



WHEN YOU ARE PERSECUTED SERVING GOD

Persecution, Tribulation, Sacrifice: The intimate friends of the righteous. Sometimes though, we can forget this call of our Lord. Or, we are stepping into new levels of obedience and it starts to cost something. Either way, it is time for a refresher. So rejoice and don't think it's a strange thing when the World tries to "Control-Alt-Delete" you from the world. Jesus has declared this will happen. Rest assured that it will be worth it.

✘ Jesus Sees A Large Group Following, Knowing Most Were Not True Followers.
Luke 14:25 "Now great multitudes were going with him. He turned and said to them,"

✘ Jesus Start To Cull The Herd By His Expectations.
Luke 14:26-27 "If anyone comes to me, and doesn't disregard his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he can't be my disciple. (27) Whoever doesn't bear his own cross, and come after me, can't be my disciple."

✘ Jesus Tells Them To Think Hard On What They Are Willing To Do To Follow.
Luke 14:28-32 "For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doesn't first sit down and count the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it? (29) Or perhaps, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, everyone who sees begins to mock him, (30) saying, 'This man began to build, and wasn't able to finish.' (31) Or what king, as he goes to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? (32) Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends an envoy, and asks for conditions of peace."

✘ Jesus Again Culls The Herd By Demanding Sacrifice.
Luke 14:33 "So therefore whoever of you who doesn't renounce all that he has, he can't be my disciple."

✘ Jesus Continues To Explain The Price Of Serving Him.
Matthew 10:16-22 "I am sending you out like sheep surrounded by wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. (17) Beware of people, because they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues. (18) And you will be brought before governors and kings because of me, as a witness to them and to the Gentiles. (19) Whenever they hand you over for trial, do not worry about how to speak or what to say, for what you should say will be given to you at that time. (20) For it is not you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. (21) "Brother will hand over brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise against parents and have them put to death. (22) And you will be hated by everyone because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved!"

John 16:33 “I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In the world you have trouble and suffering, but take courage – I have conquered the world.”

John 15:20-21 “Remember what I told you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they obeyed my word, they will obey yours too. (21) But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know the one who sent me.”

With this, let's look at some of the persecutions and setbacks to His earthly ministry. We should remind ourselves that Jesus created all things in the physical realm. If Jesus suffered all these things, are we better than our Lord? Should we be expecting preferential treatment that Jesus did not receive? The answer is obviously NO! It's just the price of admission, the cost of doing business, so to speak. If we are to do what our Lord has done, we should expect at the very least the same amount of sacrifice.

JESUS' TROUBLE DURING HIS MINISTRY

● HE WAS DOUBTED

John 10:24-26 “The Jewish leaders surrounded him and asked, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” (25) Jesus replied, “I told you and you do not believe. The deeds I do in my Father's name testify about me. (26) But you refuse to believe because you are not my sheep.”

Mark 6:5-6 “He couldn't work any miracles there except to lay his hands on a few sick people and cure them. (6) Their unbelief amazed him. Then Jesus went around to the villages and taught.”

● HE WAS LAUGHED AT AND MADE FUN OF

Matthew 9:23-24 “When Jesus went into the home of the official and saw the musicians and the crowd of mourners, (24) he said, “Get out of here! The little girl isn't dead. She is just asleep.” Everyone started laughing at Jesus.”

● HE WAS CALLED POSSESSED BY DEMONS

John 8:48-52 “The people told Jesus, “We were right to say that you are a Samaritan and that you have a demon in you!” (49) Jesus answered, “I don't have a demon in me. I honor my Father, and you refuse to honor me. (50) I don't want honor for myself. But there is one who wants me to be honored, and he is also the one who judges. (51) I tell you for certain that if you obey my words, you will never die.” (52) Then the people said, “Now we are sure that you have a demon. Abraham is dead, and so are the prophets. How can you say that no one who obeys your words will ever die?”

● HE WAS ACCUSED OF BEING SUICIDAL

John 8:20-22 “Jesus spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury area of the temple courtyard. No one arrested him, because his time had not yet come. (21) Jesus spoke to the Pharisees again. He said, “I'm going away, and you'll look for me. But you will die because of your sin. You can't go where I'm going.” (22) Then the Jews asked, “Is he going to kill himself? Is that what he means when he says, ‘You can't go where I'm going’?”

● MANY JUST WANTED 'TO BE ENTERTAINED, NOT TAUGHT THE TRUTH

Matthew 12:38-39 “Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.” (39) But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet.”

● MANY JUST WANTED 'TO TEST, TEMPT, AND DEMAND MIRACLES

Luke 11:14-16 “Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the man who had been mute began to speak, and the crowds were amazed. (15) But some of them said, “By the power of Beelzebul, the ruler of demons, he casts out demons!” (16) Others, to test him, began asking for a sign from heaven.”

John 6:29-37 “Jesus replied, “This is the deed God requires – to believe in the one whom he sent.” (30) So they said to him, “Then what miraculous sign will you perform, so that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? (31) Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” (32) Then Jesus told them, “I tell you the solemn truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but my Father is giving you the true bread from heaven. (33) For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” (34) So they said to him, “Sir, give us this bread all the time!” (35) Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. The one who comes to me will never go hungry, and the one who believes in me will never be thirsty. (36) But I told you that you have seen me and still do not believe. (37) Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will never send away.”

● DOUBTED BY HIS FAMILY

John 7:2-8 “The time for the Jewish Festival of Booths was near. (3) So Jesus' brothers told him, "Leave this place, and go to Judea so that your disciples can see the things that you're doing. (4) No one does things secretly when he wants to be known publicly. If you do these things, you should let the world see you." (5) Even his brothers didn't believe in him. (6) Jesus told them, "Now is not the right time for me to go. Any time is right for you. (7) The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I say that what everyone does is evil. (8) Go to the festival. I'm not going to this festival right now. Now is not the right time for me to go."

Mark 6:4 “But Jesus said, "Prophets are honored by everyone, except the people of their hometown and their relatives and their own family."

● CALLED INSANE BY HIS FAMILY

Mark 3:20-21 “Now Jesus went home, and a crowd gathered so that they were not able to eat. (21) When his family heard this they went out to restrain him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.”

● **BETRAYED BY HIS COMPANION**

Matthew 26:47-50 “While he was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. (48) Now he who betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, “Whoever I kiss, he is the one. Seize him.” (49) Immediately he came to Jesus, and said, “Hail, Rabbi!” and kissed him. (50) Jesus said to him, “Friend, why are you here?” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.”

● **ABANDONED BY HIS FRIENDS**

Matthew 26:55-56 “In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, “Have you come out as against a robber with swords and clubs to seize me? I sat daily in the temple teaching, and you didn’t arrest me. (56) But all this has happened, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples left him, and fled.”

● **DENIED BY HIS FRIEND**

Matthew 26:69-75 “While Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, a servant girl came up to him and said, "You were with Jesus from Galilee." (70) But in front of everyone Peter said, "That isn't so! I don't know what you are talking about!" (71) When Peter had gone out to the gate, another servant girl saw him and said to some people there, "This man was with Jesus from Nazareth." (72) Again Peter denied it, and this time he swore, "I don't even know that man!" (73) A little while later some people standing there walked over to Peter and said, "We know that you are one of them. We can tell it because you talk like someone from Galilee. (74) Then he began to curse and to swear, I do not know the man! And immediately the cock crowed. (75) And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, Who said to him, Before the cock crows, you shall deny Me three times. And he went out and wept bitterly.”

● **SEVERE REDUCTION IN HIS MINISTRY**

John 6:64-69 “But there are some of you who don’t believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who didn’t believe, and who it was who would betray him. (65) He said, “For this cause I have said to you that no one can come to me, unless it is given to him by my Father.” (66) At this, many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. (67) Jesus said therefore to the twelve, “You don’t also want to go away, do you?” (68) Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life. (69) We have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

● **WONDERED ABOUT 'THE OUTCOME OF HIS MINISTRY**

Luke 18:8 “I tell you that he will avenge them quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

● **'THE WEIGHT' OF HIS MINISTRY WAS SO GREAT, HE ASKED FOR A WAY OUT OF IT 3 TIMES!**

Matthew 26:38-46 “Then he said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, even to the point of death. Remain here and stay awake with me.” (39) Going a little farther, he threw himself down with his face to the ground and prayed, **“My Father, if possible, let this cup pass from me! Yet not what I will, but what you will.”** (40) Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “So, couldn’t you stay awake with me for one hour? (41) Stay awake and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (42) He went away a second time and prayed, **“My Father, if this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will must be done.”** (43) He came again and found them sleeping; they could not keep their eyes open. (44) So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, **saying the same thing once more.** (45) Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is approaching, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. (46) Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer is approaching!”

● **IN THE PERFECT EXECUTION OF HIS MINISTRY HE FELT ABANDONED BY GOD**

Matthew 27:45-46 “And from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. (46) And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ That is, **‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?’**”

SEED PLANTERS VS THOSE WHO WATER

➡ **What Jesus Has To Say About The Different Callings Of Ministry.**

John 4:34-38 “Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to complete his work. (35) Don’t you say, ‘There are four more months and then comes the harvest?’ I tell you, look up and see that the fields are already white for harvest! (36) The one who reaps receives pay and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that the one who sows and the one who reaps can rejoice together. (37) For in this instance the saying is true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ (38) I sent you to reap what you did not work for; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”

➡ **What Paul Has To Say About The Different Callings Of Ministry.**

1 Corinthians 3:4-9 “For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” aren’t you fleshly? (5) Who then is Apollos, and who is Paul, but servants through whom you believed; and each as the Lord gave to him? (6) I planted. Apollos watered. But God gave the increase. (7) So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. (8) Now he who plants and he who waters are the same, but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. (9) For we are God’s fellow workers. You are God’s farming, God’s building.”

Sometimes the job of a seed planter can be very tough. It takes a lot of faith to be a seed planter. Often, you do not get to see the outcome. You have to trust that the harvest will come one day. For those who wish to experience instant results to validate their ministry efforts being a seed planter, it can feel like a waste of time. For those who can have the faith that the work is worthy and can trust God, then I believe they can receive a greater reward. Much like the parable of the seed sower says...

Matthew 13:8 “Others fell on good soil, and yielded fruit: some one hundred times as much, some sixty, and some thirty.”

You seed and the good seed will produce multiple times over. It's a much harder work to till the ground up with the shovel, bury the seed, then cover for dirt and wait for rain, than it is for those seeing a fruitful plant already growing and adding water. It is much like finding the right path.

Matthew 7:13-14 “Enter in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter in by it. (14) How narrow is the gate, and restricted is the way that leads to life! Few are those who find it.”

This solemn work of scattering seed is often a lonely endeavor. You are in unsown fields, amongst the weeds and thistles. All while desperately trying to start something new, beating a new unknown path in the area of work. All the time, you must trust it is the will of God and what He is leading you to do.

Psalms 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light for my path.”

When you are walking the sometimes lonely road with a bag of seeds called the Word of God, you are sprinkling the seed all around. And in the distance, you can see the wide path filled with people seemingly having all you would want. We must resist the temptation to divert our paths. We must stay the course.

Proverbs 4:14-23 “Do not enter the path of the wicked or walk in the way of those who are evil. (15) Avoid it, do not go on it; turn away from it, and go on. (16) For they cannot sleep unless they cause harm; they are robbed of sleep until they make someone stumble. (17) Indeed they have eaten bread gained from wickedness and drink wine obtained from violence. (18) But the path of the righteous is like the bright morning light, growing brighter and brighter until full day. (19) The way of the wicked is like gloomy darkness; they do not know what they stumble over. (20) My child, pay attention to my words; listen attentively to my sayings. (21) Do not let them depart from your sight, guard them within your heart; (22) for they are life to those who find them and healing to one's entire body. (23) Guard your heart with all vigilance, for from it are the sources of life.”

When the narrow path gets rough, the journey becomes hard, and doubts fill your mind, keep pressing on. Like Abraham going to an unknown land, nothing will seem familiar that surrounds you. Yet, He who lives within you has not changed.

Proverbs 4:26-27 “Make the path of your feet level. Let all of your ways be established. (27) Don’t turn to the right hand nor to the left. Remove your foot from evil.”

The reward is great, but very, very few will receive the reward. Many on the narrow path give up as the burden becomes too great, and their love fails them to continue on.

2 Thessalonians 3:13 “But you, brothers, don’t be weary in doing what is right.”

Remember the one who died for you and all that He gave up for you. Let this ignite in your heart a burning wildfire of love, for love is the only thing that is strong enough to empower your walk until the end.

Hebrews 12:3 “Think of him who endured such opposition against himself by sinners, so that you may not grow weary in your souls and give up.”

Let love for God, Jesus, and your fellow man press you on until the completion of your calling. Then you will receive the full reward for your hard fought efforts.

2 John 1:8 “Watch yourselves, that we don’t lose the things which we have accomplished, but that we receive a full reward.”

The one we serve, the one who died for us, the one who called us into His kingdom, is bringing His rewards with Him, for each of us to receive our just payment.

Revelation 22:12-14 “Behold, I come quickly. My reward is with me, to repay to each man according to his work. (13) I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. (14) Blessed are those who do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.

The key is that some of us will have our works burned up. And for a lot of reasons, really. With some for doing it with the wrong motives, and others for giving up and turning back to the world. Either way, those who don’t run out of love for God and Man continue to press on, no matter the cost, and will receive the full reward.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 “Each man’s work will be revealed. For the Day will declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself will test what sort of work each man’s work is. (14) If any man’s work remains which he built on it, he will receive a reward. (15) If any man’s work is burned, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, but as through fire.”

WE ARE NOT 'THE FIRST', NOR WILL WE BE 'THE LAST'

Isolation and feeling alone are one the devil's greatest tactics to discourage us. In reality, it is during these times that we are proving our faith. Proving that we are not fair weather believers, only along for the good times. Real disciples embrace sacrifice; they do not allow hardship to get them to leave the narrow path. Real disciples know it is in these moments that the purest and truest form of love can be expressed to our God and Father. In our greatest hardship, we find our greatest victories. But, only if we stay faithful.

Let us read some of the many believers that have given all they could for their love of God. Great is their reward.

Hebrews 11:32-40 "And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets. (33) Through faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice, gained what was promised, shut the mouths of lions, (34) quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, gained strength in weakness, became mighty in battle, put foreign armies to flight, (35) and women received back their dead raised to life. But others were tortured, not accepting release, to obtain resurrection to a better life. (36) And others experienced mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. (37) They were stoned, sawed apart, murdered with the sword; they went about in sheepskins and goatskins; they were destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (38) (the world was not worthy of them); they wandered in deserts and mountains and caves and openings in the earth. (39) And these all were commended for their faith, yet they did not receive what was promised. (40) For God had provided something better for us, so that they would be made perfect together with us."

"I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU" GOD

On this narrow path, we must remember that even in the darkest and deepest valley of despair, we are not alone. God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, & the Holy Ministering Angels are with us. So, as we go about the Lord's Work, we should not lose heart. We are not alone!

Matthew 28:18-20 "Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. (19) Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all things that I commanded you. Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen."

John 14:15-18 "If you love me, keep my commandments. (16) I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, that he may be with you forever: (17) the Spirit of truth, whom the world can't receive; for it doesn't see him, neither knows him. You know him, for he lives with you, and will be in you. (18) I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you."

Psalms 27:10 “When my father and my mother forsake me, then Yahweh will take me up.”

BRACE FOR BATTLE, AND REMEMBER THAT JESUS SHOWED US THE PATH HOME TRIBULATION, PERSECUTION, AND SACRIFICE OF SELF.

We can't say that we were not warned. Like the verses we started this study with, Jesus told us what to expect. Yet, so many act surprised when it happens. Or others dim their light so much and have no saltiness in them, that they are no threat to the devil. Therefore, they never receive persecution, while they avoid every sacrifice asked of them. They are also forfeiting all possible rewards from God in doing so. Tribulation, persecution, and sacrifice are the instruments of investment in the kingdom of God: along with Faith, Love, and Obedience. These monies, if you will, are acquired by living with and for Jesus. This is why we are told to rejoice, GREAT is your reward.

Matthew 19:29 “And whoever has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.”

2 Timothy 3:12-13 “Now in fact all who want to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (13) But evil people and charlatans will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived themselves.”

✓ Rejoice

1 Peter 4:12-14 +16 “Dear friends, do not be astonished that a trial by fire is occurring among you, as though something strange were happening to you. (13) But **rejoice** in the degree that you have shared in the sufferings of Christ, so that when his glory is revealed you may also rejoice and be glad. (14) If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory, who is the Spirit of God, rests on you. + (16) But if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but glorify God that you bear such a name.”

✓ Cheer Up

John 16:33 “I have spoken these things to you so that you might have peace in Me. In the world you shall have tribulation, **but be of good cheer**. I have overcome the world.”

John 16:31-33 “Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? (32) Behold, the time is coming, yes, and has now come, that you will be scattered, everyone to his own place, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. (33) I have told you these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have trouble; **but cheer up!** I have overcome the world.”

✓ Rejoice. And Be Glad

Matthew 5:10-12 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to them. (11) “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil things about you falsely on account of me. (12) Rejoice and be glad, because your reward is great in heaven, for they persecuted the prophets before you in the same way.”

WE MUST HAVE THE SAME MINDSET AS JESUS.

All true followers of Jesus have the mind of Christ. It is inherit by the Holy Spirit of Christ. When we have this mind and spirit of Jesus, all true believers are able to act like Jesus acted and sacrifice through obedience like He did.

1 Corinthians 2:16 “For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

➡ We receive the mind of Christ by the Spirit of Christ.

Romans 8:9 “But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”

➡ When it comes to sacrifice, we must submit like Jesus.

Matthew 26:42 “He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will must be done.”

➡ We see this same mindset with Job.

Job 13:15 “Even if he slays me, I will hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face!”

➡ We also see this correct mindset with the 3 Hebrews in Daniel.

Daniel 3:17-18 “If our God whom we are serving exists, he is able to rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire, and he will rescue us, O king, from your power as well. (18) But if he does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we don’t serve your gods, and we will not pay homage to the golden statue that you have erected.”

WE MUST REMEMBER THAT LIFE IS BRIEF

Everything given to us by God was not meant for our keeping, but for our sacrificing. Then what God allows us to retain is blessed beyond measure. Many take the life they received by God and guard it as if they can sustain their mortal existence by sheer will and selfishness. This is insanity. As we are about to read, life is short even if you live 100 years. Then what? No, it is better to remain a living sacrifice. And use the currency of our lives to invest into an eternal reward that will last forever.

Romans 12:1-2 “I beseech you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God, *which is* your reasonable service. (2) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, in order to prove by you what *is* that good and pleasing and perfect will of God.”

LIFE IS SHORT, INVEST THOSE DAILY DOLLARS WISELY.

James 4:14 “You do not know about tomorrow. What is your life like? For you are a puff of smoke that appears for a short time and then vanishes.”

Psalms 78:39 “He remembered that they were made of flesh, and were like a wind that blows past and does not return.”

Job 7:7a “Remember that my life is but a breath,…”

Job 14:10-12 “But man dies and is powerless; he expires – and where is he? (11) As water disappears from the sea, or a river drains away and dries up, (12) so man lies down and does not rise; until the heavens are no more, they will not awake nor arise from their sleep.”

Do Not Forget That You, All You Are, And All You Have Belongs To God.

1 Chronicles 29:13-17 “Now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your majestic name! (14) “But who am I and who are my people, that we should be in a position to contribute this much? Indeed, everything comes from you, and we have simply given back to you what is yours. (15) For we are resident foreigners and temporary settlers in your presence, like all our ancestors; our days are like a shadow on the earth, without security. (16) O LORD our God, all this wealth, which we have collected to build a temple for you to honor your holy name, comes from you; it all belongs to you. (17) I know, my God, that you examine thoughts and are pleased with integrity. With pure motives I contribute all this; and now I look with joy as your people who have gathered here contribute to you.”

So, we are left with a choice here at the end of the study, to invest what God has given us into His kingdom or not. We can decide not, then act surprised by the trouble we face and press on knowing Jesus warned us. Or, we can let it cripple us and subjugate our souls to the felt sense of pain and loss. I decided to take every pain, hurt, heartache, sacrifice, loss, insult, lie, backstabbing, etc... as my investment into the eternal kingdom of God. To me, every one of these acts perpetrated against me has been allowed as an act of love to my Lord and Savior, and Father God. They are the tools of my investment which Jesus assures me will have a magnified return for my benefit. So, we can truly rejoice, cheer up, and be happy when we know what we are receiving in return.

Matthew 6:19-21 “Do not lay up treasures on earth for yourselves, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. (20) But lay up treasures in Heaven for yourselves, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. (21) For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”