

THE PROVING GROUND

TO BE TRUSTED IT MUST BE TESTED

BATTLE TESTED

Pastor Brad Howard - May 26, 2024

...when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

James 1:2-4 NLT

"God has things prepared for you that you are not prepared for."

1. YOU LEARN THAT WE ARE ALL IN A SPIRITUAL BATTLE.

For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12 NLT

The truth is that, although of course we lead normal human lives, the battle we are fighting is on the spiritual level. The very weapons we use are not those of human warfare but powerful in God's warfare for the destruction of the enemy's strongholds. Our battle is to bring down every deceptive fantasy and every imposing defense that men erect against the true knowledge of God. We even fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 Phillips

2. YOU LEARN HOW TO GET BATTLE-READY.

"A sensible man watches for problems ahead and prepares to meet them. The fool never looks ahead and suffers the consequences."

Proverbs 27:12 TLB

So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should.

1 Corinthians 9:26-27a NLT

"Just as we develop our physical muscles through overcoming opposition - such as lifting weights - we develop our character muscles by overcoming challenges and adversity."

- STEPHEN R. COVEY

Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors!

Joel 3:9a NIV

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3. YOU LEARN HOW TO STAND ON GOD'S PROMISES.

This I declare about the LORD: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; He is my God, and I trust Him. For He will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease. He will cover you with His feathers. He will shelter you with His wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection.

Psalms 91:2-4 NLT

I prayed to the LORD, and He answered me. He freed me from all my fears.

Psalms 34:4 NLT

This is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid! Don't be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God's.

2 Chronicles 20:15b NLT

But in that coming day no weapon turned against you will succeed. You will silence every voice raised up to accuse you. These benefits are enjoyed by the servants of the LORD; their vindication will come from Me. I, the LORD, have spoken!

Isaiah 54:17 NLT

We all experience times of testing, which is normal for every human being. But God will be faithful to you. He will screen and filter the severity, nature, and timing of every test or trial you face so that you can bear it. And each test is an opportunity to trust him more, for along with every trial God has provided for you a way of escape that will bring you out of it victoriously.

1 Corinthians 10:13

4. YOU LEARN WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST.

"ADVERSITY INTRODUCES A MAN TO HIMSELF."

- Albert Einstein

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion..."

Genesis 1:26 ESV

I am a child of God.

I am made in the image of God, to walk according to the Word of God.

I am filled with the Spirit of God, to overcome the enemy by the power of God,

And I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

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God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV

Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you.

Luke 10:19 NLT