



GIRLS RETREAT DEVOTIONAL SERIES:

An Invitation to see God's goodness in the Midst of our Suffering

DAY 6: HE IS A GOD WHO WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO CAPTURE OUR SOULS WITH HIS LOVE.

Scripture Focus: 1 Peter 1:3-9

"Blessed be the God and Father of our

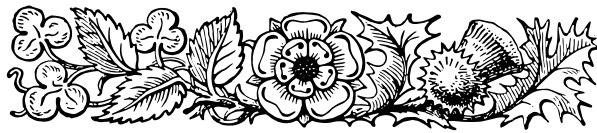
Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith - more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire - may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls."

Brief Thought:

God loves you. Your soul will live long beyond your body. He, therefore, cares a tremendous amount about the health of your soul. Our soul's greatest health is contingent on one thing, are we covered in Christ's blood? Stemming from that, we must fight to treasure Christ in our hearts above all else. Suffering, though it hurts, can be an avenue for us to treasure Christ more. God is not egotistical; it is for our good. Suffering and pain test the genuineness of our faith (vs. 7). This faith-litmus-test is always conducted from a heart of love

#gamechanger. It is never done out of a heart of malice or revenge. Knowing this changes the way we view this testing that sometimes is brought to us by the hands of our loving Father. The following story is one that I include in my book Tear-Watered Blooms. I believe it sums this point up much better than I can:





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"There's a familiar story in Christian circles about a group of women that met for a Bible study. While studying in the book of Malachi, chapter 3, they came across verse 3 that says: 'He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.' This verse puzzled the women and they wondered how this statement applied to the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out more about the process of refining silver and to get back to the group at their next meeting. That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were the hottest, so as to burn away all of the impurities. The woman thought about God holding us in such a spot; then she thought again about the verse that says: 'He [sits] as a refiner and purifier of silver.' She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver in the fire, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed. The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, 'How do you know when the silver is fully refined?' He smiled at her and answered, 'Oh, that's easy ---when I see my image reflected in the silver.'" (*True Woman* 201, pg. 128).

Looking Inward:

1. Do you believe being made more into Christ's image, at any cost, is for your best? Does knowing this make you view your trials any differently?
2. How does knowing that God's testing towards you always stems out of His deep love for you, change the way you view His heart towards you in the midst of your trials?





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Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, Thank You for never testing us out of anger or a mean-spiritedness. Even if you appoint suffering in our lives, thank You for being good and benevolent towards us in the midst of the pain. Help our hearts to trust and adore You above everything.

You are our good. You are our sure and steady anchor.
You are our peace. May we shine Your love to our hurting world.

Show us how to best do that in the midst of
this tremendous pandemic. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Reflection:

*"To trust God in the light is nothing, but trust Him in the dark.
That is faith." -Charles Spurgeon*

