

# APPRECIATING TRIALS

FASTING 2025

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,  
James 1:2 NIV

When we face difficulties, the Bible encourages us to view them as opportunities to rejoice. This may seem counterintuitive, but it is precisely through these trials that our faith is strengthened, keeping us aligned with the purpose for which we were created.

## **The Trial of Faith, in the Face of Temptation**

The purpose of a trial is to strengthen us, helping us remain on the path laid out by God.

Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.  
John 15:4-5 NIV

Only when we remain in His Word, under His lordship, and on His path, can we fulfill His eternal purpose for us—by giving life to others and building His people, His family here on earth. Only by remaining can we bring in His Kingdom, so that His will be done here on earth as it is in heaven.

On the other hand, temptation seeks to distract and divert our focus from God’s divine purpose. While the purpose of a trial is to edify, temptation aims to destroy by offering paths that seem appealing, but ultimately separate us from what God has planned for us.

It is significant to note how Scripture illustrates the differences between trial and temptation. For example, Esau (Genesis 25), derailed his destiny by making wrong decisions, losing his blessing and purpose.

The lives of Saul and David offer contrasting examples of how dangers or difficult situations can either derail or reinforce God's plan in someone's life. The parable of the prodigal son highlights the seriousness of straying from God's purpose, but also offers hope in the possibility of return and restoration through confession and repentance.

**I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you..."**

**Luke 15:18 NLT**

Even Jesus faced temptations in the wilderness, each one representing an attempt to divert Him from His divine mission. However, His constant response was 'It is written', thus reaffirming His commitment to the purpose that God had entrusted to him.

God has created us for an eternal purpose far greater than anything we could imagine for ourselves. The trials we face are not meant to lead us astray, but to build us up and empower us. As Matthew 16:27 says, the Son of Man will judge each person according to their deeds. This judgment is not meant to instill fear, but to remind us that our lives have meaning and that He is returning with the desire to reward us if we continue to live in alignment with His will.

**Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds.**

**Revelation 22:12 NLT**

We are called to live faithfully, with anticipation of the reward that comes from staying on His path. Let us apply these steps in our daily lives, knowing that each trial we overcome takes us one step closer to fulfilling our divine purpose and towards an eternity of reigning with Him.

### **Application**

1. Immersion in Scripture: Make reading and meditating on the Word of God a daily practice. Scripture will strengthen your heart and mind to face temptations.
2. Small groups: Connect with other believers who can provide moral and spiritual support. Accountability and mutual support are invaluable during times of trial.
3. Walk with someone: Recognize the things that tend to distance you from God's purpose. Through confession, we can ensure we stay on the right path, setting aside any distractions or temptations that may arise.

### **Reflection**

Can I view every difficulty as an opportunity to grow and strengthen myself by understanding why I ended up in this situation and learning from it, so I don't repeat the same mistake?