



When something bad happens in the life of a new Christian, they will often say, “Lord, why is this happening to me?” When something bad happens in the life of a mature Christian, they will often say, “Lord, why is this happening to me?” Same question, but different motivations. The new Christian may think it unreasonable that a bad thing happened. But the mature Christian knows problems are part of life in a fallen world. His “Why?” question is to discern from God what he can learn from the difficult situation – how he might grow in faith.

It has been said that difficulties don’t *determine* who we are. Rather, they *reveal* who we are. Said another way, the same heat that softens butter can make mud hard as a brick. It all depends on how the thing being heated responds. The same with the human heart. Difficulties can soften one heart and harden another.

When the teenage Joseph was sold by his brothers into slavery, he no doubt asked the “Why?” question. At first, he may have thought, “What did I do to deserve this?” But later, his “Why?” likely turned into, “Oh, now I see why!” He realized God had sent him to Egypt to prepare a place for Jacob’s family to escape the famine in Canaan.

Joseph, in Egypt, and Daniel, in Babylon, both revealed their character to their pagan masters. Their difficulties caused the presence of God to be manifested through them. In the New Testament, no one endured more difficulties over a longer time than the apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 6:3-10; 11:23-29). He described his difficulties as being “hard-pressed,” “perplexed,” “persecuted,” and “struck down.” But never “crushed,” “in despair,” “forsaken,” or “destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). He called his troubles “the dying of the Lord Jesus” so that “the life of Jesus also may be manifested in [his] body” (verse 10). His troubles revealed the “treasure” of Christ within (verse 7).

When you experience difficulties in life, it’s not wrong to ask “Why?” Just make sure you’re asking for the right reason. Troubles in life are normal (Job 5:7). Our response will manifest Christ to the world – or not.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Mike Hosti 8/16, Tom Stevens 8/24, David Scoggin, Wanda Parker 8/27,
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**Grace is when God gives us good things that we don't deserve.
Mercy is when He spares us from bad things we deserve.
Blessings are when He is generous with both.
Truly, we can never run out of reasons to thank Him.
God is Good All The Time!**