

# Glorying in Tribulation

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Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Hello, welcome to our service this morning as we come before God in worship we pray that we would bless our time together under his word.
- We're going to begin singing from Psalm 42, Psalm 42, the beginning of the psalm.
- Psalm 42.
- Both in the night and day, while unto me continually, where is thy God, they say? My soul is poured out in me, when this I think upon, because that with the multitude I heretofore had gone.
- With them into God's house I went, with voice of joy and praise, yea, with the multitude that kept the solemn holy days.
- [ 1 : 21 ]     O why art thou cast down my soul? Why in me so dismayed? Trust God, for I shall praise him yet, his countenance is mine aid.
- And so on. Let us sing these verses. Psalm 42 from the beginning. Like as the heart for water brooks in thirst of pant and pray.
- Like as the heart for water brooks in thirst of pant and pray.
- So proud, so proud, so proud, so proud, so proud, so proud. O God, that come to thee I pray.
- My soul for God, the living God.
- [ 2 : 37 ]     The heart for water brooks in thirst of pant and pray.
- O God, that come to thee I pray.
- O God, that come to thee I pray. O God, that come to thee I pray. My soul for God, the living God. My soul for God, the living God.
- O God, that come to thee I pray. O God, that come to thee I pray.
- Amen to our sound sideway, with voice of joy and peace.
- [ 4 : 42 ]     Here with the multitude that gave the storm of holy days.
- O higher blood has guide my soul, why in me so dismay, that God for all I shall be to me.
- His character is my name. Let us come before God in the name of the Spirit.
- O Lord our God, as we gather in your presence, we give thanks that we can acknowledge the God of heaven and earth to be our God.
- God who bears the name Jehovah, the God who is eternal, God who is from everlasting to everlasting.
- [ 6 : 15 ]     We recognize even in making such an acknowledgement that when we call upon you, we call upon you as others have done in the past.
- And so it is and ever will be, even though this world would have it otherwise, that the God that is will ever be.

And that much as some would have you removed from the pages of history, or have you obliterated from the curriculum of our learned establishments, have your name blotted out from society and gender, so that nothing is said of you and no acknowledgement is made as to your being.

That cannot and will not ever be the case. Even societies that endeavor to do that, to remove the Christian faith from sight, all it resulted in was an underground church developing and the blessing of that God that was endeavored to be removed, to be dispensed ever more liberally.

And those who sought to worship you in secret were able and empowered to share the good news of salvation with others, so much so that instead of suppressing the grace that is in God and the God who is the God of grace, your name became even better known.

[ 8 : 22 ] And that has been the case in past generations, and it is the case in our own present world. No matter how much our own nation is responsible for endeavoring to belittle the name of Christ and to despise his name in different ways, not just by deliberately looking to remove his name, but also in celebrating the very things that he condemns.

And we give thanks that though your word tells us that the outcome of that, that the hands of the wicked, though they may join, that the God, who is God over all, will have the last word with regard to each of us.

So help us to recognize that as we join in worship in this place today, though our numbers aren't necessarily small, we are but a small part of the whole that meets not just locally, but throughout our islands, our nation, and all the nations of the earth.

There may be gatherings that are few in number, there may be gatherings that are vast, but at the heart of these gatherings is the fact that God is in the midst, and where two or three are gathered together in your name.

There you have promised to be. And we pray that you would make yourself known to us here in this place, and that blessing would accompany the reading of your word and the reflections that we have upon it, and that it will have free course amongst us, not just in the community, but in our hearts, in our minds, and that it would touch us not just savingly, but those that have been saved and experienced the power of God in Christ Jesus, that it would be as the leaven touching our lives, the whole of these lives, our thinking, our doing, our walk, whatever it may be.

[ 11 : 08 ] It is not sufficient for us to have a knowledge of the truth if that knowledge is not producing in us that which it must. And you have decreed that your people are those who will progress in their faith, and that the graces that you endow them with are not implanted so as to lie dormant, but to grow and to increase, not just by adding to the number, but also adding to the fruitfulness of them in our lives.

So we pray for your grace to help us to that end. Remember those who are unable to meet publicly. We pray for those who live in fear of COVID at this time, and we are wise if we treat carefully that which is affecting our society, and that caution should be the watchword for every one of us, but we give thanks that in all these things you are sovereign, and we pray that even as we meet as a church and as congregations of your church, that we would show the world in which we live, that we are aware of who you are, and the fact that you have ordained all things, even the things that keep us down at times.

Remember your people with all their varying needs. Bless the household, minister to those hospitalized, visit those frail elderly who are confined to the care of others and dependent upon it.

Sanctify every visitation of your providence to us, so that we may learn under your hand. We pray that you would add to the number of your people through the power of your preached word.

You have decreed that it is through the foolishness of preaching that a blessing would come. We bless you and thank you that you are able to use vessels that are marred and cracked and deficient in so many ways, and that to your own glory.

[ 13 : 45 ] May your glory be in view at all times. So remember all who have gone out with the great evangel, who preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, to whom so ever will.

We pray that you would remember those who are grieving and sorrowful today, those who are heart sick because of the bones that they have been afflicted by.

Sometimes we encounter death as we see it take from us loved ones. Sometimes we encounter it as it encroaches upon our own person.

We pray for those who are dealing with illness that is terminal. And they have been given that insight that their life is on the way.

And that is a blessing to the people of God that they know that the time that they have here in this world is precious. But it is a blessing to them not only to know the fact that the time they have allotted to them is limited but that that which awaits them with certainty in and through the person of Jesus Christ who has promised to take his own to be with them that soon they will be in that very place that their soul craves to be.

[ 15 : 17 ] we pray then your blessing upon all that are entrusted with the care of others strengthen their arm encourage them to look to the Lord so that even in difficult circumstances they may be a source of encouragement to others.

We pray for our hospitals we pray for the local care homes and hospice and we remember the staff there who have to minister to others in difficult situations.

We pray for those who have to deliver the care of our society in general in the sense that which we are supported and upheld by various parents of government in order to keep us safe and keep us free from harm.

Remember all such we pray. Continue to bless our government even though our governments choose to reveal an ignorance of the things of God in so many different ways.

It is easy for you to bring them to hear your word in a way where they even might not appreciate that it is your word that is governing the thinking.

[ 16 : 47 ] You have done so in the past. Do not allow us to despair of the direction that is followed to be dramatically changed by the will of the almighty.

So continue to watch over us we pray. We read your word as we sing your praises and cleansing from sin in Jesus name. Amen.

We're going to read from the scriptures of the New Testament from Paul's epistle to the Romans in chapter 5. We can read the whole chapter Romans chapter 5 reading from the beginning of the chapter.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God and not only so but with glory in tribulations also knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience experience and experience hope and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us for when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly for scarcely for a righteous man would one die yet per adventure for a good man some would even dare to die but

God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us much more than being now justified by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life and not only so but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned for until the law sin was in the world but sin is not imputed when there is no law nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of

[ 19 : 39 ] Adam's transgression who is the figure of him that was to come but not as the offence so also was the free gift for if through the offence of one many be dead much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous moreover the law entered that the offence might abound but where sin abounded grace did much more abound that as sin hath reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by

Jesus Christ our Lord amen and may the Lord out his blessing to this reading of his word and to his name be the praise now before we sing our next psalm just a word to the young good ones the world in which we live in is a strange world and there are many things that change change all the time for example when we were growing up we were taught to celebrate those men and sometimes women who travelled into far countries and who explored these countries and some of these their names are no longer celebrated but vilified because of what they did or what they did with the local population or they're accused of doing that anyway but it just shows how things change

I was this week reminded of something I was visiting a place and I won't say where it was but on the wall there was a tail of a fox hanging from the wall now you might think that's very strange for anybody to have a fox's tail on the wall and many people today are very much opposed to any form of cruelty to animals and I suppose if you take that image of a fox's tail on the wall of any person you would think this is terrible what kind of person would actually do that but the person who had it was actually somebody whose job it was to deal with foxes as pests who destroyed a game that he was responsible for you might agree or disagree with that kind of job whether a person should be doing it or not and some people may be annoyed that such a thing goes on but whatever we do we look at this world and we see it through different eyes and the person who is responsible for caring for animals may think that it's quite legitimate to deal with pests in that way if they are called pests others may think that's not the right way to do it but what made me think of this along lines as I reminded of how long ago some people wear around their necks a cross and the cross says to them to the person of which this is me celebrating my

Christianity the cross tells me and tells others that I am a Christian and the cross speaks of Christ and the cross speaks of crucifixion and yet when Christ was crucified those who crucified did so in the most horrible way and those who understood anything of the cross and understood anything about the associations of the cross they saw it as God's curse they saw it as not just an instrument used for putting a person to death but as something that was associated with God's displeasure and it's all down to the way people see it you and I may see a cross as something that reminds us of Christ dying in a place but as others see it as something that they associate with shame and we always have to be careful how we interpret events even events that we see round about us in the world there are many people in the world today in which we live that think

Christians are wrong because of what they believe because they believe God's word they believe the Bible they believe that what the Bible teaches is to be taught and believed but many despise the Christian because they have that belief in the Bible and they say the Christian is wrong and what the Bible teaches is wrong and we should live and let live and so on we have to remember that sometimes what we see and what we hear and what we are taught may differ to what others see and what others hear and what they are taught and whatever conclusions any one of us must arrive at must be based upon what the word of God tells us and what the word of God teaches us is right and proper and sometimes we don't have all the picture we don't have all the answers but we must be careful lest we condemn people with little or no understanding of who they are or what they are or why they believe what they believe well I hope that that will give you something to think about we're going to sing some verses from Psalm 119

[ 27 : 29 ] Psalm 119 on at verse 65 well hast thou with thy servant dealt as thou didst promise give good judgment me and knowledge teach for I thy word believe ere I afflicted was thy street but now I keep thy word both good thou art and good thou dost teach me thy statutes Lord the men that are puffed up with pride against me forged a lie yet thy commandments observe with my whole heart will I their hearts through worldly ease and wealth as fat as grease they be but in thy holy law I take delight continually it hath been very good for me that I afflicted was that I might well instructed be and learn thy holy laws the word that cometh from thy mouth is better unto me than many thousands and great sums of gold and silver be this section of psalm 119 from verse 65 well hast thou with thy servant dealt as thou didst promise give well hast thou with thy servant dealt as thou didst promise give good judgment let me out nourish thee for

I thy word believe here I have were What I say, but now I keep thy word.

For good thou art, good thou cast, teach me in thy statutes, Lord.

The men that are hooked up with pride against me for a lie.

Yet thy command, give thy hope share with thy whole heart will I.

[ 30 : 59 ] Their hearts through worldly seas undwell, as such as peace they be.

But in thy holy holy holy, till I come to thee.

It hath been very good for me.

That I have played big wars. That I might well in childhood be.

And there thy hope be lost. The word that comes from thy ground is set around to me.

[ 32 : 41 ] And many thousand and great times of glory have still there been.

Let us turn to the passage of Scripture Red, Romans chapter 5.

We can read again at the beginning of the chapter. Romans chapter 5. 1. 1.

2. 2. 3. 4. 5. 5. 5. 6. 6. 6.

7. 7. 7. 8. 9. 8.

[ 34 : 00 ] 9. 9. 9. 10. 10. 10. 11. 11. 12. 12. 11.

12.

12. 12. 13. 13. 14. 14. 15. 15. 15. 16. 16.

16. 16. and delve into the truth that it contains. I would imagine that many of you are in awe of what is spoken of.

It speaks of the faith of the believer. It speaks of justification by faith. It speaks of reconciliation, peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 35 : 09 ] It speaks of a hope that is eternal. And that itself opens your mind to a great many things.

And when I was looking at this, I was struck by the fact that in many of our Bibles, we have given helpful encouragements when we open the Scripture.

And we use the Authorized Version, for example. Now, some of your Bibles, which are the Authorized Version, you will have chapter headings.

And these headings are not part of the original text. The original text, the autographs, were usually, they were always in Hebrew for the Old Testament, Greek for the New Testament.

And you didn't have chapter divisions, you didn't have page numbers, you didn't have verse numbers. All you had was the text. But when the translators translated the verses, they divided it up into chapters and verses to make it easier to follow and understand.

[ 36 : 31 ] Now, later, Bibles, people who brought together the Scripture into what we know as a Bible, later translations would be accompanied with these comments that come at the beginning of chapters.

Let me give you some examples for this one. Just to help you understand the wealth of meaning that is contained within these verses.

I've got several copies of the Scripture on my desk. Two of them, the Authorized Version. One chapter was headed to the results of justification of faith.

Another, faith triumphs in trouble. In the copy of the ESV I have, it titles it, Peace with God through Faith.

The NIV, Peace and Joy. The New English Translation, it's the expectation of justification.

[ 37 : 47 ] Now, you can see there's a difference in the way that the translators have given us these helpful comments.

Now, they are comments and they are helpful because they're opening up to us what these verses contain.

But because they're not part of the original text, they have liberty to discover for themselves as they read the passage, the martyr, what is contained within that that they consider to be important.

Now, all of them are right. Because when you read the chapter, these are the things that you will find in the chapter. And at the same time, what they're focusing on is what they believe to be the main teaching within this chapter.

Or within this section of the chapter. But if you understand that, then you'll understand that when we look at it, there's so much contained in what the Apostle is dealing with here, that we can spend a lot of time dealing with a very little.

[ 39 : 24 ] Because there is much to be gained from thinking about, for example, the doctrine of justification, that's what comes at the beginning of the chapter.

Or the doctrine of reconciliation, which accompanies what the person who has faith in Christ enjoys. The person who comes to faith in Christ has access to God through Christ.

They were once enemies of God. But now, through the Christ of the Gospel, through the Gospel, they are reconciled to God. They have peace with God. And all of that is there, and it opens out to you the more you look at it.

It also speaks of hope, and it's on this hope that we're going to speak today. But as you look at the verses, you'll see that hope occurs twice.

And although the word hope occurs twice, it is not with exactly the same meaning. That is, it's perfectly proper for us to consider hope in the context that it's found.

[ 40 : 43 ] And understand that, generally speaking, the purpose of the Apostle, when he speaks of hope in this way, he brings us to the same place. He brings us, hope focuses on what is in the future.

But the way he speaks of hope, as you can see, we have in verse 2, By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And then he says, And not only so, with glory in tribulations, also knowing that tribulations worketh patience, patience, experience, experience hope. Hope begeth not ashamed.

So, why is he making this division between the two? Both uses of the word hope conclude in the same way.

They are found at the conclusion of something, a goal that is to be achieved, a destination that is to be arrived at.

[ 41 : 54 ] However, when you look more closely at it, Paul is wanting us to understand that the first of these uses of hope is thinking more of the theology, the doctrine that is contained, and the second use of it, he is more concerned with the experience of the person who is spoken of.

Now, the person who is taught the doctrine, and the person who has the experience, they are one and the same. The hope is the same. The destination is the same.

But he is speaking about two separate things. And in the sense that he wants us to understand what is being taught.

Professor R.A. from Listen has an explanation which is helpful. He is talking about this. He says that Christian is on what he calls the royal road.

And it is a road that leads to the destination of which we've spoken of. But there are three things spoken of in the first part, which are processes, I suppose.

[ 43 : 23 ] We have access, we have justification by faith, peace with God, and access by faith.

These are the doctrinal processes, the theology concerned with those who are on this road. And then the second part is the tribulation, the patience and the experience, which are part of what those who are on this road will be in holiday.

It's not the whole, obviously, but it is part, with the terminus being the hope, or what is spoken of as hope. Both are linked to faith in Jesus Christ, and yet they are different appreciations of what that faith in Christ entails.

We could take in the whole first five verses of the chapter and do justice to it, I suppose. But I want us to narrow our focus because I want us to think about the tribulation that worketh patience, the patience that results in experience, and the experience that takes us to hope, or the realization of the fruition which is hope.

And strange as it may seem, the tribulation of which he speaks, who is at the same time part of the glory of which he speaks also.

[ 45 : 03 ] We glory, he says, in tribulations also. Well, we can look at it just simply breaking it up, beginning with the word glory there, to find out what he means by it.

Then tribulation, then patience and experience, and finally coming back to hope again. We're talking about what the experience of a believer is.

The person who has come to put their trust in Jesus Christ. The person who has faith in Jesus Christ.

And the person who has such a faith also inevitably has hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are these three that accompany always one another. Faith, hope and love. They are inseparable in the experience of a person who puts their trust in the Lord Jesus.

[ 46 : 15 ] But the hope of the believer, which may appear to those who are not believers, to be very much at odds with what they see for themselves.

The hope of the believer produces in the believer a joyful expectation. And that's what the word glory here means. The word glory, when we think of the word glory, we think of it in terms of the person of God, who is all-glorious, or, you know, the attributes of the divine, which take us up into something beyond our experience.

It is glory in the sense of being at the highest tier of experience. Or glory in the sense of the destiny, or destination of the believer, which is heaven, which is glory.

But here, the word glory, we glory in tribulations, he says. We have joyful expectation concerning these things.

Now, when you see we have a joyful expectation as a believer, that may be disputed by those who are not Christians, because they look at the Christian and say, well, there's nothing very joyful about that person who professes Christianity.

[ 47 : 50 ] They don't look very happy to me. And for that reason, I doubt very much if this is true. But worse than that, it is a joyful expectation in tribulation, which is very much the two things that are very much opposed.

But what the Bible tells us is that the Christian is a happy person. He's a joyful person. She's a joyful person.

And regardless of how we perceive how the Christian is outwardly, they have more reason than any person living to be joyful.

Because their life is bound up with Christ Jesus. And that's what the Apostle is talking about here. The Apostle is wanting us to understand the significance of what it means to be a Christian.

You are a Christian who is justified. In other words, the law has nothing more to do with you as a Christian. It is no longer in exercise condemning you because you have broken it.

[ 49 : 15 ] Because you are in a relationship with somebody who has dealt with the law on your behalf. God is no longer your enemy. You are at peace with God.

And when you are at peace with God, the reasons for being disheartened or disillusioned or fearful have been removed. And I know for a fact that many Christian believers who came to faith in Jesus Christ, one of the most obvious evidences of that experience was the joy that filled their heart because of the relationship that they had with the Lord Jesus Christ and what it meant to them.

And when we remember that, we begin to understand something of what the Apostle is alluding to here.

There is no doubt that personality can affect us, that personality can influence us in the sense that we are what we are by nature.

And some people, as they say, their glasses are half empty, while others are half full. It all depends on what we are by nature. But this isn't talking about our personalities.

[ 50 : 44 ] this is talking about what we can properly understand ourselves to be and rightfully be as those who are believers.

Robert Haldin has put a very helpful comment, I believe it's helpful anyway. It is, to glory disseminates not only the excess of joy possessed by the soul in the contemplation of the future inheritance, but the language of triumph expressing this joy, which is properly met by glory.

The Christian should speak nothing boastingly so far as concerns himself, but he has no reason to conceal his sense of his high destination as a son of God and an heir of glory.

In this he ought to exult, glory, and in obedience to his Lord's command, rejoice because his name is written in heaven.

When you're looking forward, anticipating not just the possession of what you have been fully realized, but what you anticipate to be your possession fully in the future that awaits, then you have every right to feel the exultation or the rejoicing of which Paul is speaking here.

[ 52 : 26 ] Some may think it more laudable to be miserable, but if the misery conforms to a genuine apprehension of their lostness, then there's something seriously wrong with the appreciation of Christ, wrong with the relationship that they profess to have with Christ.

If they are miserable because there's an uncertainty about the genuineness of the relationship, something has to be done about that, because you can't live your life as a Christian in the grip of misery because you're uncertain of Christ, or you're uncertain about what Christ has done, or you're uncertain about your relationship with that Christ.

If your misery comes from that, then you need to address that and deal with it. And when you do deal with it, you realise that the true nature of misery in that sense has been dealt with in the person of the Lord Jesus.

But he goes on and he says we glory in tribulations. And the true meaning of the word tribulation here is we glory in trials or testings.

Now the question is most relevant, do we glory in them or glory in them? Maybe that's a silly question.

[ 54 : 08 ] Do we glory in them or do we glory because of them? And I suppose that has to, the answer to that question really hangs on what do we mean by it.

The tribulations of which he speaks, what are they? We live in a world where there are many troubles and they are coming to all. And every one of us will at some point encounter trials and testings in the world in which we live because it's inevitable that at some point we'll have sadness, we'll have temptations, we'll have experiences that will test us to the limit.

And that's true for everyone, whoever they are. They don't have to be Christians to experience these things. because everyone will have times of grief, time of sorrow, time of trial, whatever it may be.

But here the apostle is speaking about the testings that accompany faith. I would imagine that that is what this burden is.

The Christian who because he is a Christian understands that there are things that they must engage with as Christians and deal with as Christians and overcome as Christians.

[ 55 : 36 ] And that will involve them in the testings of which he sees here. And he is saying to the Christian, when you understand that these are yours and that you must engage with them as a Christian, you have the liberty to rejoice in them because you know that the God who has sovereignly introduced them to you is sovereign in all that he does.

In other words, whatever it is, take for example this pandemic, everybody has been affected by it in some way, shape or form. Everybody, without exception.

Not everybody has been affected by Covid in the sense that they have caused illness. But there's nobody who hasn't experienced the way our life has been curtailed because of it and our interactions with others and the fears that we have because of it.

But how do we deal with that as Christians? anybody deals with it in their own way without being a Christian. But as a Christian, how do we deal with it?

Do we gripe? Do we grieve? Do we sorrow? Do we kick against this providence? It's not fair, it's not right, we shouldn't have these things to deal with. If God is sovereign, why has he allowed it?

[ 57 : 12 ] Why are so many people suffering because of it? Why have so many people died because of it? Why are so many people having to live on suffering because of the effect that it has upon it?

Why have so many people lost income because of it? It can't go in any direction. But the Christian can look at this from the point of view of a Christian who understands that we can glory in tribulation because there is a road upon which we are on.

Using again the words of our affirmation, we are on a royal road and God has decreed that on this road upon which we are travelling, this is part of the things that we must encounter through which we must journey.

but there is this certain hope before us that what waits for us at the end is not just for our good but to his glory.

There are temporal trials and there are spiritual trials and I think it's John Mario who says central to the experiences of the believer is the fact that the afflictions are for Christ's sake.

[ 58 : 36 ] Now you may think that Mario there means that that can only suggest to us that the afflictions that are introduced into our experience are temptations or trials that we are visited upon by others who are enemies of Christ.

That's not the limit of it although it can be part of it. For what Mario goes on to say is it gives an opportunity to visit upon us the power of Christ and the glory of Christ in the way that he is supportive of his own as they go through it.

Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians he speaks of his own experiences. verses I wrote this saying to you lest when I came I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all for out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears not that you should be grieved but that you might know the love which I have more abundantly done to you but if any have caused grief he hath not grieved me but in part that I may not overcharge you all so Paul is aware of his own trials and testings that come at him from all angles all kinds of directions sometimes from enemies of the cross sometimes from those who are the redeemed of the

Lord and he has to deal with them and believe that God is in control of all of these things my grace he says in chapter 12 is sufficient for thee my strength is made perfect in weakness most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me therefore I take pleasure in infirmities in reproaches in necessities in persecutions in distresses for Christ's sake for when I am weak then I am strong I have become a fool in glory he have compelled me and so on Paul understands this better than most but he wants to share his experiences with others that they might interpret what they are going through in light of what God is doing in light of what is at the end of this road upon which they are made suffering makes an unsaved man give up all hope but when a

Christian suffers he rejoices in hope because he knows God is in control the darker the night the brighter the gloom the brighter the stars gleam in the gloom of God's promises we know he says that tribulations work patience this requires us to understand that Paul is referring to the sufferings of a Christian and the sufferings they endure for the sake of Christ again when you think of these words you might think that it restricts it to what is done directly in opposition to Christ but it is never just that because if a Christian for example has to endure loss whatever that loss may be the first thought may be why should

[ 62 : 49 ] I a Christian have to endure such loss and you see this sort of reasoning going on and the Bible often brings it to our attention the psalmist speaks of it when he sees the world going on and seemingly at ease while he has to suffer even though he is God's servant and that is something that the Christian has to resolve in their own mind when they are dealing with what God is doing to them now we normally associate patience with a form of lying under the rod as it were having to put up with it a form of stoicism a sense of the inevitable I can't escape it so I might as well grin and bear it as it were but the original meaning of the word as Paul uses it here is not just sitting doing nothing but persevering persevering means not just sitting down doing nothing it is going on doing something doing what the

Lord encourages us to do going on with him facing the future with your nose as it were in the stream because you have this hope you have this confidence through the Lord time is going and I don't want to be keeping it too long we read here that there is a need for patience and there are some people and I have seen them and I have to say that they have impressed me incredibly by the way that you could see them under the hand of God as it were and they virtually stooped because of the burden that they are carrying it's as if you can imagine a weight being placed upon something and pressing down upon it and it's so obvious that that is the way they are and yet as they are under that weight they are still with their face set upon

God and they are still with their desire towards him and to go on as he will enable them to go on you know the saddest thing I've ever had to do is deal with people who had to deal with the discovery of a cancer and when these people as far as I could see and as far as their own profession could be they had no interest in Christ they had never shown interest in Christ before this came and they were showing no evidence of that being part of their experience but there was a sort of defiance in the face of that prospect that cancer was in their life and they were going to beat it they were going to best it they were going to go on regardless and it was all about what they were going to do now

I can understand why a person would have to be like that but it was so sad in the sense that when we are in a situation like that and if we are in a situation like and even Christians sometimes they're so devastated by such a thing that they find it hard to deal with but at the same time for the Christian there is always the opportunity to discover no I'm not alone in this I'm not by myself in this if I am going to go on it will be going on with the Lord and even if I'm not going to go on the Lord has not left me the Lord is not going to abandon me the Lord has promised me this is the hope that I have that he will be my portion and life as in death

I quote the words of Harry Finneson how does patience gird the Christian heart he does because he has peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ and because that peace is being ministered to them in their time of need the peace of God garrisons the heart final thing very briefly the experience that is part of this the Greek word means proof means proof the evidence tribulation work with patience and patience experience experience hope the evidence that you have that what is you wish is from

[ 68 : 23 ] God it's not your own it's not something you manufactured it's not something you created not something you imagine it is something that is rightly used by reason of the experience that you have of faith in Jesus Christ and peace with God through him the believer rediscovered the genuine nature of their relationship with God and it also bears witness to the ongoing support the Lord gives to them along with his people here in the world I think it's John Murray that says here we have a circle the circle begins with hope and it ends with hope the believer sees what he has in Christ Christ who is redeemer Christ who is the saviour and the saviour he has trusted in at the beginning will be with him at the end and what he has at the end will be that prospect that will go on into eternity it's all confident by the evidence that you have that such a relationship is the relationship of faith now there's a question for you today have you got such a relationship with

Christ have you got such a faith in Christ that you are confident that no matter what be it troubles trials testings be it the experience of which it speaks here will it all produce in you the fact that you have fixed your soul upon Christ and trusted it to his safe keeping and may it be so for each one of us let us pray amen Lord be merciful to each of us when we think of our shortcomings of failure the many ways in which we do not live up to what we are by nature a new nature created by Christ Jesus help us then to look to that saviour of sinners without trusting pardon us every transgression we pray in his name amen the closing psalm is psalm 34 psalm 34 and a verse 16 the face of God is set against those that do wickedly that he may quiet out from the earth cut off their memory the righteous cry unto the Lord he unto them gives ear and they out of their troubles all by him delivered out we'll sing to verse 19 the face of God is set against those that do wickedly the face of God is set against those that do wickedly that do and who has 34 the righteous

God bless you.

By him we live now. The Lord is ever nice to them.

The key of broken sin. To him be saved.

[ 73 : 20 ] He got the heart. The dark in heart of night.

The trouble's heart. God may the just.

The love of mercy. The key of broken sin.

The love of them all. The light. The light.

KOe. May God bless you and me see you God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit Addressed, and abide with you all now and always Amen