

PART ONE HANDOUT ADVERSITY...BURDEN OR BRIDGE

KEY: Adversity can Either be An Overwhelming and Destructive “BURDEN” OR IT CAN BECOME A “BRIDGE” TO A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

The Choice is Always Yours...Will Adversity be A Burden or a Bridge in Your Life?

BURDEN, Spiritually Speaking, is a Heaviness or Weight that Depresses Us. We Become Weary & Discouraged...No Joy-No Peace...The Hearts Grow Cold to Christ!

A BRIDGE, by Contrast, is a Way to Rise Above Difficulties and Develop a More Intimate Relationship with Our Heavenly Father. Read Psalm 103:19 Read Romans 8:28

- Paul's life is one of the Best Biblical Examples of how Adversity Can be a Bridge to a Deeper Relationship With God. Read Phil. 3:8,10

Through Tribulation & Difficulty, Paul learned He could Know Peace Midst Adversity Read Phil. 4:11-13

Paul Learned that God would give him Supernatural Strength in his Weakness. *He explained that his weakness allowed the Holy Spirit's power to work through his life:* Read 2 Cor.12: 9-10

Question: Do we Trust that what God Allows in Our Life Will Be for Our Good and His Glory.

Ps. 37:4 Promises that the Lord Delights in Giving Us the Desires of Our Hearts However, Paul Understood that “*God Values Our Service More than Our Desires*”.

That is Why He Prioritizes Our Character Development Over Our Comfort. Read 2 Cor. 12:7

- Through His Adversity, God Strengthened and Spread Paul's Message. Read Phil 1:13-15

KEY: The More Adversity We Face, the more Effective Our Message will be to others.

FACT: *We have Our Greatest Impact when People Watch Us Go through Pain and Suffering with Our Faith Intact...Our Testimony Shines Brightest in Our Adversity!*

- This is Why, It's Important That We See Everything in Our Lives as Coming from God.

God Wants Us to Say With Paul ...I Have Learned that “*God's Grace is Sufficient for Me...I've Learned that My Power is Made Perfect in My Weakness.*” *Because I Trust the Lord To Accomplish His Perfect Purpose in My Situation and My Life!*

Adversity Prepared Paul to Comfort Others More Effectively. And God's Plan is to Use Our Suffering to Prepare Us for Greater Ministry to Others. Read 2 Cor. 1:3-4

We're Best Equipped to Comfort People if We've Been Through Something Similar. *Paul's thorn had a particular function; it was designed to keep him humble and dependent on God, despite the spiritual revelations he had been given.* Our Trials are Designed by God to Help Us Become Whom He Planned.

- Therefore, We can Rejoice in the Midst of Adversity. In Philippians 4:4, the apostle wrote, “*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, REJOICE!*”
- Knowing the Lord is in Control of Our Circumstances Gives Us Reason to Celebrate that with Each Adversity God Is Working His Perfect Plan in Our Lives!!

KEY: His Plan with Adversity is Always the Same...Perfect Us to Become More Like Christ and to Have a Greater Ministry and Mission for the Kingdom.

It is likely that You May Be Experiencing some Type of Adversity Today...If So *You can Try to Handle it Using Your Own Resources—Turning to Your friends for Advice, doing the Best You can, or Escaping into Hobbies or Addictions.*

But I Guarantee that When it Comes to Life-Changing Hardship, These Options Will Ultimately Fail...And Your Adversity Will Become an Overwhelming...BURDEN.

THE TRUTH OF THE OLD HYMN *He Giveth More Grace* MAKES CLEAR WHAT CHRIST WANTS TO DO IN YOUR LIFE AS YOU TURN YOUR BURDEN OVER TO HIM:

When we have Exhausted Our Store of Endurance, When Our Strength has Failed, 'ere the Day is Half Done, When We Reach the End of Our Hoarded Resources, Our Father's Full Giving is Only Begun.

His Love has No Limit, His Grace has No Measure; His Power No Boundary Known Unto Men. For Out of His Infinite Riches in Jesus, He Giveth, and Giveth, and Giveth Again.

WISDOM COMES WHEN YOU TRUST THAT CHRIST...WILL USE YOUR ADVERSITY AS A BRIDGE TO "UNLEASH" HIS SUPERNATURAL POWER IN YOUR LIFE!

This Morning, I Encourage You to Choose to See Each Adversity as a BRIDGE [Count It Joy] That God Will Use It to Bring You to A Deeper Relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Believer, You Have the Awesome Power of the Holy Spirit Residing in You...He is Able to Equip and Transform You...And He Will Carry You Through Every Suffering, Pain and Hardship.

May You Experience God's JOY in Each Adversity As You Use it as a BRIDGE to a Closer Relationship with Jesus!

"LIFE" POINT: I Choose To Let Adversity Be A Bridge To A Closer Walk with Christ.