



The Person – Lesson 3

The Process is Normal

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Read Romans 4:18-21

As we look around the world today, we see so much tragedy, so much discord, violence, depravity, and heartache. When we are faced with the brokenness of our world, it gets us asking the question: "What should our response be as Christians?" One answer that comes to the forefront is this: As Christians, it is imperative that we *fully live out* what we are called to do. We are meant to be the hands and feet of Christ on this planet, ministering to the hurting and the broken. But here's the catch: Living through the process of being molded for your calling is hard. How do we do it?

1. A Revelation of Love

- Before anything else, we must have a revelation of the Love God has for us. This has to become the core of our belief system. Once we truly believe and understand "how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is" (Eph. 3:18, NLT), we can face any situation with confidence, *because we know that we are loved with an unshakeable love.*
- This revelation of the singularity of God's love for us is so evident in the scriptures. And even if we get each nugget of truth about His Love deep down in our souls, it is still too great for us to ever understand (Eph. 3:19). That's some pretty amazing LOVE!
 - His love is everywhere, and is inescapable! See Psalm 139:7-9

2. Engaging with God in the Process

- **Each one of us will go through a process**, a journey with God on this path to our calling. The question is, will we choose to opt out of it, or will we choose to engage with God in it?

- **It's in the waves of disappointment**, the dark nights of the soul, and the long seasons of waiting that we can decide whether or not to allow God to refine us and forge us.
 - *I have refined you, but not as silver is refined. Rather, I have refined you in the furnace of suffering.* Isaiah 48:10, NLT
- **When we encounter seasons of suffering**, we rest in the love of God and trust that He has not brought us to this place to be destroyed – He has brought us here to be refined. He will never ever make us walk through hardship alone. He is always with us, and we need not be afraid.
 - *"Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you."* Isaiah 43:1b-2, NLT

3. The Process is Normal

- **This difficult process of walking out the calling of God** on your life is normal, and when we encounter hardship on the journey, we should, in fact, *rejoice*.
 - *Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.* 1 Peter 4:12-13, NLT

4. How You Come out of It Is Unique

- **You calling is certain** (Rom. 11:29), but there is one way to miss it – if you opt out of the process and follow the way of the flesh instead (*For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom. 8:7-8, ESV*). This is a real danger in our age of quick comforts and fleshly gratifications. As Paul exhorted Timothy, so we should exhort ourselves: *Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith.* 1 Timothy 6:20, NLT

Conclusion:

God chose and called you before you were even born (Galatians 1:15). He has a good plan and purpose for your life (Jeremiah 29:11). But on this earth, you will have trouble, but take heart – for Jesus has overcome the world (John 16:33). The process you are in to get to the promise is so normal for the believer. Take a cursory glance through Abraham's story, and you will see the prototype for this faith journey! It will not be easy; in fact, it will be fraught with difficulty. But we grab hold of the promises of the Word of God by faith, and know that God is for us, know they His promises *will* come to pass, and we can endure anything knowing that is true.

We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. Romans 5:3-5, NLT

Reflect:

- What is the promise you are waiting on?
- How can you apply the Word of God to your life in the circumstance that you're in right now, putting faith in what He says instead of in what you see?
- Looking back on your past, can you see how God has come through for you, how He has strengthened you and refined you in the midst of difficult situations?