

Growth from Adversity – The Process

God is a perfect Parent and has a perfect plan for training His children. He has a process called transformation that uses adversity as a necessary part of it. The specific role of adversity in this process is the subject of this study. What is the function of adversity in the training of the Lord?

Commencement – Challenge – Choice – Completion

1. Commencement – Adversity arrives in different ways

1. Fall into it – empipto – some hidden trap or danger along a chosen path - Mt 12:11 – lost sheep falls into a pit; 1Tim 3:6-7 – pride **à** fall into condemnation & reproach; 1Tim 6:9 – pursue money **à** fall into temptation, snare & harmful lusts
 - Choose the wrong path and find hidden snares and become trapped
2. Encounter – peripipto – suddenly surrounded – Jam 1:2 – encounter various trials Lk 10:30 – robbers jump out
 - Sudden onslaught of different adversities all at once
3. Taken hold of – lambano – seized, grabbed – 1Cor 10:13 – no temptation has taken hold of you except that which is common to man
 - Something powerful grabs you and you cannot escape its grasp
4. Happen to you – sumbaino – variety of circumstances come together to form an adversarial situation.
 - Circumstances operating under God’s control/timing to form an adversity.
5. Have – echo – to be in possession of – Jn 16:33 – you will have tribulation
 - Existence of consistent, long term environment of adversity

2. Challenge – what is in your heart – what do you really believe about God, self, life

1. Adversity is an examination – dokimazo – test to determine/prove purity/validity
 - Ore purified by heat boiling out impurities to produce pure gold
Jam 1:2 – to determine the validity of your faith; 1Cor 3:13 – validity of your work is revealed by fire; 1Pt 1:7 – your faith is tried by fire; 2Cor 8:2 – Macedonian bel’s under a great trial of affliction **à** joy & generosity; Deut 8:2 – desert proved their hearts
 - The heat of adversity proves the purity/impurity of what is in our hearts.
2. Adversity reveals the content of our belief system
Deut 8:2 – led into the desert – humble you, test you – to know what was in your heart
 - Would they obey God or not when the pressure came on them
 - Pressure breaks through the veneer – breaks down pretense – reveals reality
3. Adversity humbles us – brings us to reality
Deut 8:2 – desert humbles; 2Cor 12:7-10 – thorn/flesh revealed weakness
 - Adversity breaks our arrogance and exposes our weakness & helplessness
 - Adversity eliminates our illusion of independence and self-sufficiency.
 - Adversity strips away our dependence on OM beliefs/behaviors

(Phil 3:7-8) Paul has lost all that he was before - zemioo API – stripped away

- a. Adversity challenges our core beliefs – examines and reveals our hearts
- b. Adversity overwhelms our false front and reveals hidden viewpoints.
- c. Adversity reveals truth in us that we have committed to application
- d. We find ourselves afraid, angry, jealous, etc – false belief system
- e. Adversity reveals our helplessness and dependence on God – humility

3. Choice – option to take off old worldly beliefs or use existing biblical beliefs

1. Choice about how we will view the adversity
Jms 1:2 – joyful; 2Cor 7:4 – Paul overflow with joy in all afflictions; Rom 8:28 – God uses everything for good; Heb 10:39 – shrink back; Jms 1:13 – blame God
 - At the point of awareness we can choose a sinful or spiritual response
2. Choice to acknowledge & reject root beliefs connected to sinful reactions.
Heb 12:15 – root of bitterness; 1Tim 6:10 – love/money root of all kinds of evil
 - Beliefs → viewpoint → feelings → verbal/overt behaviors
 - Behaviors are rooted in beliefs – sinful behavior is rooted in false beliefs
 - Old false beliefs can be rejected & replaced with biblical beliefs Eph 4:22-24
3. Choice to believe & use God’s word for our blessing & His glory
Jms 1:3 – proving of your faith; Gal 5:16 – walk in GHS; 1 Peter 1:7 that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ
 - Opportunity to believe & use God’s promises for victory over adversity
 - Opportunity to express love & loyalty to the Lord under pressure
 - a. Adversity reveals our wrong beliefs by boiling impurities to the surface
 - b. Sinful reactions indicate that you are operating from wrong beliefs
 - c. Opportunity to search for the root of your sin and change your mind – metanoia
 - d. Opportunity to choose to reject wrong view and apply God’s view of life.

4. Completion – watching God honor His word & glorify Himself

1. God’s word answers & overcomes every device & scheme of the devil’s strategy
2Cor 2:10-11 – fruit GHS - forgiveness overcomes the devil’s scheme to divide us; Eph 6:11 – armor of God to stand against the schemes of the devil; 1Pt 5:6-8 – humility, casting your care on God, sober, vigilant – devil seeks to devour you.
 - Opportunity to use God’s word in battle to defeat the enemy
2. God allows max adversity, proving that His word can overcome all sin/evil
2Cor 12:9 His grace sufficient for any/all suffering; 1Cor 15:55 Resurrection is the ultimate victory – Heb 2:14 – Christ destroyed him who held the power of death
 - God’s superiority over Satan is seen as His word overcomes the devil’s strategy
 - We glorify and demonstrate His glory by using His word to overcome adversity
3. Adversity is a gift that allows us to participate as God glorifies Himself

(Romans 8:17) “and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”