

June 14, 2011
Charles Stanley's Life Principle #21
Obedience always brings blessing.

PRAYER FOCUS: _____

What is a blessing?

One way to describe a blessing is: any expression of God's goodness and love toward us. We typically limit our concept of blessings to things like answered prayer, supernatural provision, and other positive events. But sometimes God blesses us in the midst of difficulty with things like inner strength, new insight, or greater spiritual maturity.

What's happening when pain enters the life of an obedient believer?

Unconventional Blessings

When obedience doesn't lead to an expected result, look for one or more of these less obvious ways God may be working in your life.

1. An Adjustment of our Priorities

God uses disappointment to realign our focus. We might have set our eyes on something that was not His will or not yet in His timing. Or maybe we assigned too much importance to a worldly goal that is of little value to God.

Romans 12:1-2 Psalm 119:27

2. Spiritual Insight to His character

When life takes an unexpected turn, we are wise to ask what God may be trying to teach us about Himself.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

3. Greater Dependence on God

We cannot live the Christian life apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to obey God. But we frequently take back control of our lives, thinking we can manage without Him. Life's difficulties remind us how much we need the Lord.

Galatians 2:19-21

4. Opportunities to Prove the Lord's Faithfulness

People notice how you respond to life's tragedies and disappointments. When you allow God to carry you through difficulty, your life becomes a testimony of His power and goodness.

Paul & Silas in prison (Acts 16:19-34). What opportunity did God give them because they stayed focus on His purpose?

5. Greater Hunger for His Word

When things don't go well, we are more likely to dig deeper into the Bible, searching for answers, peace, and encouragement.

Psalm 119:71 2 Timothy 3:16-17

6. Peace and Joy

Regardless of the situation, we can be content and even happy. Why? Because our contentment is based upon trust in God, not possessions, achievements, or circumstances.

Philippians 4:11-13 Romans 15:13

*How abundant are the good things
that you have stored up for those who fear you,
that you bestow in the sight of all,
on those who take refuge in you.*
Psalm 31:19