern the Christian life and that a child of God has to come to grip with certain issues if they are going to get the most out of this life, if they're going to be overcomers, and no one that is not an overcomer is giving a testimony that they're saved.

It's only when you are an overcomer in your life, it's only when I'm an overcomer in my life that I am giving a testimony that I am saved by the grace of God. That's very interesting. Now, it doesn't mean that I may not be saved, it means that I'm just not giving a testimony to the world that I'm saved.

Now, tonight, one of the issues that I feel like a child of God has to face if they're going to really be an overcomer, is how to handle adversity. Now, you can say, well, that doesn't apply to me. Well, stick around.

Because I know if you're a human being, God has revealed in His Word that everyone has trouble. And it seems like that in our day we're having more than ever. I don't know.

I do not know how much trouble you're having, adversity you're having. But I do know that we have adversity. And if we do not know how to handle adversity, it will crush us.

But if we know how to handle adversity, it will make us. God has sent adversity to every one of our lives to be a blessing to us, not a curse to us. It seems when God gets ready to speak, He speaks in one hour or more of three areas.

He speaks through our family. He speaks through our finances. And He speaks through our health.

Now, I often say this to people. When God has to speak in the family in the material sense, to where you are aware of it, in the financial sense, in the health sense, when God has to get that far to get our attention, it's because we have been spiritually dumb. Now, the reverse side of that is this.

If we are sensitive to God, we can respond to the tug of the Holy Spirit in our spirit. And God does not have to let something abrupt come into our lives to get our attention. But we're not all that sensitive, are we? We're not all that sensitive.

So how do we handle adversity? Now, I'm going to give you a number of scriptures tonight. And I'm giving you this number of scriptures for your consideration, for you just to study. I'm not going to preach on all of this.

I'll not go verse by verse or we'd be here all night. But I am going to give you these verses. And if you're a note taker and you want to take them down, that's good.

If you aren't, just sit there and listen. And if you don't want to do that, go to sleep. And if you don't want to do that, I'd suggest you slip out, make like you're sick, go home, go to bed.

Amen. Now, I don't want to grieve you and I don't want to get you in the flesh, but I do want you to get some help. Romans 11.36 says, Of him, through him, and to him are all things.

That's one verse that really blesses my heart. Colossians 13-19, 1st 13-19. Colossians 1, 13-19.

I'm just going through these. Proverbs 16.4 Boy, that is some verse. Proverbs 16.4 Deuteronomy, 8th chapter, the first 12 verses, 1-12.

And then Judges, the 2nd chapter, the 23rd verse. And the 3rd chapter, the first 2 verses. Verse 1 and 2. Now, this really covers a great deal of territory.

And you pray tonight as I share with you just this simple truth about adversity. I have had so much adversity this week in the sense that I'm talking about it. That it's almost so heavy on my spirit that it's very difficult for me to even preach to you tonight.

But that's the reason why I said I'm preaching a message to myself. Because I feel like the Lord will lift me in my own spirit as I go through this message. When we talk about adversity, we have some difficulties.

We have some difficulties because we feel like that all adversity is from the devil. And the adversity that's been delivered to our door has been delivered there by the devil. Now let me say this and get this clear in our hearts because we can't go far if we do not get this clear in our hearts.

The adversity, when it comes to you, very likely has been delivered to your door by the devil. Amen? It's not only been delivered to your door by the devil, but adversity very likely was caused by the devil. But now there is something else a child of God must settle.

And these verses, now I could turn to these verses because these verses stand as our final authority on the truth. And these verses would tell you that far beyond the devil there is God. Now I think this is enough to the spiritual thinker.

The Bible declares our Lord as the Lord of the living and the Lord of the dead. Is there anything else? That's everything, isn't it? Amen? If the Lord is the Lord of the living and the Lord of the dead, that means he's Lord of everything. Amen? Now, he's not only Lord of the good, but friend, he is in charge of the adversity.

And not one speck of adversity touches your life. Now listen to me carefully. Not one touch of adversity touches your life that does not come through by the permission of God.

So when adversity touches your life and touches my life, we can say, Okay God, even though the delivery boy was Satan, even though the cause of it was Satan, we can say, Okay God, here you are, what's up? God, this is you. Because when it touches you, it's God. Amen? Now if you do not see it as from the Lord, you see it just as from Satan, you are going to be crushed and you're not going to get the blessing that God has for you out of that adversity.

That adversity will very likely crush you. But if you see God saying something to you and allow God to have his way in that adversity, that adversity will turn to bless you. That adversity will turn to bless you.

Now I've had the most difficult time in my life handling this issue of adversity in my life being allowed by the Lord. I never could see God as God of the living and the dead. And I never shall forget it.

And in the illustration that I'm fixing to give will come out a couple of verses of scripture that really firm up firmly this concept that God is in charge of this whole business and not one thing touches our life except it comes as from the Lord. I mean, when it touches our lives, we know that God has allowed it. Boy, that's something.

Back in 1970, I began to get ill. And by 71, I was so ill that my son here, Bubba, could carry me around in his arms. I was like a bag of bones.

And everyone knew that I was dying. And so I heard of a great preacher in America from England. He was in America from England.

And I wanted to visit with this great preacher. And I was taken to this camp, encampment, where he was to be one of the speakers. And so I was placed on the couch.

And he was seated over there. And I could hardly talk because of my tongue being collapsed. And I said, Sir, how far can the devil go with a man that is as right with Jesus as he knows how to be? See, I thought that it looked like Satan was going to kill me.

And I had a promise that I wasn't going to die, but I mean it looked like Satan would kill me. And I should have died, the doctor said. So, he said, Well, Brother Manley, have you considered the story of Joseph? Now remember, I'm telling you a story that anchors the truth that God is really in charge of adversity that comes into your life.

It doesn't come there without God's planned permission. Now, he said, Have you considered the story of Joseph? I said, Yes, Sir, but it's lost its cutting edge. Do you remember the story of Joseph, how when Jacob sent Joseph out to see his brothers, they took him, stripped him of his coat, and threw him in the ditch and sold him into slavery? Remember that story? Do you remember years later, twenty-something years later, when his brothers showed up in Egypt? He said this to them, he said, You did it for evil.

They're Satan. But he said, God meant it for what? Good. God meant it for good.

In other words, he, Joseph, saw God in this adversity. That's right. And he knew it.

The devil delivered it, but he saw God in it. Isn't that interesting? Amen? I just want to make sure you're here, because I realize, friend, if you learn how to handle adversity, you are going to grow up spiritually overnight. Amen? And I've been dealing with this area a long time, and I still have difficulty with it.

But I'm telling you about when I first got a glimpse of this truth, I'm telling you, on a level where my life has never been the same. He said, Well, he said, Have you considered the story of Job? And I knew he had something special to offer me. I said, What do you mean? He said, Well, Job, who brought, in the story of Job, who brought Job's name up first? And man, I almost said, Satan.

But God brought Job's name up first. And man, I saw God for the first time as my father, so in charge of my life, that, my dear friends, not one hair on my head could fall without God's permission and his knowledge. And I saw the Lord for the first time totally in charge of everything that affected my life.

And if an issue came to my life, the Lord was in charge. Every adversity you have, every single solitary adversity, not some of them, all of them. Now, when the Lord lets an adversity come to your door, he is saying something to you.

Let me just say this. When he allows an adversity to come to your door, you know what he's saying? He is saying, You need to be redeemed. Our others need to be redeemed.

Our both of you need to be redeemed. You say, What do you mean by that? Alright, I mean, by redeemed, when the Lord allows adversity to come in your life, he allows that adversity to expose your wickedness and my wickedness. And when we see our wickedness and we confess it and forsake it, who gets redeemed? We do.

Amen? When your wife does something, and my kids are going to think I'm picking on them tonight. Because we've just been sharing all afternoon in a family way. And this has been beautiful, but I had this sermon planned before they showed up.

When your wife or when your husband or your children upset you and you act like the devil, it's not your husband or your wife or your children's fault. It's God's way of pushing your button and exposing your wickedness. When my wife does something and I act like the devil, she may have done wrong, but it's my problem.

That's right. And God allows adversity to come in your life and my life to expose the wickedness of our heart. Let me just say something else to you.

And I'm preaching to you as well as myself or myself as well as you. Might ought to leave it like I said in the first place. I'm preaching to you as well as myself.

I'm speaking to me first and foremost. When God has to go and deal with you and me twice on one subject, it's because we have been spiritually dumb. Amen.

You say, why do you say it like that to impress you? Amen. If I'd have said it in some normal way, you wouldn't even thought about it. But I saw some of you raise your eyebrows back there.

Amen. Because I call you spiritually dumb. Amen.

You're not sure. God allows adversity to expose the wickedness of our hearts. And if we would be sensitive to this, God can really, really teach us how to mature as saints.

I mean, he just allows that adversity to come and we get upset. Right? Amen. Oh me.

Amen. God make us sensitive tonight to this truth. And when we get sensitive to this truth and we see the wickedness of our hearts and we confess it and forsake it, then God cleanses us and then there's something else that goes on.

And that's when others get redeemed. And what does that mean? It means that when adversity touches our lives, other people see how we act in that adversity. And what do they see or who do they see? When we act right in our adversity, they see Jesus in the midst of trouble.

And they want the Jesus we've got. Amen. Amen.

They want the Jesus we've got. Then they get redeemed. What I have just done without giving you the topic, I have just shared with you the difference between temptation and testing in the Bible.

A lot of people believe that God does not tempt people. But I did a word study on that word temptation and I found out something about that word temptation. I thought that the word temptation simply meant an enticement to do evil.

Isn't that what you think it means? But in the Bible, it's used more time as an exposure to wickedness. Exposure to wickedness. God allows temptation to come into your life to expose your wickedness.

And in testing, he's talking about me and you being put in a predicament where the very nature of our being is exposed. And who's supposed to be the nature of our being? Jesus Christ. Now the Lord allows adversity to come into your life and my life for this purpose.

Amen. One man put it this way, he allows adversity to come into your life to correct you and enlarge you. That's just what I got through saying.

Amen. Amen. Now you can add a great deal to that.

If many of you are Gothernites. Gothernites. Gothernites.

Whatever. You probably got a magazine within the last week or two on the whims of adversity. That's really good.

He's broken it. He has gone into more detail than I'm going into because he's got a book to do it with and I've just got my times already out. I say that God allows adversity for four reasons.

Now I've actually given you the reasons already. But this will help your understanding. It may not help your knowing.

It helps your understanding. God allows adversity to come into your life to expose your wickedness. God allows adversity to come into your life to reduce you to weakness.

Well I can see that brother. Oh. So you just simply, simply trust Jesus.

God allows adversity to come into your life to teach you that man shall not walk by bread alone but every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. God wants us to walk by the word. Not only its teachings but its promises.

God wants us to walk by the word of God. Oh brother I'm hurting so much as I mention this tonight. But it's the word that stands.

It's the word of God that stands. I remember as I shared my testimony the other night some of you will remember. That I got a promise from God I was not going to die.

And I continued to die for six months. And the only thing in this world that kept me going was I had a promise from God I would live to see my children's children. Boy it was that word that I lived by.

And it's still that word tonight that I live by. You know. I know grandpas are all excited about their grandchildren.

And I'll tell you that's a new day isn't it. Grandmas and grandpas amen. I mean it's some day to become a grandparent.

But my two grandsons are just a little bit special to me because they're promises. And this one that's here he says he's papa's promise. And I guarantee he's a promise.

Red headed, freckled, node boy. And just blesses me all over. But what I'm trying to say God said I'd live to see that.

And my very life this very hour is dependent on one thing that's the word of God. My doctors can't handle it. But that word can.

And another thing that God allows adversity to come into our lives is to establish the law of antagonism. You say what does that mean? It means my dear friends God allows antagonism to come and pressure our life. Because it stimulates growth.

It stimulates motivation. I tell you we'd get lazy and lousy if it wasn't for trouble. If it wasn't for trouble.

That's right. That's right. And my dear friends you may not believe it but it's trouble more than once used of God to get us to God.

God allows trouble to come into our life to stimulate us. So brother Manley what happens if I'm ignorant of that trouble and I do not pay any attention with God. God lets it get bigger and bigger and bigger until you pay attention.

You say what if I do not pay attention to adversity? Disregard God. There comes a day when God will let your bones bleach in the desert of disobedience. And walk off and take his glory from you.

Or it may be reversed. He may take his glory off of you and leave you to be bleached in the desert. If you know your Bible real well you know that I'm definitely making reference to the children of God who were not sensitive to God.

Coming out of the land of Egypt and they refused to walk on with God. And God you know what God did? He turned them into the wilderness. They were not sensitive to God.

And they died on that wilderness journey and their bones bleached in the sun. God he says he has to treat his children as horses and mules. You know what that means? He puts bits in their mouth and he turns them with the winds of adversity.

To keep them going like they're supposed to go. And if they buck and refuse then my dear friends the adversity gets worse. The adversity gets worse.

Do you know we had a little revival in the traditional Southern Baptist Church in America in 1970? Are you aware of that? Do you know what preceded that revival? Do you know what stimulated that revival? Do you know what was the ground work of that revival? The traditional church member as a young person became such a dope head and drunken and harlot. The average boy and girl out of the normal typical Southern Baptist Church. That boy and girl became so mixed up in dope and adultery and liquor.

That mothers and dads went to the altar and sought the face of God till God started supernaturally saving them. And it spread across this country and it will be written down in history revival. I mean my dear friends these typical Baptist churches got willing to get right with God.

Some of them didn't even pay any attention. They just let their daughters and sons go straight to hell. They just let them go.

But some didn't. Some heard God in return. Some heard God and prayed.

Some heard God. And beloved, adversity can be your enemy. It will crush you.

Or adversity can be your friend and bless you. And it's all to shut you up to one person. And that person is Jesus Christ.

And if you're not allowed adversity to shut you up to him, it'll crush you. If you're allowed to shut you up to Jesus, it'll bless you.

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