

# **Helps to Holiness: The Discipline of Difficulty**

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## I. Introduction.

A. Text: Hebrews 12:5-14, II Corinthians 12.

B. Most of us do not realize that we are often quarreling against God.

## II. How God uses difficulty to create holiness in our lives.

A. The revelation of the source of our difficulties.

1. From God to build.

a. The purpose is to deepen, discipline and to detect areas of weakness that we need to work on. (James 1, II Corinthians 12:5-6, I Peter 6)

b. We should not always view difficulty as from Satan.

2. From Satan to destroy.

3. From self to comfort.

B. The refining process of discipline.

1. Believers are in the process of becoming like Christ.

2. We need holiness. (I Peter 1:15)

3. Difficulty is a help to holiness. (Malachi 3:2)

a. The refining process is meant to expose the problem.

b. It is meant to enlighten the believer as to what God wants to do about the problem.

c. It is meant to empty of us of the attitude that hinders us. (II Corinthians 12:9)

d. It is meant to enlarge us of God's vision for our lives.

e. It is meant to enrich us.

f. It is meant to establish us. (I Peter 5:10)

4. The refining process must be daily.

C. The reaction to difficulties.

1. Grieving.
2. Heaviness.
3. Despitefulness.
4. Losing heart.
5. Trying to escape.
6. Rejoicing, this is the right response.
  - a. When a person praises God at the bottom, his heart changes.
  - b. Rejoicing is part of the cure.

D. The results of difficulties.

1. Profit.
2. Partaking in His holiness.
3. Peace.
4. Becoming precious.

E. Avoiding God's refining process results in depriving oneself of building the necessary muscle one needs to be the person that God wants one to be. Struggle is essential to growth.

**Application questions:**

1. What is the purpose of life's difficulties when they come from God?

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2. Can difficulty result in becoming less holy? Explain.

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3. What challenges are you facing right now? How can you practically plan to rejoice in God this week for this trial?

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