

MYTH 2: GOD PROMISES AN EASIER LIFE WHEN YOU BECOME A CHRISTIAN

Select Passages • November 18, 2007 • Pastor Mike Newman

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1 Corinthians 10:13 (NLT) ¹³The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.

2 Corinthians 11:24-27 (NLT) ²⁴Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. ²⁶I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. ²⁷I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm.

2 Corinthians 12:7b-10 (NLT) So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. ⁸Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. ¹⁰That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Psalms 13 (NLT) ¹O LORD, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? ²How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? ³Turn and answer me, O LORD my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die. ⁴Don’t let my enemies gloat, saying, “We have defeated him!” Don’t let them rejoice at my downfall. ⁵But I trust in your unfailing love. I will rejoice because you have rescued me. ⁶I will sing to the LORD because he is good to me.

1 Peter 4:12 (NLT) ¹²Dear friends, don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.

What do you think about the statement God promises an easier life when you become a Christian?

Four Biblical Principles:

- 1) _____—including followers of Christ—experiences suffering, sickness, death, consequences of poor choices, injustice, problems with money, and many other challenging things throughout their lives.
 - ✓ See 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Corinthians 11:24-27, and 2 Corinthians 12:7b-10

- 2) The Bible teaches that followers of Christ should not only expect hard times, but may even have to experience _____.
 - ✓ See Psalm 13, 1 Peter 4:12, Hebrews 10:32-34, James 1:2-3, 2 Corinthians 8:1-2, 2 Corinthians 6:4-5, and Hebrews 11:32-40

- 3) Following Christ on this earth guarantees a _____ when we die that will be free of all problems, sickness, and trouble.
 - ✓ See Revelation 21:3-5 and 2 Corinthians 4:16-18



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Hebrews 10:32-34 (NLT) ³²Think back on those early days when you first learned about Christ. Remember how you remained faithful even though it meant terrible suffering. ³³Sometimes you were exposed to public ridicule and were beaten, and sometimes you helped others who were suffering the same things. ³⁴You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail, and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever.

James 1:2-3 (NLT) ²Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.

2 Corinthians 8:1-2 (NLT) ¹Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. ²They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity.

2 Corinthians 6:4-5 (NLT) ⁴In everything we do, we show that we are true ministers of God. We patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind. ⁵We have been beaten, been put in prison, faced angry mobs, worked to exhaustion, endured sleepless nights, and gone without food.

Hebrews 11:32-40 (NLT) ³²How much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets. ³³By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight. ³⁵Women received their loved ones back again from death. But others were tortured, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free. They placed their hope in a better life after the resurrection. ³⁶Some were jeered at, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in prisons. ³⁷Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half, and others were killed with the sword. Some went about wearing skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated. ³⁸They were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground. ³⁹All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised. ⁴⁰For God had something better in mind for us, so that they would not reach perfection without us.

4) God promises to provide _____ _____ to face whatever we experience while living on this earth.

- ✓ See Psalm 46:1, John 16:33, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, and 2 Corinthians 12:8-10

When a follower of Christ faces troubles and problems, God steps in and provides supernatural love, care, promise, and strength.

Revelation 21:3-5a (NLT) ³I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. ⁴He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever." ⁵And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!"

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NLT) ¹⁶That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. ¹⁷For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! ¹⁸So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

Psalm 46:1 (NLT) God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.

John 16:33 (NLT) ³³I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NLT) ³All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. ⁴He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

2 Corinthians 12:8-10 (NLT) ⁸Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. ¹⁰That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

How to Begin a Relationship with Jesus

Believe that Jesus is who He said He was, that He came and died on the cross, and that He arose from the dead three days later.

Acknowledge your sins and ask God to forgive you.

Submit yourself to follow God's teachings for life.

Express your desire to have this kind of relationship to God.

For more information about what it means to become a follower of Christ or what to do after you make a decision to follow Jesus, speak to one of the elders or pastors following the service today (they can be found by the prayer room in the church lobby) or contact the church office (717-762-7147) to set up an appointment. You may also request materials and find additional information to help you on your spiritual journey on our website by clicking on the "Beginning Your Journey" link.

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