

Strength in Affliction--the Secret of Loving Christ More

by John Newton

The secret to loving Christ more is to trust Him and try Him and His promises, and this will lead to a deeper love and appreciation for Him.

Scripture: Psalm 9:10, Psalm 27:8, Psalm 34:17, Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 43:2, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Corinthians 12:9, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "Faith And Suffering", "Trusting God"

Description

John Newton encourages the congregation to find strength in their afflictions, reminding them that the Lord loves and chastens those He loves. He urges them to not be moved by trials but to glory in their weaknesses, knowing that the power of Christ rests upon them. Newton emphasizes the importance of living a life of faith, trusting in God's deliverance, and finding comfort in Christ amidst troubles. He assures them that loving Jesus, even in their perceived inadequacy, is a sign of salvation and encourages them to trust Him more to deepen their love.

Transcript

At length, and without farther apology for my silence, I sit down to ask you how you fare. Afflictions I hear have been your lot; and if I had not heard so, I should have taken it for granted: for I believe the Lord loves you, and as many as He loves He chastens. I think you can say, afflictions have been good for you, and I doubt not but you have found strength according to your day; so that, though you may have been sharply tried, you have not been overpowered. For the Lord has engaged His faithfulness for this to all His children, that He will support them in all their trials: so that the fire shall not consume them, nor the floods drown them (1 Cor. x. 13; Isa. xliii. 2).

If you can say thus much, cannot you go a little further, and add, in the apostle's words, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear. I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me: yea, doubtless, I count all things loss and of no regard, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for when I am weak, then am I strong"? Methinks I hear you say, "God, who comforteth those who are cast down, has comforted my soul; and as my troubles have abounded, my consolations in Christ have abounded also. He has delivered, He does deliver, and in Him I trust that He will yet deliver me." Surely you can set your seal to these words. The Lord help you then to live more and more a life of faith, to feed upon the promises, and to rejoice in the assurance that all things are yours, and

shall surely work for your good.

If I guess right at what passes in your heart, the name of Jesus is precious to you, and this is a sure token of salvation and that of God. You could not have loved Him, if He had not loved you first. He spoke to you, and said, "Seek My face," before your heart cried to Him, "Thy face, O Lord, will I seek." But you complain, "Alas! I love Him so little." That very complaint proves that you love Him a great deal; for if you loved Him but a little, you would think you loved Him enough. A mother loves her child a great deal, yet does not complain for not loving it more; nay, perhaps she hardly thinks it possible. But such an infinite object is Jesus, that they who love Him better than parents or child, or any earthly relation or comfort, will still think they hardly love Him at all; because they see such a vast disproportion between the utmost they can give Him, and what in Himself He deserves from them. But I can give you good advice and good news: love Him as well as you can now, and ere long you shall love Him better. O when you see Him as He is, then I am sure you will love Him indeed! If you want to love Him better now while you are here, I believe I can tell you the secret how this is to be attained: Trust Him. The more you trust Him, the better you will love Him. If you ask, farther, How shall I do to trust Him? I answer, Try Him: the more you make trial of Him, the more your trust in Him will be strengthened. Venture upon His promises; carry them to Him, and see if He will not be as good as His word. But, alas! Satan and unbelief work the contrary way. We are unwilling to try Him, and therefore unable to trust Him; and what wonder, then, that our love is faint, for who can love at uncertainties?

If you are in some measure thankful for what you have received, and hungering and thirsting for more, you are in the frame I would wish for myself, and I desire to praise the Lord on your behalf. Pray for us. We join in love to you.

I am. &c.

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