

1 Peter 1v6-7: God's purpose in our trials

*6In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7These have come so that your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

Peter knew that his readers were experiencing many kinds of trials. How do we respond as Christians when we are faced with suffering? Peter urges us in these verses to see that there is a beautiful good purpose in all the trials that we face. God sends trials to refine our faith so that we will love Christ, though unseen, more deeply, and this in turn will demonstrate to us and others looking on that our faith is genuine.

Some of you know Lilly in our church family is a very skilled jewellery maker. When I asked her about the refining of precious metals, by which impurities are burned out in a furnace, she said the way to tell when the temperature is just right is when the liquid gold becomes glassy, like a mirror, and you can see your reflection in it.

That is what God is doing in the trials he takes each of us through: he uses them to shape us into his image. Remember from v1-5 he has chosen us from before the beginning of time and set us apart to serve His eternal purposes: we are in this world for obedience to Christ. God is a master craftsman, he will never leave us in the furnace of trials too long. He knows each one of us, as his dearly beloved children, so well. He is never going to allow anything to happen to us that will harm our relationship with him, only that which will strengthen our faith, not weaken it. Through the trials he is forming in us more of the perfect image of Christ, which is what is best for us.

When life is going fine and we have no difficulties, trusting Jesus is easy – but others looking on can dismiss our faith by saying, its ok for her, her life is so comfortable. But when the trials come and we continue to cling to Christ, even though life is very painful, then we know our faith is genuine, which increases our joy in Christ, *and* others looking on are caused to ask: where does she get her joy from?

And amazingly one day, when Christ returns and we are with him, there will be praise, glory and honour for Christ, and even a reflected glory for us, as we reflect the image of Christ and we will see that all the painful trials of this world were worth it.

Prayer:

Father, help me today to trust that you know what you are doing with me and through me as you take me through all kinds of trials. Help me learn to find my joy more and more anchored in you and the eternal blessings you give me rather than in the fleeting pleasures of this world.

Amen

