

Hearts of Love

Tom & Debbie Tillman "to touch the world for Jesus Christ"

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Hearts of Love is a non-profit ministry, dedicated to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ whenever and wherever we find open doors. Our first priority is to glorify God and lead whomever possible to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Please pray for us faithfully. We need your prayer, and we appreciate it more than we could ever say. Please consider us an extension of your ministry in this world, and support us with your prayer as such.

**May God richly
bless you!**

Tom & Debbie

Be Still, I Am Your God.

Have you ever felt overwhelmed... as if God has forgotten to give you even a small break between His seemingly never ending trials and tribulations? Does it ever feel as if all day, every day, over and over and over again... little things, big things, maddening things... until you even lash out at God, Himself?

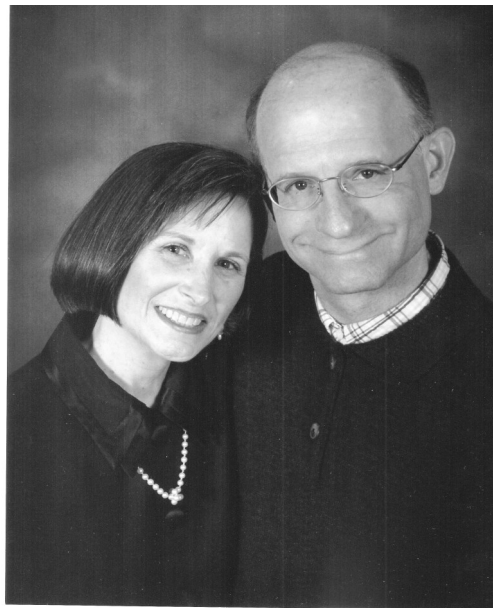
Perhaps you've finally fallen into the habit of becoming angry and even swearing at every little thing... blaming God for each one... or, perhaps, you only fail at these things sometimes... just once in a while... and, yet, you feel like such a failure every time you do.

Jeremiah felt overwhelmed; in fact, God inspired him to write it down for us to read and remember: 'see, O LORD, and consider; for I am become vile. ¹² Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by...

... behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. ¹³ From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaleth against them: he hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate and faint all the day. ¹⁴ The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand: they are wreathed, and come up upon my neck: he hath made my strength to fall, the LORD hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up... For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me' Lamentations 1:11

... 'the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me' ... that's how it feels, sometimes, isn't it. ... as if God's Holy Spirit, Whose job it is to comfort me, is far from me... where are You, Lord... don't You see?

'I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. ² He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. ³ Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the



*He has committed to
us the word of
Reconciliation.
Therefore, we are
Ambassadors for Christ.*

2 Corinthians 5:19,20

day. ⁴ *My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones.*
⁵ *He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail.*
⁶ *He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old.* ⁷ *He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy'*
 Lamentations 3

What is so difficult to understand, what doesn't seem to make sense, sometimes, is when we are encompassed about by trials but we know that it is not the result of our sinning.

That is, really, the point... trials are not meant to be punishment for sin, but, rather, trials are God's never-ending work in our lives as He seemingly relentlessly pours out trials upon us.

Here is where anger becomes the result: for an angry person, everything... every negative thing becomes the source of an angry outburst, an eruption of wrath, whereas to someone else, the same things are simply minor irritations that simply pass over them and are gone.

James wrote: 'Consider it all joy, my brothers *and sisters*, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.' James 1:2

The KJV says, 'Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.'

Patience! That is God's goal with every trial, whether large or small... patience! Above all, through all, in all, over all and under all... patience! James writes, 'when you encounter various trials,' not if, but **when...** all the time, in fact.

To a patient Christian, most trials don't seem like that big of a deal... they patiently trust that it is from the Lord's hand and He is walking through it with them.

To an angry Christian, every trial further displays their lack of patience.

Patience is what allowed the Lord Jesus Christ to walk through His 33 years on Earth and then to willingly walk through His entire torturous ordeal of death for us; He was patient. He did it because He loves us and that is the first and foremost expression of love: patience. '*Love is patient, love is kind...*' 1Corinthians 13:4

While some respond to trials with anger, others might respond with depression; both are sinful as both are rooted in pride. Both anger and depression begin with pride: 'I don't deserve this!'

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You might say, 'You don't understand my depression' No, I don't, but... isn't it true that, like anger, the root of depression is, unbelief: not believing God's Word and not trusting in the God Who inspired His Word... both anger and depression, being rooted in disbelief, are caused by one's not knowing God's Word.

I am depressed by trials/I am angry at trials... because I don't know and understand enough of God's Word to be able to believe that He loves me and that He is working all of this for my good and for His glory.

I know... there are types of depression which are rooted in an actual chemical/hormonal imbalance in the brain... that's not what I mean... although, just like any other health problem... God is certainly able to heal anything but that's not to say He always will heal everything because any honest Christian must admit that, even like Paul's 'thorn in the flesh,' there are physical problems that God has intended to use for our spiritual growth... especially in His work of producing patience in us.

Whether our 'go-to' response to trials is anger or depression or any other work of the flesh... its root is disbelief through not knowing, not studying and not applying God's Word. Don't misinterpret here: I am not accusing, I am revealingly divulging God's working in me.

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If we don't read and study God's Word enough, we can't know and understand His perfect love and constant care for us in and through every trial. Do you ever have dreams which you know are significant and have been designed by God to teach you, dreams which you'll certainly remember? Last night I dreamed: Debbie and I were with a couple we've been friends with for many years. We were together in some place... New York, actually. As we were there, it became evident that Debbie and the other husband were going to go out to dinner and then to a hotel for a time. To the other three, this seemed normal but not to me. The other wife said to me, 'Let's go to a Broadway Show.' Soon after, I called Debbie and she answered as they were having dinner together; she seemed impatient with me, not wanting to take my call. I cried out to her, saying, 'Don't do this... it will be a great harm to you... you may feel some short time of pleasure but immediately after you will feel such shame, grief and guilt; don't do this to yourself!' Suddenly she, and he, were back with us... they had never planned to go to a hotel, at all. I woke up, stood up from bed and I sensed God's voice; He said, '**Do you**

feel that... do you feel that grief inside? That's what you do to Me every time you sin!

I immediately dropped to my knees in confession and prayer; I've been so guilty through the years in not hungering for God and His Word, for not placing Him and His Word as my highest priority; I've been so guilty! In the dream, I was Jesus while Debbie was me. I called out to her with my concern being only with her wellbeing, not my own. She didn't want to hear from me... like I don't always want to hear from God. My pain and grief were obvious to me but I fail to understand the depth of what I do to God as I grieve His Holy Spirit and grieve Him which I do... far, far too often.

It's only been a few hours since the dream but even now, I recognize myself taking into account the Holy Spirit's counsel, guidance and His grief. I don't want to ever grieve the Holy Spirit and yet I have done so, so very often.

The Lord Jesus Christ always deals with us, and responds to us, in love, patience and kindness but we don't always respond to Him with love, patience and kindness, do we...

Perhaps you've thought, 'How does Tom know so much about me?' I do

because we're all the same to one degree or another. We all sin, we all feel guilty and we all want to walk in fellowship with God but our flesh, all too often, turns us away from the One Who loves us, Who cares for us and will uphold us in every trial, every day until He comes for us one day soon in the Rapture.

Even when we sin, He wants us to know, He loves us and to us, His children, He is ever forgivingly patient. 'This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. ²² It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. ²⁴ The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. ⁵ The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.'

Lamentations 3:21

P.S. Just so you don't get the wrong idea: Next month, Debbie and I will have been married for 50 years! God has taken us through an awful lot together. We are both 70; Debbie is lovely and can pass for far younger; I look in the mirror and see someone far older than I feel. I love her, truly, and would never look elsewhere; she loves me the same. Together, we are looking, daily, for Jesus' return as we seek to do His will in all that He sets before us.

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The Harvest is Great, but the laborers are few. *Matt 9:38*



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