

How to Be Thankful in Difficult Circumstances – Part 1

I. Why is it Difficult For us to be Thankful?

- A. Physical Pain
- B. “Impossible” Circumstances
- C. Envy – Looking at Others
- D. Misfortune/Disadvantage
- E. Expectations, Demands of Others

As Americans, our expectation is to live...

- Affluent
- Above Average
- Comfortable
- Happy
- Pain free
- Successful
- Master of our Domain

Tension between the perfect & imperfect.

II. How to be Thankful in Hardship

- A. Though hardship is a part of life, you can **R** _____ above depression, despair, disappointment, and defeat.

- B. **R** _____ in God’s Provision. Peace of mind comes when I relinquish the stress of trying to be something I’m not – God!”
He says, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” – Psalm 46:10 (NIV)
 - 1. **R** _____ Toward God’s Hope.
Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. – 1 Cor 9:24,25
 - Success is achievable.
 - Nothing and no one can separate us from God’s love and reward.

 - 2. **R** _____ on His Sustaining Strength.
Praise be to the Lord, for he has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him. The Lord is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one. Save your people and bless your inheritance; be their shepherd and carry them forever. – Psalm 28:6-9

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. – Isaiah 49:29-31

3. Be **R** _____ by Making Up Our Mind.
Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, “King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.” – Daniel 3:16-18
- a. We only lack peace of mind when we can’t make up our minds!
 - b. Everyone Serves Something/Someone!
 - i. Money
 - ii. Worry
 - iii. Parents’ expectations
 - iv. Lust
 - v. Image
- ...choose this day whom you will serve,... - Joshua 24:15*
4. **R** _____ Pride and **R** _____ in the Freedom of Humility.
For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. – Philippians 1:21
- a. I don’t **D** _____ special treatment now.
 - b. I can **D** _____ with Suffering that is Temporary.
...weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. – Psalm 30:5
 - c. I can Choose to **D** _____ an Attitude of Gratitude.
We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. – 2 Corinthians 4:8-10

Answers: II.A. Rise; B. Rest; 1. Run; 2. Rely; 3. Resolute; 4. Relinquish, Revel; a) Demand; b) Deal; c) Display