# HIGHER AIM

# **Tough Times Theology**

Matthew 27:57-66

### **INTRODUCTION**

God will often use disasters to get our attention. He might use finances, relationships, and our own physical health to get our attention. But remember, He always has a purpose. We can learn some deep spiritual truths while going through tough times. Because of this truth, I want you to have a tough times theology. I want you to know what you believe about God, and what He is doing for you before tough times arrive. I want you to be ready. If you believe tough times will never come, you need to think differently. It is a false expectation to think you will be immune from tough times. So in order to help you develop a tough times theology, here are some principles for dealing with hard times.

#### **KEY POINTS**

#### 1. Tough Times Will Come

Jesus said, *"In this world, you will have trouble."* Then He said, *"But take heart. I have overcome the world."* God promises that you will have trouble. You could say, "I don't want it. I don't pray for it." That's great, but you will have trouble. That is part of our life's journey. Tough times are a guarantee.

#### 2. Tough Times Reveal True Friends

When you are going through tough times, your fair-weather friends are never around to be seen. They are around you when you party. They are there for the free food and the fellowship. When you are experiencing a difficult time, fair-weather friends disappear. They will tell you, "I didn't know what to say. I didn't want to hurt you by bringing up what you are going through." A true friend comes in the middle of your pain and tough times.

We need to realize that God sometimes allows us to go through tough times so we will find out who our real friends are. Scripture tells us, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity" (Proverbs 17:17).

### NOTES

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## 3. Tough Times Offer Opportunities

When we go through hard times, it is an opportunity for you to bless others. It is one thing for you to receive help, but it is easier to give help. Tough times will provide you with an opportunity to help someone else. Don't minimize the ministry that you do in tough times for people who are also walking through difficult times.

### 4. Tough Times Refine Your Faith

When you go through tough times, that is when your faith is refined. You will grow more in tough times than when you are being blessed. I wish it was the other way around; that you would grow more in blessed times. When God blesses you, it is easy to take that for granted and say, "Thank you, God." It is in the tough times when your faith is refined. The Bible says in James, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything" (James 1:2-4).

### 5. Tough Times Don't Last

Tough times don't last for eternity. Whatever you do, don't identify with tough times and say, "That must be who I am." This is not who you are. Tough times may come, but tough times will not last. God has a plan for your life, even in the brokenness, pain, and desperation that you may feel. It may be Friday for you, but Sunday is coming. You need to focus on what God is doing and where He will take you in the days to come.

NOTES

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# **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

- 1. What tough times are you currently facing?
- 2. Who in your life has shown their true friendship in the midst of your tough times?
- 3. How can you serve someone else who is also going through a tough time right now?

