

Published based on [8 Important Things to Know During Hard Times](#)

8 Important Things to Know During Hard Times



We all live in a world cursed because of sin. Part of the effect of that curse is hard times, difficulty, pain, and sorrow. I so wish I could tell you that Christians don't have to go through any difficulties, but the Word of God contains story after story of believers in difficult times. Paul and Peter in prison, Daniel in the Lion's Den, Stephen being stoned, believers being persecuted, the very life of Jesus, and I could go on and on. And this list applies to all storms whether we caused them, Satan sent them, or God designed them. In a moment, I am going to share my list of eight things you should know about hard times but before I do that I need to give you some foundation.

Unfortunately some Christians' theology denies the place of pain and suffering in the Christian life. This is a tragedy because such a theology shames a believer when they try to make sense of their trials and suggests that a good Christian, a faith-filled Christian, wouldn't be subject to such difficulties. It is also unfortunate because it shames or rejects one of the primary paths to knowing God and becoming useful to Him and others.

The reality of living in a sin-cursed world has to be reconciled to the heart of God. God never intended us to live under the curse of sin and in the end all will be restored to us as it was in the Garden of Eden. And we are in a process of restoration. However *an honest Christian faith* which represents *an honest Christian God* must deal with the truth about pain and suffering in order to throw the rope of faith to struggling believers in the midst of difficulty.

My life has not been exempt from pain and suffering although I am certain mine has been far less than many others'. Yet from my personal walk I can offer a few thoughts which can help you make it through hard times and become better. As I begin this list, I am going to assume that you know prayer is important. I am going to assume that you know the Word is important. I am going to assume that you know communion with God is important. My intention is to focus on some of the other things that I have learned as a result of my trials.

1. ***God is giving you an opportunity to know more of His heart.*** He is working to reveal a greater knowledge of Himself to you. He wants to use this difficulty to deepen your relationship. He is teaching you that He is faithful. We really can't understand what God's faithfulness is until we feel abandoned and eventually, and I said ***eventually***, wind up in the place where we can see His handiwork. When I walked through my darkest storm 2 years ago, I felt abandoned by so many and by God most of all. God allowed it and He used it.
2. ***God is giving you an opportunity to know more of your own heart.*** God knows your heart better than you do. He is working to teach you more about your own heart. This is a priceless gift from His hand. Contrary to what you might think at first, I am not talking about how dark your heart is. I am talking about how God uses every storm to reveal your woundedness, your unwholeness, which is hindering your relationship with Him and others. For example, my storm brought up every core issue in my life. The fear of abandonment. Rejection. And on and on, but here's the point. God is getting at something – or many things – inside you. When you know your heart better, you can recognize the lies of the enemy when they come against you again.
3. ***God wants to use your storm to make you better.*** Your faith will be tested and tried

and PURIFIED. There is nothing too dark, too black, too hopeless, too hard, that God cannot use it for your glory. As 2 Cor. 4:17 says, our afflictions are working something greater in us that we can know. The end result will be glorious for us if we embrace what God wants to do in our hearts.

4. ***You will fail God during the storm.*** I am not trying to discourage you or speak a curse over you, but it the nature of a storm distorts your vision. Everything becomes dark and hopeless. You lose your footing. You grope in the darkness. God offers mercy to us all. He “remembers that we are made from dust.”

5. ***The storm has the potential to destroy you.*** Storms are powerful, destructive forces. As during all our life experiences, we have the power to chose each day whether to trust ourselves or to trust God. Do we rely on our own strengths to fix this thing? Perhaps you default to manipulation or control. Whatever or however you react in the storm, it really comes down to this: Will I trust myself or will I trust God? We often choose to trust ourselves even though our mouths are saying we trust God. Our actions are screaming, “I am going to fix this!”

6. ***Freedom can be found in the suffering.*** Just as our ultimate freedom was found in the suffering of Christ on the cross, our emotional, mental freedom can be found in our suffering. As we find ourselves vulnerable, we can learn to deny ourselves and find freedom in and through the suffering. Again, the ways of God often make no sense to us in our humanity.

7. ***Your suffering can provide a way for you to be like Christ and provide healing for others.*** As Henri Nouwen teaches, you can choose to make your wounds available to others as a source of healing just as Christ was our wounded Healer.

8. ***In God’s reign, “everything belongs,” even the broken and poor parts*** (Richard Rohr). Nothing catches God off guard. He really does work everything together for our good.

So if you find yourself in a storm, in hard times, my testimony to you is that you hold something powerful in your hands. It is an opportunity to be destroyed or it is an opportunity to be transformed. The darkness will pass eventually, the clouds will clear, the wind will cease, and the end result for you individually can be that you know more of God’s heart, that you have learned to trust, and that He has healed your heart in ways that you didn’t even know you needed before. That is one of the beautiful things about serving a God who is mysterious, powerful, and all-knowing.

Perhaps you might pause and ask Him to help you cooperate with His plans in your life, submitting your heart and will to His anew. Is it hard? Yes. Is it worth it? Unequivocally.

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