



# Berean Christian Fellowship

## DEVOTIONAL 120.0

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### Afflicted in Faithfulness

**“It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes” (Psalm 119:71).**

In this life, the Christian is “*afflicted in every way*” (2 Cor. 4:8a). This is no surprise because Jesus “*was afflicted*” (Isaiah 53:7), and He said, “*a servant is not greater than his master*” (John 13:16a).

Affliction can come in many ways—persecution, illness, pain, relational issues, etc. It can happen for many different reasons, but in them all, it is ALWAYS an opportunity for us to grow closer to God! David always took affliction as a reminder to draw closer to God, regardless of the reason for it: “*I know, O LORD, that your rules are righteous, and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me. Let Your steadfast love comfort me according to Your promise to Your servant. Let Your mercy come to me, that I may live; for Your law is my delight*” (Ps. 119:75-77). Sometimes, he had strayed: “*before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word*” (Ps. 119:67). Yes, God “*delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity*” (Job 36:15), “*and if they are bound in chains and caught in the cords of affliction, then He declares to them their work and their transgressions, that they are behaving arrogantly. He opens their ears to instruction and commands that they return from iniquity*” (Job 36:8-10).

If there is iniquity in our lives, do we respond to affliction by confronting that iniquity or do we commit greater iniquity by ignoring it? “*Take care; do not turn to iniquity, for this you have chosen rather than affliction*” (Job 36:21). “*The godless in heart cherish anger; they do not cry for help when He binds them*” (Job 36:13). Affliction can drive people away from God into further sin, but the Be-

liever is to stand firm, because everything God allows is for our good: “*all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose*” (Rom. 8:28b).

While there are temptations to harbor resentment or anger against God and others in affliction, the Believer is instead to delight in the Lord, for “*if your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction*” (Ps. 119:92). Affliction gets our attention. It puts things in perspective, opening our ears and eyes because it is a humbling process, reminding us of our helplessness and the frailty of our form. Success and prosperity can blind us, making us think we can provide for ourselves, but affliction proves to us that it is His strength that keeps us. After all, we were made “*jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed*” (2 Cor. 4:7b-8a) because of His Holy Spirit in us.

No one seeks affliction, but if we are enduring it, we must draw nearer to God, for only He delivers us: “*many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all*” (Ps. 34:19). Our God “*has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and He has not hidden His face from him, but has heard, when he cried to Him*” (Ps. 22:24). “*This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your promise gives me life*” (Ps. 119:50). Christ’s promise in you is “*springing up to eternal life*” (Jn. 4:14)!

May we declare, “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ’s sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too*” (2 Cor. 1:3-5). Let us also comfort the afflicted! Even so, Amen.

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