

Reading: I Peter 5:6-11

Topic: God's Process of Developing Useful Vessels

INTRODUCTION: Anyone who is born again into the Kingdom of God will go _____ God's work and development _____ in order to be made into a vessel of honor for Him.

I. SUFFERING:

A. The Call To Suffer:

1. It is a wonderful thing to hear, to believe and to obey the _____ of Jesus Christ, and to experience the joy of having our _____ forgiven, but the development of our spiritual growth _____ includes another aspect that everyone must go through. Phil. 1:29
2. The Word of God explains this aspect of our development _____ as a _____ to being involved in some _____ of suffering, just as Christ suffered for us. I Pet. 2:21

B. The Plan for Everyone:

1. Everyone who truly follows Jesus will pass through some _____ of suffering and difficulty, not to destroy but to strengthen and develop _____ and to experience the grace of God. 2 Cor. 12:7-9
2. The type of suffering may _____ from person to person, but the basic purpose is to bring us to a total dependency up the Lord and to realize that He alone is our source of _____. 2 Cor. 12:10
3. The suffering may be financial hardship for a time, rejection by _____ and friends, physical sickness and _____, persecution, death of loved ones, unexpected crisis, etc. but through it all, the objective is to build faith and trust in our Lord. 2 Cor. 11:23-28

II. STRENGTHENING:

A. Like A Muscle:

1. Strong muscles are developed only through resistance to the muscles themselves, and if there is _____ any opposition to those muscles, they will be _____ and useless.
2. After the process of suffering, the Lord's desire is to bring us into the strengthening _____ where we will have a stronger _____ and trust in the Lord's power and not in ourselves. 2 Cor. 3:5

B. Strength To Stand:

1. The Lord Jesus has in His training plan the goal to develop strong _____ in His army, people that will be warriors in the _____ against the forces of darkness and evil. Eph. 6:10
2. That strength is developed during the suffering process which is comparable to _____ training in the military that prepares the soldier for _____ combat in war. Pr. 24:10

III. ESTABLISHING:

A. Taking Root:

1. When a seed is planted in the ground, it first goes through the process of _____, and then it begins

- to come to life under the warm soil with the help of the _____ and gentle rain. Jn. 12:24
2. Once the seed has sprung to life it begins to _____ both upward and also downward, with the green plant showing above the ground and the unseen _____ growing downward. Co. 2:6,7

B. Firmly Established:

1. The will of God is after the phases of suffering and strengthening, that every individual _____ an established and stable _____ to work in the kingdom of God. 2 Tim. 2:21
2. Some people take longer than others to get to that establishment _____, depending on their own willingness to _____ themselves to stabilizing a spiritual life. Mt. 13:23

IV. SETTLING:

A. Finding Your Place:

1. The final phase of this process is settling, from which the _____ settlers comes, referring to people who have found a _____ to settle and to live and work.
2. God's design and plan is for every individual who is in His _____ to be involved in His kingdom work and to find their _____ and minister in the capacity that He has designed them for. I Cor. 12:12,13

B. Knowing Your Place:

1. Some people ask the question – “How do I _____ where I am supposed to be and what I am supposed to be _____ in the work of God?”
2. There is something about recognizing and understanding the _____ and abilities that God has given to you that points the way to _____ and what you are meant to do and once you find that place, you become settled and confident in whatever ministry the Lord has placed you in. I Cor. 12:28

CONCLUSION: This four-step process of becoming a useful vessel is also described in another _____ in the Word of God in a _____ that God spoke to Jeremiah using clay and a potter: Jer. 18:1-4

- a. Lump of clay – the _____ material
- b. Potter's wheel – the process of molding and _____ - painful
- c. Marred vessel – needs more _____.
- d. Pressed down again and reshaped into a _____ vessel.

God's will is for every individual to _____ to the process of becoming a useful vessel for His work in the Kingdom of God.