

Hope When Life Falls Apart When Life Gets Hard - Part 5

Life Church St. Louis April 27, 2025
Lead Pastor Dan Walker, PhD, MDiv

Pray Daily for your Five Friends Focus

Introduction

2 Corinthians 4:8–9 (ESV) We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

Matthew 5:11–12 (ESV) “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, ...

Isaiah 43:2 (ESV) When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

1. Expect the Fire and Rejoice in Christ

1 Peter 4:12 (ESV) Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

1 Peter 4:13 (ESV) But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

2. Don’t Be Ashamed – You Bear His Name

1 Peter 4:14 (ESV) If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

1 Peter 4:15 (ESV) But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.

1 Peter 4:16 (ESV) Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.

3. Trust God by Continuing to Do Good

1 Peter 4:17 (ESV) For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

1 Peter 4:18 (ESV) And “If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

1 Peter 4:19 (ESV) Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

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Introduction

1. Why do you think people can sometimes find hope even in the hardest situations?
2. What can help you keep going when you feel overwhelmed or close to despair? (2 Corinthians 4:8–9)
3. How can your perspective change when you face criticism or rejection from others? (Matthew 5:11–12)
4. How does it encourage you to know that you never go through challenges alone? (Isaiah 43:2)

1. Expect the Fire and Rejoice in Christ

1. How might your outlook change if you expected challenges in your walk with God rather than being surprised by them? (1 Peter 4:12)
2. What does it mean to find joy in difficult times because of your connection to Jesus? (1 Peter 4:13)
3. How could you encourage someone else to find purpose in their struggles this week?

2. Don't Be Ashamed – You Bear His Name

1. What does it mean to be considered blessed when you are mistreated because of your faith? (1 Peter 4:14)

2. Why is it important to reflect on the reasons for your suffering? (1 Peter 4:15)
3. How can you honor God through your response to difficulties as a Christian? (1 Peter 4:16)
4. In what ways could you show more boldness in sharing your faith in your everyday life?

3. Trust God by Continuing to Do Good

1. What might it look like for God to refine or correct you through difficult experiences? (1 Peter 4:17)
2. How does knowing the seriousness of salvation impact your view of reaching others? (1 Peter 4:18)
3. What helps you trust God enough to keep doing good, even when you don't see immediate results? (1 Peter 4:19)
4. What is one specific way you can continue doing good for someone else this week, even if life feels challenging?

Conclusion

1. What is one truth from this message that you want to hold onto when life gets tough?
2. How can you support someone else going through a difficult season with hope and encouragement?