

“In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33



Is this life in following Christ meant to be of worldly blessings, financial prosperity, without challenges to our faith, and even absent of trials?

Here's what Jesus said as recorded in Matthew 16:24-26: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

What are we then to expect from the world for being steadfast in our faith in Christ?

1Peter 4:12-13; "Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad, for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world."

Why?

2Cor 4:11: "For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

Acts 14:22: "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God."

Do I realize that the world will bring challenges to my faith as I live to follow Christ?

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What should our attitude be when facing rejection and trials because of our faith in Christ?

Deuteronomy 31:6: "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He *is* the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

Joshua 1:9: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go."

1Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

Philippians 4:6-7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

How then can we have faith and trust God?

Romans 10:17 says, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ."

In essence, we must feed our spirit with the Word of God so our faith is nourished and sustained.

Am I ready and willing to keep the faith and heed the call to follow Christ, no matter the circumstances of life?

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Why should we stand by Christ and His Word, even through trials, no matter the circumstances of life?

Romans 1:17: "As the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life."

Hebrews 11:6: "It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him."

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."

What's more?

Romans 8:18: "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

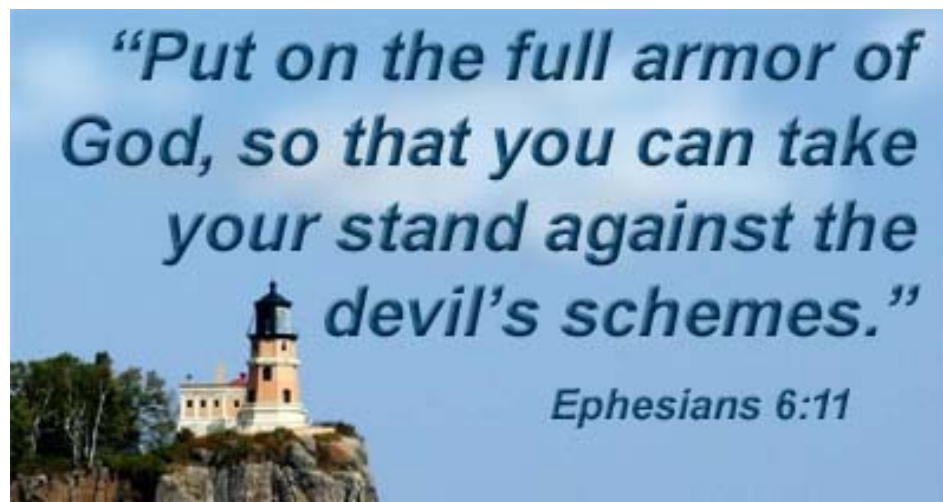
Psalms 23:4: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me."

1John 4:4: "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

Matthew 5:10: "Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Do I understand the importance of living by faith to please God, and being focused on living to follow Christ at His Word?

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How must we stand firm on our faith in Christ, so as to abide and live by the Word of God?

Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take."

Colossians 3:16: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another."

Colossians 3:23: "Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people."

Psalms 31:24: "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD."

Romans 12:12: "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."

Romans 12:2: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

And as Ephesians 6:10 says, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."

Why?

Hebrews 13:6: "The LORD is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?"

Am I ready and determined to stand by faith in God's Word, and trust Christ no matter the circumstances of life?

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“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” 2Cor. 4:17



What is God's ultimate purpose to allow trials and challenges in our life?

1Peter 1:6-7: "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

2Corinthians 12:9: "And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Romans 5:3-4: "Knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope."

Why?

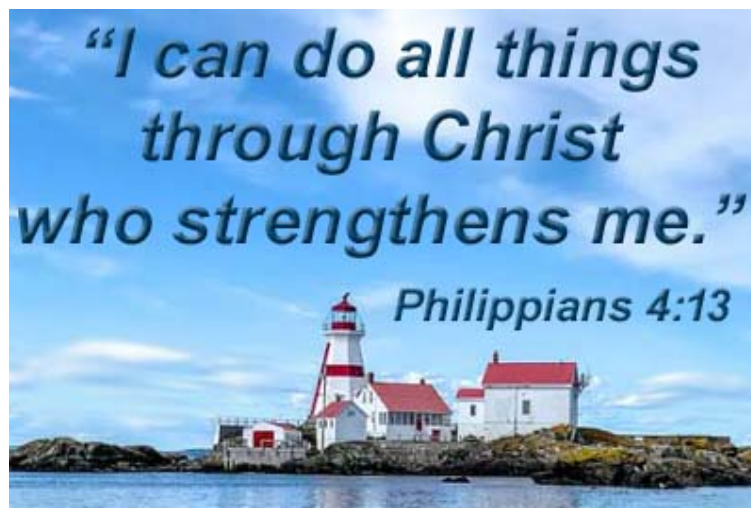
1Samuel 12:22: "For the LORD will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you His people."

Romans 10:11: "For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ."

Will we trust God's ultimate purpose to allow challenges in our lives, so as to prepare us for the glorious day we will meet Jesus Christ, our Lord?

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Is there power in standing firm by faith in Christ, and how is that power of God enabled in our life?

1John 5:4: "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world, our faith."

Romans 8:38-39: "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."

Psalms 46:1-2: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear."

Isaiah 40:31: "But 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."

The reason Jesus said:

Luke 18:27: "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

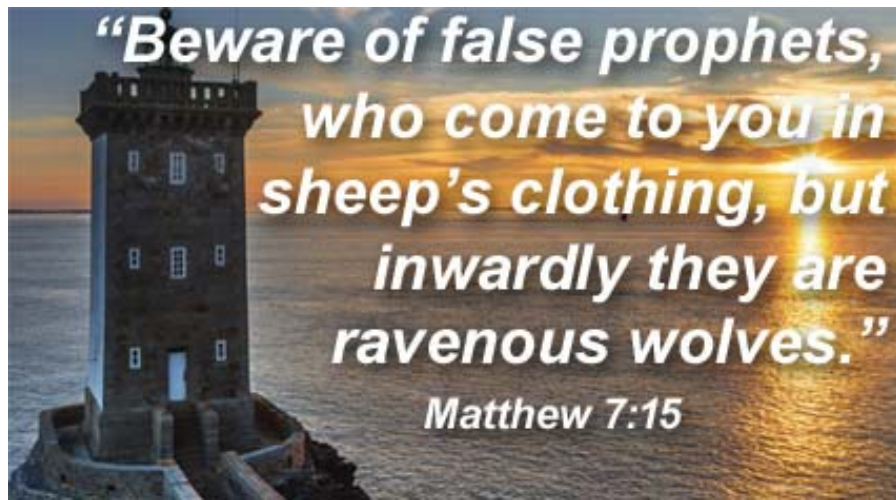
Mark 9:23: "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

Why?

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

Do I understand the power of God enabled through faith in Christ, our Savior and Lord?

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Are there warnings about being watchful for deceivers and false prophets?

1Peter 5:8-9: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world."

1John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

Col. 2:8: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

1Tim. 6:3, 5: "If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ," ⁵"From such withdraw yourself."

Why?

Mat. 24:24: "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."

The reason Jesus warned us saying: Mat. 24:4-5: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many."

Am I always on guard against deceivers and false prophets, through being grounded in the Word of God?

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