

In following Christ, are we to expect a comfortable and easy life, or will we rather face persecution and trials as a result? Here's what the Word of God declares on this:

Acts 14:22: "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

Why?

1 Peter 2:21: "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps."

Ephesians 6:12: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly places."

Therefore:

1 Peter 4:12-13: "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy."

2 Timothy 3:12: "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

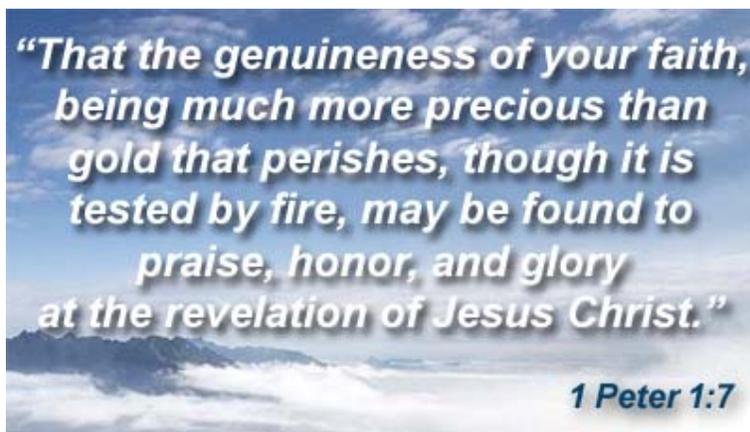
What's more?

2 Timothy 3:1-2, 5: "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy."⁵ "And from such people turn away!"

Where do I stand here?

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Why does God allow trials in our life as we follow Christ our Lord?

2 Corinthians 4:17-18: "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

2 Corinthians 1:4: "That we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."

What's more?

2 Corinthians 12:9: "He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

Romans 8:37-39: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

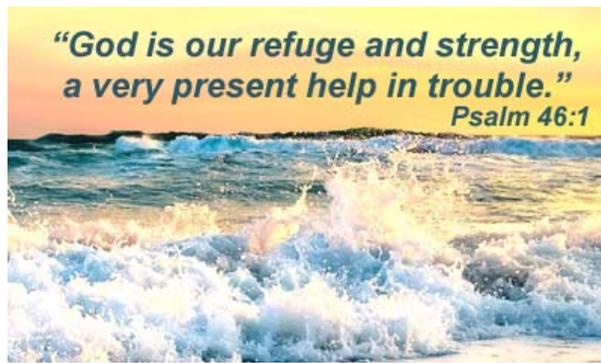
As such:

2 Timothy 1:7: "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

Therefore:

James 1:12: "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him."

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Where must our hope be anchored, as we face trials because of our faith?

Psalm 23:4: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."

Isaiah 41:10: "Fear not, for I *am* with you; be not dismayed, for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

As such:

Romans 8:28: "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose."

Romans 8:37: "Despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us."

The reason why:

Isaiah 40:31: "Those who wait on the Lord shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

2 Corinthians 4:16: "We do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day."

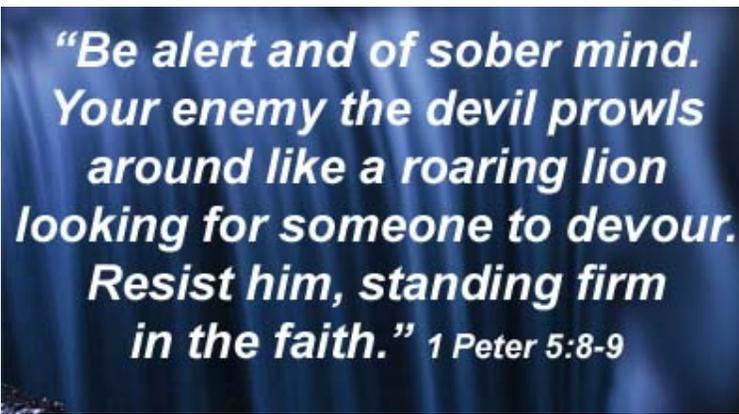
Therefore:

Romans 15:13: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 12:12: "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."

Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

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What should our heart attitude be, as we face trials because of our faith in Christ?

Ephesians 6:13-15: "Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

Philippians 4:8-9: "Whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. And the God of peace will be with you."

What's more?

Psalm 9:10: "Those who know Your name will put their trust in You; for You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You."

2 Timothy 2:12: "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us."

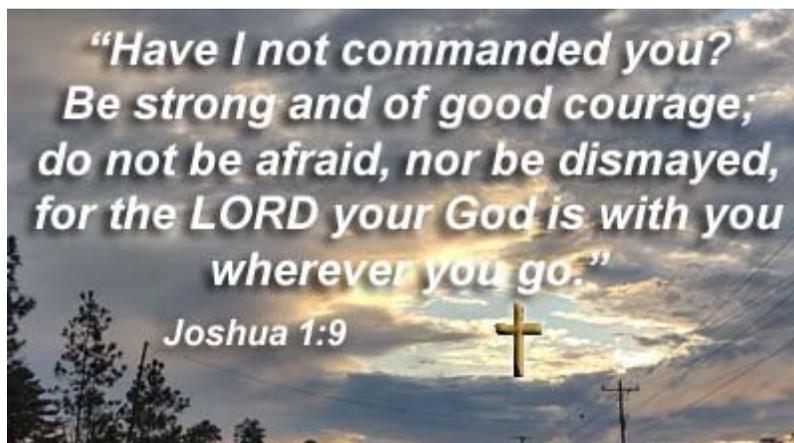
Therefore:

2 Timothy 4:5: "You should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Matthew 5:12: "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven."

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Why must we trust God, no matter the circumstances of life?

Hebrews 11:6: "Without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

What's more?

Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

The reason Jesus said:

Matthew 11:28: "Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

John 14:27: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

As such:

Isaiah 26:3: "You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed on You, because he trusts in You."

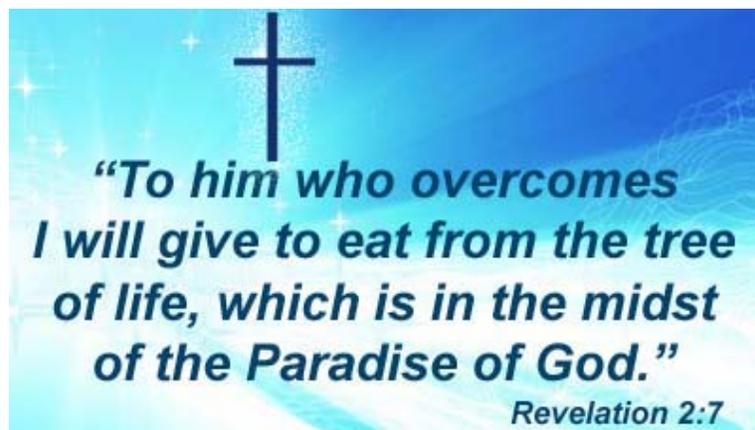
Psalms 9:10: "Those who know Your name will put their trust in You; for You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You."

Matthew 6:27: "Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

Therefore:

Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

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How does God reward those who trust Him in all circumstances of life?

Revelation 3:10: "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."

Revelation 3:21: "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

As such:

Psalm 34:17-18: "*The righteous* cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD *is* near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit."

Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose."

Exodus 14:14: "The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

What's more?

Romans 8:18: "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Therefore:

Romans 8:38-39: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

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