

The Tools God uses to Transform us. Part 2 Ro. 8:16-29

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Sept 13th

Reflection: Discipleship involves a journey whereby we grow in our relationship with Christ.

Jesus invites us to *"Follow me"* (Mt 4:19); *"Lean of me"* (Mt 11:29) and *"Abide in Me."* (Jn 15:4)

The Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20) reveals that this journey of faith is a process involving our:

- Salvation: *Enabling a Restoration of a Personal relationship with God.* Col. 1:13
- Baptism: *Producing an identification and association with God and His Church.* (Ro. 6)
- Discipleship: *Providing a path for personal Transformation to Christlikeness!* (Ro. 8)

God uses His Word, His People, and His Spirit to "Shape us" into His Image. (Ro. 12:1,2)

Direction: This morning I'd like to discuss some of the more "difficult" tools God uses in this process of shaping our souls. Anybody can bring good out of good, but God specializes in bringing good out of bad! **He's great at turning crucifixions into resurrections!**

Ro. 8:28,29 *"All things work together for good to them that Love God, to them who are called According to His purpose. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate (pro-oriz'o: predetermined "destination" {See Rev. 4:11}) to be conformed (Symmorphos': Jointly formed) to the image of his Son..."*

Some of the "all things" God uses include **Trouble!**

1. Trouble is **inevitable.** (110x in Bible)

A. We're in a sin cursed world! Gen. 3:17; Romans 8:22,23

Job 5:7 *"man is born unto trouble."* (amal: Grief)

Job 14:1 *"Man ... is of few days, and full of trouble."* (Rogez: Restless, fear, anger, rage.)

B. Jesus as the **"Express image"** of God (Heb 1:3) was still *"despised and rejected of men"* Is. 53:3

1) Following Him will often lead to trouble. Jn 15:20 *"The servant is not greater than his lord.*

If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (See also 2 Tim. 3:12)

2. Trouble can be **Profitable.** Ro. 8:28 *"all things work together for good"* (agathos: benefit)

A. Jesus faced many troubles, but trusted God through them. Heb. 5:8

Notice His approach to overwhelming grief. (Mark 14:36)

1) **Recognized** God's bigger than the problem. *"Father, all things are possible unto thee"*

2) **Requested** the problem to pass. *"take away this cup from me."*

3) **Relinquished** His will to God's bigger plan. *"nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt."*

B. God can use trouble to:

1) **Turn** us. Pr. 1:23 *"Turn at my reproof"* (See also Rev. 3:19 and Jer. 29:10-13)

Ro 8:6 *"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."*

Ps. 119:67 *"Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept (shamar: guarded) thy word."*

2) **Tune** us (so we can recognize his voice.)

a) The cares/comforts of this life (Mt 6:33; 13:22) can distract us from focusing on God.

Ro 8:5 *"For they that are after the flesh do mind (phroneo: regard/entertain) the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."* (See also Ro. 8:18 and 2 Cor. 4:17,18)

b) Jesus' prayer illustrated the importance of this "re-tuning" or "refocusing". Jn 12:27,2

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour:

but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name!"

"All those who journey, soon or late; must pass beneath the Garden's gate.

Must kneel alone in darkness there, and battle with some fierce despair.

God pity those who only pray, "let this cup pass", who cannot say "Thy will be done"

For they fail to see, the purpose of Gethsemane!"

3) **Teach** us (Ro. 8:28-39)

- a) To **Trust** Him! Ro. 8:37 *"in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."*
- b) To **Touch** Him! (Mk 5:24-34) *Trust and Touch are Related!*

Conclusion:

God's goal isn't your personal Convenience, but practical, Christlike **character!**
He's not interested in making your life comfortable, but rather *"conformable to the image of His son"*
Until you understand this life isn't going to make sense!
You'll constantly worry, wonder, and Wander! (Drift from him)

Example: Pastor Andrae Crouch lost his parents and brother within a 2 year time period.

Later he battled four different kinds of cancer and congestive heart failure.

Reflecting over his life and losses, he wrote the song "Through it all".

I've had many tears and sorrows, I've had questions for tomorrow;

There's been times I didn't know right from wrong

But in every situation God gave me blessed consolation, That my trials come to only make me strong.

I thank God for the mountains, and I thank Him for the valleys,

I thank Him for the storms He brought me through.

For if I'd never had a problem, I wouldn't know God could solve them,

I'd never know what faith in God could do.

Through it all, Through it all; I've learned to trust in Jesus; I've learned to trust in God.

Through it all, Through it all; I've learned to depend upon His Word.

Application:

Just as Jesus is God's "Image" or character, We are to be "Christians." (Christ-like)

1 Peter 2:21-23 *"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:"*

How to "Triumph through Trouble"

- 1) **Reflect** on what God is teaching you. Ps 46:8-11 *"Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. ... Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah."*
- 2) **Record** life's lessons. Keep a journal of what God is teaching you.
God is keeping one! (Mal. 3:16; Nu. 33:2) Hebrews 2:1 *"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."*
- 3) Remember the **Reward.** (Heb. 12:1-3)
2 Cor. 4:17 *"For our light affliction, ... t, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;"*
Ro. 8:18 *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."*
Ro 8:35-37 *"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. in all these things we are more than conquerors (hypernikao: beyond victors!) **through him that loved us.**"*