

CHRISTIAN LIVING CONFERENCE - OCTOBER 19, 2013

“HOW TO LIVE THROUGH AFFLICTION CHRISTIANLY”

PASTOR SCOTT HENRY

1. THE DEFINITION OF AFFLICTION:

- A. Something that causes bodily pain or mental distress ... state of being in pain or trouble. Individual Affliction: sickness, poverty, oppression, tribulation, persecution, injustice. National Affliction: calamities from war, invasion, conquest, exile. Synonyms in Scripture: anguish, distress, grief, misery, oppression, sorrow, travail, pain, tribulation, trial, plague, chastisement, discipline, persecution, woe, etc.
- B. OT: 11 Hebrew words translated into English as “affliction.” Two primary:
 - i. “*Anah*” - to lower, humble, or deny (Lev. 16:29, 31, 23:27, 32, Isaiah 58:3, 5)
 - ii. “*Oniy*” (on-ee) - depression, misery, anguish, trouble (Gen. 29:32, 31:42; Ex. 3:17, 4:31; 1 Sam. 1:11; Job 30:16, 27, 36:15, 21; Psalm 25:18, 44:24)
- C. NT: 7 Greek words translated into English as “affliction.” Most common:
 - i. “*Thlipsis*” - crush, compress, squeeze, anguish, tribulation, trial, affliction (2 Cor. 1:6, 2:4, 4:17, 8:2; Phil. 1:16; 1 Thess. 1:6, 3:7; Heb. 10:32)

2. THE SOURCE OF AFFLICTION:

- A. GOD: Hebrews didn't dwell on secondary causes, but attributed everything directly to the Lord: (Amos 3:6; Ex. 23:27; Deut. 28:20-23, 28; Isaiah 45:7; 1 Sam. 7:10; Lam. 3:37-38). All things were referred to as the Divine operation (Gen. 42:28). When afflicted the Hebrews didn't doubt the sovereignty of God, but accused Him of indifference, neglect or forgetfulness (Psa. 10:1, 42:9).
- B. EVIL AGENTS: DEMONS & MEN (All under God's sovereign rule)
 - i. An “evil spirit” afflicted King Saul (1 Sam. 16:14; 18:10; 19:9). A “lying spirit” enticed Ahab to his doom (1 Kings 22:20-22).
 - ii. Job's calamities were wrought by Satan, the Sabeans, and the Chaldeans
 - iii. NT: physical & mental disorders were thought the work of demons (Mark 1:23; Mark 5:2; Matthew 9:32-33; Acts 16:16-18). Jesus said of the woman under infirmity, “whom Satan has bound” (Luke 13:16).
 - iv. Acts 5:40; 1 Thess. 2:14; 2 Tim. 4:14; 3 John 9
- C. CREATED REALM: disease, death, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, flood, cancer, etc.

3. THE PURPOSE OF AFFLICTION:

- A. GOD'S GLORY: John 9:2-3, 35-38; 11:4; Ex. 4:10-11, 9:16
- B. PUNISHMENT: Ex. 7:4; 1 Sam. 15:1-3, 26-28; Psalm 89:30-32; 107:17; Hebrews 3:7-13; Gal. 6:7
- C. TESTING: Genesis 22:1; Deut. 8:2, 16; Job 23:10; Psalm 17:3, 66:10; James 1:3, 12; 1 Peter 1:7, 4:17
- D. PURIFICATION: Psalm 119:67, 71, 75; Isa. 48:10; Romans 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 12:7-9
- E. CHASTISEMENT: Lev. 10:2; 2 Sam. 6:7; 2 Chron. 26:14-21; Prov. 3:11; Heb. 12:5-11
- F. REDEMPTIVE: Isaiah 52:13-53:12, 63:9; Acts 8:26-35; 1 Peter 2:21-25
- G. REPENTANCE: Psalm 32 & 51; Hosea 5:15; 1 Cor. 11:32; 2 Cor. 7:9-10
- H. SELF-DENIAL: 2 Cor. 1:8-9, 2 Cor. 12:7
- I. CHRIST LIKENESS: Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 4:7-11; Heb. 12:10-11; James 1:2
- J. GLORIFICATION: Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 4:17

4. HOW TO ENDURE AFFLICTION:

- A. LOOK TO JESUS: Hebrews 12:1-3: "looking" - "aphorao ... af-or-ah'-o" - To look away steadfastly or intently toward a distant object. Metaphorically, to behold in the mind, to fix the mind upon. 2 Cor. 3:17-18; John 16:33; 1 Peter 2:19-25; 1 Peter 3:17-18; Phil. 2:5
- B. REMEMBER THE PROPHETS: James 5:10-11; Hebrews 11:32-40
- C. WALK BY FAITH: 2 Cor. 5: 7; Prov. 3:5-6; John 14:1, 17; Hebrews 11; Psalm 73; Isa. 26:3-4
- D. USE MEANS OF GRACE: Acts 2:42, 20:32; Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 12:1-2; Heb. 4:12, 5:12-14; Psalm 119:105; James 5:13; Phil. 4:6-7; Psalm 25:15-22; H/C 73, B/C 34; H/C 75, B/C 35
- E. ANTICIPATE TRIALS: "If we are true Christians, we must not expect everything smooth in our journey to heaven. We must count it no strange thing, if we have to endure sicknesses, losses, bereavements, and disappointments, just like other people. Free pardon and full forgiveness, grace by the way and glory to the end – all this our Savior has promised to give. But He has never promised that we shall have no afflictions. He loves us too well to promise that." (J.C. Ryle) Job 5:6-7, 14:1; John 15:20, 16:33; Acts 9:16, 14:21-22; Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 10:13; Phil. 1:29; 1 Thess. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:3-4; 2 Tim. 1:8, 2:3, 3:12, 4:5; 1 Peter 4:12; 1 John 3:13
- F. ATTITUDE OF JOY: Matt. 5:11-12; Luke 6:22-23; Acts 5:40-41, 16:24-25; 1 Peter 4:13; Phil. 3:1, 4:4; Col. 1:24; 2 Cor. 12:10; James 1:2
- G. PATIENT ENDURANCE: "hupomeno" to stay under, remain, bear, persevere, abide: 2 Cor. 6:4-10; James 5:7-8; 1 Cor. 4:12; 2 Tim. 4:5
- H. KNOWING MIND: James 1:3; Rom. 8:28; Heidelberg Catechism #1
- I. SUBMISSIVE WILL: James 1:4-5; Luke 22:42; Matt. 6:9-13
- J. BELIEVING HEART: Job 13:15; James 1:6; Mark 5:35-36; John 20:27; H/C #26
- K. IDENTIFIED WITH CHRIST: Matthew 10:21-24; Luke 24:25-26; John 13:16; Hebrews 2:10; 5:8-9
- L. REMEMBER GOD'S PROMISES: Psalm 23; Isa. 43:1-2; Heb. 13:5; Matt. 28:20; John 14:18; John 10: 27-31; John 5:24; Rom. 8:31-39. "Thus it is that we may patiently pass through this life with its misery, hunger, cold, contempt, reproaches, and other troubles - content with this one thing: that our King Jesus will never leave us destitute, but will provide for our needs until, our warfare ended, we are called to triumph." (Calvin)
- M. REMEMBER GOD'S STRENGTH: 2 Cor. 3:5, 12:9
- N. TRUST GOD'S PURPOSE: 2 Tim. 2:8-10; Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28
- O. EMBRACE GOD'S COMFORT: 2 Cor. 1:3-4; Ps. 23:4; Isa. 40:1; 49:13; 51:3; 61:2; Matt. 5:4; Acts 9:31
- P. REMEMBER CHRIST'S COMING: James 5:7-8; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Heidelberg Catechism #52
- Q. NEW HEAVENS & EARTH: Rev. 21:3-4; 2 Peter 3:10-13
- R. LIGHT AFFLICTION: 2 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:18; Matt. 5:12
- S. SHORT DURATION: 2 Cor. 4:17; Psalm 30:5; John 16:22; Rom. 16:20;
- T. REMEMBER GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY: "This rather is the solace of the faithful, in their adversity, that everything which they endure is by the ordination and command of God that they are under His hand." (John Calvin; Institutes: I, 16, 3); Dan. 4:34-37; Psalms 22:27-28, 47:8, 97:1-2, 115:2-3; Isa. 52:7; Rom. 8:28; Job 1:12, 2:6; 1 Tim. 6:13-16; Rev. 1:8, 11, 19:6, 21:6; Thomas Boston once wrote, "Whoever the instruments of our affliction and whoever's hand is heavy on us we meet with nothing but what comes through our Lord's fingers. Whoever the messenger is, God is the One who sent him."