

The Trial of Our Faith

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1. Tonight the message is “The Trial of Our Faith.” I want to read a few portions of Scripture... We have one, first of all, in the book of 1 Peter. And in 1 Pet 1:7 It says:

- (7) That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire...

That what be tried with fire? Gold? No, your faith. I told you that mountain-moving faith looked toward a God Who raised the dead, which ‘raising of the dead’ meant that the extremest of conditions would be met by faith. So, there you see it again. I haven’t told you a lie. Everything I tell you dovetails.

- (7) That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it (this faith) be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

And that’s what Peter said.

2. Now, what did James say? James 1:2-8. (We’ve read it before.)

- (2) My brethren, count it all (pure) joy (‘All joy’ means ‘pure joy’.) when you fall into divers temptations.

Now the word ‘all’, I want you to understand, means nothing mixed in there. Pure joy means ‘pure joy’. How would you like to have pure joy? That means nothing mixed with it, joy that is pure, no possible slippage in the gear, so to speak—no alloy, no diminishing—pure joy, like you say ‘pure pork’. Pure pork sausage means there is no beef and no bread crumbs. It’s all pork. Well, that is what the word ‘pure’ means here—nothing but joy. It says you are to count it pure joy when you fall into divers temptations (testings).

- (3) Knowing this, that the trying of your faith (There it is again.) worketh patience.
- (4) But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

That’s enough to read from there; I just want to show you that your faith gets tried.

3. Turn to Rom 5:1:

- (1) Therefore being justified (Not being justified, you have been justified.) (by faith), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:
- (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
- (3) And not only [so], but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;
- (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope:
- (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

4. Now this is a most important Scripture, and we are going to deal from It. Before we do, I want to read It from other translations in order to get a better understanding. Many words in the King James Version were not properly researched, or they were used in a day hundreds of years ago and have lost their meaning. So, I am going to read it from various translations, which are more modern, in order to give you a better understanding of the Scripture, and you can research these words for yourself in a lexicon or some dictionary, or whatever you choose.

a. The “Weymouth” translation says this: (And I like this.)

- (1) We exult... (‘To glory’ means to exult. If you glory in something you are exulting in it. The word ‘exult’ means ‘to crow’.)
- (2) We exult in hope of seeing God’s glory.
- (3) And not only so, we exult in such afflictions as is ours; knowing as we do, afflictions produce endurance;
- (4) Endurance, ripeness of character, and ripeness of character, hope:
- (5) And this hope never disappoints because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

b. “Moffatt” translation:

- (1) Through him we have access into this grace wherein we have our standing,
- (2) And we triumph in the hope of the glory of God;
- (3) Not only so (but) we triumph even in our troubles, knowing that troubles produce endurance,
- (4) (And) endurance character (That’s the second time you notice that is mentioned.) and character produces hope,
- (5) A hope which never disappoints, since God’s love floods our hearts through the Holy Ghost given to us.

c. “Way” (an Oxford Translator, “Moody Bible Press Publication.”) Yes, when Greek students choose a word, many of them choose the same word, and you may rest upon it; that is the best translation for this time. Notice again:

- (2) We exult in the hope of something higher yet—the glory of God’s presence. (Now, remember; this is a liberal man saying this.)
- (3) I will further say that we actually exult in such afflictions (See? Trials that are ours!)
- (4) Knowing as we do that afflictions develop unflinching endurance, and endurance develops tested strength, and tested strength the habit of hope.
- (5) This hope is no delusive one, as proved by the fact that the brimming river of God’s love has already over-flowed into our hearts, on-driven by the Holy Ghost.

Now, you will notice in these cases there are some words that differ, but not once is the conclusion different: the hope which never disappoints because of God's love overflowing in our hearts.

5. Now, as we study this I want you to notice some very special language in this portion of Scripture; and, if the Holy Ghost did not show you this, you could read it many times and miss it. This is the Scripture that God brought me back to, year after year and time after time, until one day He showed me what I wanted to know and could never find before in the Word of God. You will notice that this part of Scripture starts with hope. It says, "We exult in the hope of seeing God's Glory." But it not only starts in hope, but it ends with hope; and then, it spirals somehow through a spiritual process to a level which is beyond hope, that is, the level of love.

6. Now, let's examine this carefully according to what we have read. We'll just look at it briefly, however, as we examine it, but it will be a careful examination. It says, "We stand in grace, and we hope for the glory of God." What does that mean? The word 'hope' means 'earnest expectation'. What does the 'glory of God' mean? It means exactly what it meant when Jesus was here upon earth, and they came to him and said, concerning the man who was blind, "Who did sin? Did his parents sin that he was born blind, or did he sin that he became blind?"

And Jesus said, "Neither. The fact is, he was born blind, and he was born blind for the glory of God."

In other words the glory of God was involved in this man's affliction because God was going to do something which He could not do unless the man had the affliction. I have been teaching that all week... you can't miss it.

7. Here is a picture in Romans 5 of a man exulting, crowing in what he found in the good Word of God applicable to him and his situation, which was a predicament. Remember, I have taught you: there can be no promise without a necessity. There can be no promise without a problem. Face it once for all: there is no need of a promise without a problem. God cannot alleviate that which needs no alleviation. God can comfort no heart that needs no comfort. He can provide for no man that needs no help. He can heal no man that needs no healing. He can save no man that needs no salvation.

Are you satisfied? Huh? Are you? No, quit bluffing! Are you satisfied? From now on, when you think of promise, you are going to think of affliction; is that correct? Make up your mind. We can close the meeting and go home now as a bunch of back-slidden failures, or we'll sit around and find us some truth. Far too long we have fooled with the Word of God. This is no time to fool; it is too late. Because some preacher or somebody sold you a bill of goods, or some devil has, or you sold yourself... We can't fool with that.

The Bible says that this man exulted in the Word of God as was applicable to his situation. He needs God, and he finds that God has the answer. It goes on to say that he received it with great, great joy. But then, the trial sets in. But, when the trial sets in, the Scripture says he endured it, and he came through a better man for it. This enlargement of heart and life has an effect upon that man's earnest expectation which is called 'hope', because it now becomes indestructible, for It says it never disappoints. And from this experience he goes to the overflowing, manifested love of God in his life.

8. You say, "That's a wonderful experience. I want that." You can have it, but you have to go through the same process that man went through. Let's examine it word for word.

The Scripture says that this man exults in the hope of the glory of God. He is crowing over the fact that God had revealed to him that He is not only able to extricate him from his..., and does sincerely expect God to do what He said, because God can't lie. He is not only omnipotent (able to do it), but He is immutable. He will do it, because He swore by Himself, and He stands behind His Word to perform It. He exults in It, and I must do it also. It is thrilling and rejoicing to know that God has the answer for us;

and that is exactly what God has in store for us now, because He says over here in Hebrews 6, which we have read before (at least some of the verses). And verse 16 says:

- (16) For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife
- (17) Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed [it] by an oath:
- (18) That by two immutable things, in which [it was] impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation (comfort), who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope (earnest expectation) set before us:
- (19) Which [hope] we have as an anchor of the (our) soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.

Our expectation is centered in Christ himself and can't fail. And he proved he can't fail, because he conquered sin and death and rose again and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. And It says our fore-runner, Christ, is within the veil, and our expectation is anchored in him. Why? Because he is the High Priest of things to come.

9. Now this man has seen that God has the answer for him, and he rejoices in it; he exults in it; he's just thrilled about it.

Now, logically, the human mind, by reasoning (And we are trying to be reasonable.) will say, "All right, I am set free. I have gone to God for the answer; I am set free. We are gifted so that our needs are met."

But, what does the Bible say? The Bible says, "No, that's not what happens: a trial sets in." In spite of our prayer of faith, the answer does not come immediately; and, instead of things getting better, they will either remain at status quo, or they may even get worse. That's exactly what Scripture says.

10. Now, the next portion of the same verse reads, "We exult in such trials and afflictions as ours." The Bible says that is what this man did. When the afflictions come he got all shouting happy about them, too. That is one thing I can never figure out about shouting meetings—Methodists, Pentecostals, or God knows what they are. I could never figure that out, because in a church anybody can shout and do anything. And ho! you can cut a rug, bless God, that would put a dance hall to shame; but get out there where the trials are, and there is not one shout in the camp or one smiling face, but just one grump! grump! grump! What happened to God? The Scripture said this man exults—he crows as well in the trials as he crowed over the promises. He shouted just as much; he danced just as hard; he said, "Whoopee!" just as exhilarated as he said it before. In fact, he is a Billy Brae who was so happy he literally danced down the street; and one day his wife said, "Billy, I wants thee to know that the flour barrel is getting empty."

"Well," he said, "Wife, I wants thee to know, let it get empty. I shall stick my head in the barrel and shout, "Glory!" through the bunghole."

And she said, "Thou hast better see that thou do it when the time cometh."

So, one day she said, "Billy, the barrel is empty," and he said, "Wife, if you will stick your head in the barrel with me, we will both shout, "Glory!" through the bunghole." And they did, and God filled the barrel.

11. Now, look! There isn't any man living who is given permission to rend the Word of God. For anybody to take away the second part of this verse is to rend the Word of God. If you can shout, "Glory!"

over God being your healer; over God being a provider, over the promises of God, then you are duty-bound to shout, “Glory!” over the fact that you are tested and tried, because that is exactly what the Scripture says to do. Let me show you, brother and sister. I am not giving you my own ideas but the Word of God. So, we come to Heb 11:17-19, where It says:

- (17) By faith, Abraham, when he was tried... (Abraham’s faith was tried.) By faith, Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,
- (18) Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:
- (19) Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Now, let me ask you this question. Don’t answer, but think! When was Abraham tried by God? Before God gave him the promise or after God gave him the promise? Abraham was tried ‘after’ God gave him the promise. If you think the promise of God will keep away the trial, you have missed the boat. The promise of God will bring the trial; it says so right here in the Book.

12. Let’s see what else the Book says. You know when It says, “It is written: in the Book, It doesn’t mean somewhere in the Bible. According as I understand it, (I have been told by scholars!) It means just exactly as It was written of the cross: “It is finished.”

“It is written” is identical in meaning; that is, not so much the meaning as a word for word translation, but the thought. “It is written”—“It is finished”—“I have spoken,” said God. That’s It! And It will stand, and It is the only thing that will stand. We had better stand with It.

13. So, we go to Ps 105:19. It says:

- (19) Until the time that his Word came: the Word of the Lord tried him (Joseph).

You say, “Bro. Vayle, I’m going to use that Word of promise and get results.”

You’d better also say, “Bro. Vayle, I’m going to use that Word of promise and get tried.”

God said to Joseph: “Sun, moon, stars, bow down! Sheaves bow down!”

He came and told his people, and they said, “You really think so?”

He said, “I am sure it is.”

They said, “We’ll find out.”

So, you need God for the trouble which comes from believing His Word? Joseph got hated. That’s a nice feeling. I’m getting used to it, I hope (cross my fingers). Joseph got sold into slavery. He got lied about...falsely accused...persecuted...put in prison. Until the Word that God gave him by promise personally came to pass, he was tried by that same Word.

14. Let’s see if I can find over here something. Hebrews 6:15 says concerning Abraham:

- (15) And so, after he had (after he had) patiently endured, Then (and only then) he obtained the promise. (God’s Word tried him.)

Now, why is it that we can exult? Why is it that we can exult in the trials of our lives and take the trials in an exultant, rejoicing manner? In the first place, we have the measure of the faith of the Lord

Jesus Christ, which was given for this very thing and cannot operate without; it can move mountains and raise the dead. That ought to take care of it. Also, it puts things in the past tense, because God cannot fail, giving us the rest of faith while the trials go on—assurance.

15. But, also, there's a second thing, and that is, according to Scripture, It says, "We know something." And that is what's wrong with Christians. They don't know anything, hardly, anymore. Now the old-timers did. The old Puritans knew the Word of God. The old scholars really knew something. But our modern people, they don't know for nothing. The Bible says these people knew something.

Now, what is it they knew? Well, that's the next step. They knew that tribulation worked patience. That's what they knew. They understood what we're trying to arrive at tonight; and that's an understanding of why God tries our faith, how He does it, what the end results are, and what we are to understand about it to go through the process in order to arrive at a happy situation in the Lord Jesus Christ. They knew that the trial of their faith worked patience; they knew that the only way anybody can get patience is by being tried. No other way.

16. So, we turn to Heb 10:32-39, and It says:

(32) But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated...

What illuminates the man? "The entrance of thy word giveth light." (Ps 119:130a).

You say, "Bro. Vayle, the Holy Ghost gives me light."

Don't be ridiculous! The Holy Ghost doesn't give you light. The Holy Ghost is a Person, and He brings you the Word, which gives you the light; because, if you have the Holy Ghost and shut yourself away from the Word, you won't get light, even though you've got the Holy Ghost.

You say, "Can I do that?"

You're capable of shutting off the things of God. You are! The Word brings light. "The entrance of thy Word giveth (bringeth) light."

And It says in Hebrews [10]:

(32) But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated (The Word of promise came to you.) ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

(33) Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

When you are a Christian they are going to go after you, for your own sake, because you love God; or they are going to fight someone else that you have conversation with, you are living with, or associated with, and they will fuss at you because of that. That is exactly what Paul told you. Now, he said, "Ye had compassion of me in my bonds and took joyful the spoiling of your goods, knowing..." [Heb 10:34]

17. Now, how many of you tonight can be happy when you are despoiled? We get pretty 'ouchy' as any man living. If I want to give it to you, I'm generous; but, if you want to take it...? It may not be exactly that I am stingy, but you see I'm right-handed, and I keep my money in my left hand pocket. It's not too easy to get it. See?

Now the Bible says that you rejoice because you know something. You take joyful the fact you're spoiled. Why? They knew something; they knew something. They knew that they had in heaven [Hebrews 10]:

(35) A better and enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence (faith in the Word of God) which hath great recompense of reward."

(36) For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

When do you get the promise? **After** you are **tried** and **endure**.

18. Now, for years we have been taught 'live endurance', haven't we? They say, "Now you don't need to sit down there and suffer," and they appeal to your greed. They take out a check and say, "Fill in this check for fifty or a hundred. God will give it back a hundred-fold."

Now, that is not just exactly a lie, but it ain't the truth, honey! They appeal to greed. Oh, I know. I've been to their meetings. I get their magazines. They send out anointed pocket books. If that is not the same as getting a relic from the Catholic Church, I'll eat my shirt. If that's not paganism, I don't know what paganism is. If that's not substituting a rabbit's foot for God, I don't know what it's all about. We get it all the time. If you don't know their names, I'll give you their names. I have a right to, because I've got their magazine with their name on it. It's no secret.

It's not W.V., it's Jean, isn't? What is it, Dallas, that does it? Oh, surely it can't be just Texas that does it. You've got them here in North Carolina; don't worry. Just like I've got them in Ohio. And they appeal to you [with] "You don't need to go through trials. We are here to take your trials off you."

19. And I'm not saying you can't get healed. I'm not saying God's not doing something for you. But I am saying that, just before you get the promises of God, you are going to suffer, because God said so. There aren't any shortcuts. [There] never have and never will be. See? It says that 'after'...

You say, "I need healing."

God says, "You need patience."

"I have to have some money."

God says, "You need patience."

"I need to get my family in shape."

God says, "You need patience."

I'm going to tell you one thing: I've never seen God back up from His Word yet. He backs It up. He does not back off from It. And I never saw a man to beat Him yet, either. That's why one day a lot of folks are going to stand in judgment and say, "I prophesied." And He will say, "So did Balaam."

"We healed the sick," they said.

"You sure did, but so did Judas."

He'll say, "I never knew you." [Mt 7:33] God only has respect for those who preach the word. You stick to His Word, because that is what God says.

20. Over here in the book of James you have the very same thing. James 1:2-4:

- (2) My brethren, count it all (pure) joy when ye fall into divers temptations;
- (3) Knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience.
- (4) But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

It says here you will always want things all your life, until you get patience. Once you get patience you will never lack another thing. Whew! That's tough preaching; I think we all had better go home. That's the lesson that Job learned, isn't it? We won't read about Job. We read about Job the other night. We will read about him later on, maybe.

21. Let's go to Dt 8:2. We've got it here. Now:

- (2) And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee.

Now, don't blame it on the devil. Hey! Who is your shepherd? Huh? God. Then, why blame the devil? Whose hand are you in? God's. Then, why blame the devil? I'm not telling you to blame God. [I'm] just trying to show you something.

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord..." Notice It says 'way'; not 'ways', but 'way'. There is one way God leads: 'way' not 'ways'; and there is only one end to it. Our way will bring many things which are various forms of death, but God's way brings one thing.

- (2) And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee (through) these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, [and] to prove thee, to know what [was] in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no.
- (3) And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only...

What happened when they just wanted loaves and fishes from God? They backslid, didn't they? [They] couldn't take the teaching; couldn't take the rest. You don't live by bread alone. You don't live just by these promises here. You've got to live by what goes with the promise. See? That's why nobody is living good these days, because they all eat de-natured food. They take the potatoes now and they dehydrate them, and they take everything good out; they add chemicals to them, and what do you do? You don't bother with spuds any more. You go down and you get French's Fluffy Potatoes in a little thing and pour them in water and feed yourself and your kids on 'gunk'—pure, unadulterated 'gunk', not fit for a sewer, let alone the human body.

22. You know what? That's the way man always does things. He takes everything out of the promises of God, and he tries to put it right where he wants it. You can't do that. [It] won't work. Look at verse 15: "Who led thee through that great wilderness..." Who? Who's leading? God's leading! Where is He leading them to? The Promised Land! Oh, isn't it beautiful? What do you want? You want the promise? So did they.

How're you going to get it?

"Oh, I'm going to pray the prayer of faith. Hallelujah! And I'm going to go flitting in."

Oh, are you? I've got news (for you): Someone with a shotgun knows how to get those high-flying birds. You know the Bible? There's not only the place where It says, "They shall mount up with wings as eagles," but it also says: "They walk." It also says "They sit," and they also "stand," too. It also says

“they get cast down.” Huh? Who? (That’s God.) “...Led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions.”

“Oh,” you say, “I can’t read It that way, because I don’t like It.”

“Who led thee through a beautiful, lush valley, so quiet, so sweet, and there were birds and butterflies, and lots of water, and there was that money tree; and, of course, there was even a cigarette tree...(If you don’t think that is bad for you.) and a little wine for your stomach’s sake.”

Is that what It says? Why read It that way?

You say, “I don’t read It that way.”

Then, don’t get the connotations as though you read It that way; or don’t ignore It, because God does not change His ways. The Bible warns us in Eccl 3:14-15:

- (14) I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.
- (15) That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.

God does not change His ways. It says [Dt 8:15-16]:

- (15) Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, [wherein were] fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where [there was] no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;
- (16) Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, (in order) that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good...

But you say, “God’s got a funny way about doing things good.” That’s why He said [Isaiah 55]:

- (8) For my thoughts [are] not your thoughts, neither [are] your ways my ways, saith the LORD.
- (9) For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

And we know that some of the heavens are millions of light years away and trillions of miles from here. So, forget your way and get a hold of God’s and accept it as the natural way of Christian living.

23. Now this process of developing faith is not actually a strange desire of God to put us through. See? Because a man with God back of him, and the measure of faith, can be patient. He can’t lose, because he is “more than conqueror,” he’s invulnerable, he’s invincible, if he only knew it.

For God to try us is not strange! Now, if God sent a man or boy on a job, that would be different. For us to tell somebody who is a brick mason and doesn’t know one piano note, ‘A’ from ‘B’, to sit down and play, that’s wrong, because you are asking that person to do what he can’t do. But, when God leads us His way, it is because we are equipped and well able to go God’s way, because God is not a ruthless tyrant. He is a good God Who does good things.

24. Now, what’s the next step? The next step is that this man endures; and by his endurance becomes patient. And, because he is patient, something else happens. And the Bible calls it ‘maturity’, or ‘ripeness

of character'. Remember what Bro. Branham said not long ago? He said, "The wheat is in the chaff, but it is green, and it's got to mature." And, how is it going to mature? We are going to be tried as we have never been tried in our lives, so get ready for it.

25. I'm going to say something here, and I want you to take it in the way it is said, because it is going to be on tape; and I am going to be criticized, and I mean criticized. You believe that Bro. Branham was a real prophet of God with insight? You believe he would not lie—he would not lie to me, and he would not lie to you? Bro. Branham did not know if the tent was real or a symbol. Many people were convinced it was not a symbol but was real. He told me he did not know. I believe that the tent ministry's come and gone and they did not know it, because the little tabernacle of the Bible is a little frame building made out of wood with skins on it. But, when you talk about a 'tent of the congregation', that is not the tabernacle. The little tabernacle contained the Holy of Holies; and in it he said, "I'll meet you there, and the others will have to go the same way you went, and they'll come out whole."

In other words it is a step to the Resurrection. Now here is something I don't want you to misunderstand, because I don't know too much about these things. He did tell me this one thing: he said, "Lee, if there is anything to the tent, I've got two men picked. And I pick you to teach the preachers in the morning, but want you to teach faith to the people in the afternoon."

I preached twice to the preachers; and no man in his ministry has ever done that except me. I'm just making a bare, bald statement. You can take it or leave it. I put no meaning on it, especially, but he said, "Teach the ministers doctrine." I taught two mornings on doctrine and I went back to teaching faith; and I'm teaching you faith in God. I'm saying, "If you believe the prophet of God, you'd better believe what God's Word said, because, you see, character comes by the trial of your faith—by you becoming patient; and the "wheat is green."

26. This is the most characterless age that God has ever allowed to be produced in this world. If you can find character today, brother/sister, you are finding the highest thing in this world. But you can't find it today. The churches don't have it, and the world doesn't have it. The kids in school said that Charles Van Doren had a right to cheat, be prompted, and to make all that money, if he could get away with it. It was just too bad he got caught.

They said, "The government ought to do more to help us than not help us. We ought to have the government do things for us. We don't need to be independent."

Lying, gouging, chiseling, murdering. And the church is 'green'. It hasn't got character. Why? Because the church has been taught, "You don't need to suffer." Now, come on, you know what I'm talking about. They're taught a short cut. My brother/sister, character cannot come apart from suffering. It says in Heb 5:7-9 concerning Jesus:

- (7) Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared (He was not heard because he cried and sobbed and fasted—he feared);
- (8) Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;
- (9) And being made perfect, (How? By suffering...to get patience...to get character...and only then) he became the author of eternal salvation...

Even Jesus Christ had to suffer to develop character.

27. Let us turn to Job 5:17-27.

- (17) Behold, happy (That means ‘blessed’, ‘fortunate’, ‘successful’.) is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:
- (18) For God maketh sore, and God bindeth up: God woundeth, and God’s hands make whole.
- (19) He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.
- (20) In famine (Famine? Yes, famine: we talked about it this morning. God) shall redeem thee from death: and in war (Yes, there’s going to be war.) from the power of the sword.
- (21) Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: (But it’s going to be there.) neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.
- (22) At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.
- (23) For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.
- (24) And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle [shall be] in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.
- (25) Thou shalt know also that thy seed [shall be] great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.
- (26) Thou shalt come to [thy] grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

When does a shock “cometh in season?” When it is mature. It’s dry; it’s not green; it’s got character. What it’s got now is life. [It’s] now ready, as it were, for another cycle. It’s ready for planting, that it might come forth in a life. In other words you go into your grave; you are ready for the resurrection. See? [Job 5]

- (27) Lo this, we have searched it, so it [is]; hear it, and know thou [it] for thy good.

28. What’s “for thy good?” That God can only develop character in you by suffering. Let’s turn to the book of Psalms—Ps 84:4-7, and It says:

- (4) Blessed [are] they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.
- (5) Blessed [is] the man whose strength [is] in thee; in whose heart [are] the ways [of them].
- (6) [Who] passing through the valley of Baca (the valley of tears, the valley of sorrow, the valley of testings, the valley of trials)...(What does It say?) make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

Now, Ps 94:12-13:

- (12) Blessed [is] the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;
- (13) That thou mayest give him rest...(How do you get rest? Through your faith in God...the trial of faith. How? By the trial of your faith.) That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

29. Let's turn to 1 Peter. I'm sort of jumping around in the Book but I just want to bring out certain verses, because they tell the story and every Word of God is true, and every Word of God has power in It. 1 Pet 5:6-11, and It says:

- (6) Humble yourselves (thyselves) therefore under the mighty hand of God.

What does It say?

- (6) Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

In other words God is going to bring you down by His Own Hand and, then, lift you up.

- (7) Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

See what we are talking about? Now:

- (8) Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

How does he devour them? By the people thinking that their sorrow is too much for them, and they get swallowed up. Now:

- (9) Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are (being) accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. (Not one misses it.)
- (10) But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle [you].

30. You say, "I want that, patience, without suffering, so I won't mind suffering then."

I'm sorry, honey, but you get it by suffering. You don't get it to enable you to suffer; you suffer in order to get it. You don't get money in order to go to work; you go to work in order to get money. Huh? Now, don't try to change God's order of scriptures. Oh, don't try your short-cuts.

"Bro. Vayle, I'm going to pray and fast and get the oil on my hands."

Well, you can get a tub if you like and take a bath. I don't care what you do.

You say, "I'm going to join 'youth endeavors'."

You do what you want. Go ahead! Balaam went his way and got his feet crushed. Bully for him!

31. I'm talking this way to stir us up to get us to realize this is how you get what you are after. You don't tell God how to get it. You get it by God's way or you won't get it. You suffer, and if you're not willing

to suffer, you're not going to get it. The thing you are throwing aside is God's way, which is best; and it's the only way God is going to give it to you, because, you see, God can't change.

You say, "Bro. Vayle, I believe in dispensations, and God changes."

Well, you don't believe right, because God doesn't change either in what He does or what He is; because you do what you are, so therefore, if God changes what He is doing, He changes what He is.

32. Let me show you how stupid is this thought of dispensations. Huh! All right, in the Garden of Eden, it was what? Innocence? God put woman and man, Adam and Eve, and He said, "Now I just wonder what they will do."

The devil got turned loose, and the devil caught them. Then, God said, "Oh, oh, oh! Isn't that too bad? Look what they did."

That's the way you read the Book...some of you guys who believe in dispensations. So, He turned around and said, "Well, I'll put them under conscience. Let's see what they do."

So, Cain up and killed Abel.

"Oh, how shocking, how shocking!"

He's lost two rounds now. Human government brought on the flood. Promise, faith, love didn't work. Grace hasn't done it. Six-time loser is God, according to you people who believe in dispensations. Now, listen; would you bet on a horse that lost six races and bet on the seventh? Huh? No, you wouldn't do that. Then, why bet on a God Who is a six-time loser? Because that's what He is if you believe in dispensations, and God tries something each time different to see if it will work.

33. Oh, brother/sister, come on! God has never changed His way, or He Himself would be changed. The way of God is suffering. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I've got to tell you. I wish I could be like the modern preachers and say, "You don't want to go to hell."

Well, who does? I told you I wouldn't want to get my little finger burnt, let alone my whole body cast into hell. So, you don't want to go to hell; you want to go by easy 'believism', 'escapism'. You're not escaping anything. You never were meant for hell if you're in the Bride of Christ. You're getting ready for heaven, honey. Don't bat your eyes; just read your Bible.

If I'm wrong, when I'm finished, you come up here and take over. We'll go word for word. I'm ready for any man; I don't care who he is. Let's find out. Don't twist It, just read It the way it is. He said, "... After ye have suffered a while, make you perfect..."

When do you get perfect? **After** you have suffered.

"Oh, if I could get perfect, then I could take it."

No, no, no! I'm sorry! Huh?

34. Revelation 3:19. "As many as I love..." This is said to your day and mine. In no place in the Laodicean age does it say that we love God. We don't. The last book of the Bible in the Old Testament, Mal 1:1:

(1) The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi.

(2) I have loved you, saith the Lord, yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us?

God loved Israel; but they did not love Him. We are in the same boat. God does not say we love Him, but He says He loves us, and He's warning us. Why? Because He says, I'm going to have to rebuke you, and I'm going to chasten you: "Be zealous, therefore, and repent—because you haven't seen it."

Now, get ready for it, because it's going to come. We are going to be abused, if we are the Bride of Christ, indeed, which I hope to God we are.

Then, look at the Song of Solomon. When she heard his voice, she said, "That's my lover," and she ran; but, when she got there, he wasn't there. She went through the streets. The dogs chased her; they ripped her clothes; they assaulted her; they tried to molest her. But she heard His voice, and she ran through the night pleading with him through the night. She was going and going. Finally exhausted and fainting, he came and talked to her—raised her up.

35. Do you think for one minute you're not going to get persecuted, you independent people? If you don't want to get persecuted, join an organization tonight. Now, forget it. Just forget it. You might just as well leave now and join an organization. Go on! Because they are going to cut off every unorganized church in America. Already, (And you don't even know it.) this building has to have what they call a 'reversion' clause on it. Where will this building go if this work falls? And, because you haven't got it in the deed, and you don't know it, they will take your building away from you. Ha! Ha! You're stuck already. IRS is going to cook everybody's goose, because every check is photostatted right now, and you have not just suggested, but you have indicated you want your money to go to some person in the Gospel; and you've taken a deduction on it from your income tax. They are going to come back and tell you that the law says all you can do is suggest, and you can't actually tell where it is going to go. They can look up the back records, and that will get the whole bunch of us. Huh?

36. Didn't know it, did you? You better know it now, honey. You are in for it; and I'm ready for the jail. I hate it. I get up nights at odd times, and I like comforts and all. They are going to get me. I'm like the fellow that knows he's going to get hit with the baseball; but just where, I don't know. I'm not kidding myself. If you are, you join some church. They have already said in two years (The government stipulates in two years.) they figure they will have it down to six major organizations in America. So, honey, if you've 'minored' and you want to escape, you'd better 'major' right now. If you're a child of God, you're not going to worry about it, because Daniel has a lion's den. Let's go 'lion'. If God doesn't shut them up, what happens? Why, you just get it up; that's all.

You say, "But, will it hurt?"

Sure, it hurts, but not too long. Will you be scared? Sure, you will be scared. I'd be scared. I'm not kidding. It's rough. I'm not here to pretend.

"Oh, Glory hallelujah, this is sweet!"

Sure it's sweet, but you've got to have something in here that makes bitter Word sweet.

37. In the book of Psalms 4:1 It says:

- (1) Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me
when I was in distress...

When do you get enlarged? When does God make you a big person? When you get put in distress. You say, "But, God, I want to be a big man; Lord God, I really want to amount to something. Now make me something, Lord, and I'll go and take over."

Oh, come on now! God says, "I'll knock you down; I'll tramp on you; I'll make it so rough. Then, you'll be a big man."

You say, “Oh! Hold it!”

Oh, come on! Big men are always men of character, and you can’t get character apart from suffering. Huh?

38. Hebrews 12. Let’s see what It says:

- (1) Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset [us], (What is that? Unbelief.) and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

How can you run a race with patience? You never saw a patient runner in your life. What’s he trying to tell us? It will be over in a hurry. It’s just like a race that’s all done. Quieten down! Quieten down! “Looking unto Jesus the author and (perfecter)...” (The word ‘finisher’ is like a cabinet-maker who finished the cabinet—a ‘perfecter’.)

- (2) Looking unto Jesus the (starter and perfecter, because you start rough, and He’s going to smooth us off) of your faith; who for the joy that was set before him (the promises of God) endured the cross (the afflictions and suffering), despising the shame, (The things they threw at him by reproach, mocking and jeering.) and is (now) set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- (3) For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners...

He did not endure the contradiction of the saints. No elect member of God’s Body will ever persecute, harm or hurt another member of that elect Body. It’s the reprobate that does it. That’s his job. God doesn’t reprobate for the sake of reprobation. He reprobates because you need the reprobate to give you trial.

39. Now It says here:

- (3) ...Who endured the contradictions of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your (souls) minds.
- (4) Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. (Christ did. He fought himself until His Blood broke forth from his pores.)
- (5) And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:
- (6) For whom the Lord loveth (You see, revelation again.) he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (Heb 12:3-6)

You know that in the Greek the proverb for education was ‘suffering’. The Greeks had a word for education: schooling. And it was called ‘suffering’. Education is to equip you for life and mature you so that you can face up as a responsible person. God says, “I’ve got to scourge you to make you responsible as a Christian.”

Now, remember; He’s not going to hurt you. He’s not going to kill you. No! He’s not going to beat you down; not going to destroy you; because your faith in God is going to take you through. But you are going to have to use the things God gave you in the way God told you to use them.

40. Now It says: [Heb 12:7-8]

- (7) If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? (That's to correct for His Own good.)
- (8) But if ye be without chastisement, whereof (Every single believer, with a measure of faith is a partaker.) then (It says) you are (spurious sons) or bastards, and not true sons.

Yet you've got people that try to tell you to live like bastards instead of sons of God; that you don't need to suffer. "Use the gift; use a short-cut; do this; do that."

Now I'm not against gifts; I'm for them. I'm for healing. I'm for everything; but I'm for the way that God says It. That's why we don't get results, because we don't go God's Way.

41. Now, listen carefully: character is a victory. It is not a gift. What is the victory? It is a successful result of war. The result of the battles of this life in the name of Jesus Christ, in this world, ends in one thing— and one thing only: character. Not money, not health, not prestige, not a million things that the world loves and wants, but the one thing that God wants: character.

Now, notice that this victory of character development, notice it brings a return of hope. He starts with hope and ends with hope. See? He gets the promise, he exults in it; the trial comes in, he exults in it, because he knows that he is being tested in order to bring out patience which in turn will give him character; and then, this hope (which was just ordinary hope) the Bible says is now 'hope which never disappoints'.

How many times have you started out with a hope in God but ended up disappointed? Come on now, ninety-nine times out of a hundred; that's about the way it goes. Isn't that right? Come on now. Let's be honest. I told you: if all we had to do was pray in Jesus' Name and every prayer was answered, we would all be princes and princesses living in palaces with a fleet of Cadillacs with them. You wouldn't need to read Gaylord Houser's book or anybody else's on how to be strong men. All would be healthy; all would be glamour girls, and...Oh, no! See? God's not interested in glamour girls and all those things. He wants character. Huh? And, if you got your prayer answered every single time because of a measure of faith, you wouldn't have any character. You would be a spoiled brat. Did you ever hear of a parent giving his kid everything he wanted every time he squawked? No discipline? If Johnny feels like throwing his porridge, it's good, just let him throw it; but not at me. If you want it, you can have it, but not around my place.

42. First time our boy...and this cured him, this is a fact...and our son, Gray, is a very sweet little boy, but one day he didn't get his breakfast just exactly on time, and he went 'spuee'. So, I went 'smack', 'smack', down in the crib, and I said, "Stay there." There wasn't one more time that he went 'spuee'. He was the best eater of all three of us. And you know how I taught them to eat? I taught the top end from the bottom end. Something like the Lord—He goes at things backwards. You think He does, but He doesn't. Character. See?

Listen to me: Isn't there a time in your life you have noticed, that after a period of time whereby you hang on to God's Word regardless, and that you suddenly come out a better Christian; and you know that you know that you know that you know you've got it. Is that right? That is that process. Not by accident; it's a process. See? In other words here is the process of the exercise of faith which causes growth of faith; and our growth in the faith. God wants both: a growth in the faith and a growth of our faith.

43. Now, let's apply what we have learned to Abraham, to see if it holds water, because he's our test. Now [] God goes to Abraham. God reveals Himself to Abraham, and He says, "I am thy shield, and thy

exceeding great reward.” I am the One Who supplies all your needs, and Abraham says: “Oh, ho! If you are the One that supplies my needs, what are you going to do about the fact that I have no son?”

“Oh,” God says, “I will give you a son.”

“Oh, that’s nice.”

Now, but does he get the son? No, sir! All he’s got is a promise. Is that correct? All right.

44. Let’s read now in Romans 4 and follow It through. Let’s read It, and I will show you something really wonderful here, because this will help you. Rom 4:17-22:

- (17) As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, (Now this is a promise. God said it and he believed it.) before him whom he believed, [even] God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.
- (18) Who when hope was gone (This is the literal translation.) hoped on in faith that he might become what God said he already was. (See?) So shall thy seed be.
- (19) And being not weak in faith, (How could he be weak in faith? We wasn’t weak in faith, because he had a measure of God’s own faith.) he considered not his own body now dead, though he was an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara’s womb:
- (20) He staggered not (Notice, he staggered not.) at the promise of God through unbelief.

Oh, just a minute. What’s that there for? Because, instead of getting the promise, a son, right away like he thought, God kept him waiting twenty years, until his body was so dead, and his wife’s body so dead, it was useless. It had to be God.

Now, what would you do tonight, if God said to you, “I want you to have a son,” and either one of you were too old to have a child? Now, would you go through your trial till you got the rejuvenation, or would you say, “Well, this can’t be. I’m supposed to have a son; I’m too old to have a son. That’s all. Forget it.”

Unbelief. And you lost it. Right? Notice the process. You see?

45. Look, folks, the Bible dove-tails. When God lays down a principle, It holds from Genesis to Revelation without even the minutest change. And you can’t find one person that hasn’t been on this trail I’m talking about.

Now, let’s read some more about it. “He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief.” And I’ll tell you, God’s Word will stagger you, unless you learn about the trial of your faith. It’ll stagger you. But he didn’t stagger. He knew what was going on, and he became stronger in faith. See, it’s growing—giving glory to God. Notice, exulting in the trials; he’s rejoicing. He said, “Hallelujah!”

“Oh,” he said, “Bless God! When this son comes forth, I will be better able to help him, because I will be older, wiser. Sarah will be better, you know, get better, mellow with old age and all those things.”

Oh, he was happy. He said, “Our bodies will be older, but our minds will be more mature, wonderful minds; we will know just what to do.”

He was rejoicing every day, praising God. “Never mind how old I am,” he said, “I’m still what God said I am.”

And he became it.

46. Now, listen: It says here: [Romans 4]

(21) And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Now, listen; here’s the picture again. Abraham was given a promise, but he didn’t get the promise. Years later he was getting older and older until it was too late to believe. But he kept believing and, as he kept on believing, by patience he became mature; and one day God came down to him with two angels and stood before him and said, “Abraham, you’re a man of such character that I can tell you what’s going to happen, and, by the way, you’re ready to have that son now because you now have the character.”

That’s exactly what He said. [Genesis 18]

(17) And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?

He was the friend of God. That’s how deep his character was. He’d gotten over looking at Hagar. He’s gotten over going down to Egypt. He’d gotten over all those things. He was a man of character now, standing righteous before God, believing God, and God said, “Now you can have it.”

47. But I want you to notice the Scripture, my brother/sister. Please look at verse 17 (if you have a Bible). What does it say that Abraham did? In verse 17 “He believed.” Is that correct? All right. Now, look down at verse 21, twenty years after. “He was fully persuaded.” He was not fully persuaded in verse 17, twenty years before. So, the trial of his faith and holding on to God did not only bring his character, but brought his faith to such a high lever that he knew that he knew that he knew that he knew!!! The faith which never disappoints is the same word as ‘fully persuaded’ (or ‘full persuasion’). Suddenly, Abraham is strong and powerful, but it took the years of trial. Remember, God doesn’t fail. It’s we who fail, because we don’t understand.

48. Now we still have plenty of time, so we’re going to apply this, not to Abraham, but to you and me. Not that we haven’t been doing it. We go to God, and we want Him to make known one of His redemptive titles to us. It may be Healer, Provider, Keeper, Shepherd, or Righteousness. We pray the prayer of faith; we believe Him. We expect an immediate answer. We expect some improvement, or at least we expect a betterment right now. We want deliverance, so we have been taught. We want it at our own time and in our own way; and, when the answer doesn’t come and we are not aware of the way God works, then our faith fails, and we say, “Well, I guess I did not pray in faith.” And the preacher says, “That’s right. You did not pray in faith.”

Now you are both wrong, because a prayer of faith is a prayer of faith. Then, if you believed, you believed. The only trouble is you don’t know God’s way, so you failed. See?

Now you say, “I just thought I prayed in faith.”

So, that’s how we minimize the power of the measure of faith, and, in a way, we think that God’s faith failed.

49. How can God’s faith fail? You just took it back. That’s all. If I put a dollar on the counter and say, “Give me four loaves of bread at two bits a piece.”

And then, you say, “Take it back.”

“Oh, no, don’t do that,” and you take it back.

He says, “Are you gonna give me the money?”

“No!”

I say, “Well, I think... Yes, I do want the bread.” I put it down and take it back. Nothing wrong with the dollar bill; nothing wrong with the man trying to give me the merchandise. It’s the fellow taking the thing back and forth. See? That’s what happens.

50. Some even go so far as to say that God denies His answers in order to do something else for us. That’s not true. No, that’s passing the buck. But the thing is, nothing is wrong even though we think, by logical reasoning, (not knowing the Word) that something is wrong. Everything is exactly the way God wants it. We are merely under pressure in order for God to teach us to endure, in order to develop character, to show ourselves worthy of Him and His provision. God wants us to mature. He wants us to have character.

Now, what is character? Character is how you act when the pressure is on. Now, do you want to know what kind of a guy I am? Put me under pressure, and you will soon see. But, if you give me money and nice clothes and everything nice, I’ve got no pressure and everybody is sweet and my wife is sweet and my kids are sweet. Oh! I’m as sweet as a buttercup. Oh! I’m sweeter than all the roses, sweet as violets, and so are you.

51. I told you. Didn’t I tell you? I told somebody! We had a housekeeper years ago, when my wife and I worked. Her name was Mabel, and she had a little step-daughter, kind of little thing she adopted, called Helen. And Helen and our kids were scrapping day and night. You talk about a bedlam, we had it—our three kids and her one. Oh, brother!

So, one day Mable blew her stack, and she said, “It’s your kids. It’s your kids. It’s your kids!”

I said, “How come? Why?”

“Oh,” she said, “when Helen’s alone, she has no trouble.”

I said, “Sure, ‘cause she loves herself. She wouldn’t fight with herself. Nobody does.”

The only way you know what’s in you is when the pressure is put on.

52. Did you... Oh, by the way, did you hear what I read about in the Bible tonight from Deuteronomy? He said: [Deuteronomy 8]

(3) I led you this way to see what was in your heart.

Ah! God put the pressure on. It wasn’t that He didn’t know what was in their hearts. He wanted them to know what was in their hearts. So, He put the pressure on, and they soon found out what they were like. See? So, you see, brother/sister, it’s not your action. It’s your reaction that pins you, whether you are a Christian, because He says, “When a man comes up and hits you on one cheek, say, ‘Take a crack at this one—it’s all free’.”

He takes your coat, you say, “Well, go ahead, this one came from the same store and matches your coat. You can have it, too.”

You say, “Come and walk a mile.”

He says, “No, I prefer two miles.”

You say, "You're supposed to enjoy it." It says to exult in it. (2 Th 1:3-5) God says it's a manifest token of God's approbation or approval of you. You are a son? He is trying to make you strong. He's trying to give you character. It's your reaction, my brother/sister, that tells the tale.

53. No real saint of God will ever start anything. I challenge you. Show me in the word where a saint of God ever started anything.

You say, "David did!"

No, no! This lady stripped in front of the public. Any woman taking off her clothes in public is just fair bait. God forbid any man should touch her. God forbid he should. But, brother/sister, listen! You read your Bible. You'll find out a woman does excite a man. She was naked. He really didn't mean it. I don't believe he did. But in that moment, it was too late. Christians don't start things; but, when somebody else starts it, they often finish it. See?

"He hit me here, and you should have seen my right as I crossed it...boom! Ho! I got him." Now, don't do that.

When he was reviled, he never reviled. When he was cursed and hanged upon the cross, He said, "Forgive them." The Bride does not cry for vengeance. She cries for forgiveness. She understands and says, "I'd be in the same place, if it wasn't for the grace of God."

God has to put pressure on you to see your reaction, because how you react to any stimuli (And, remember: it's going to be rough stimuli.) will prove what you are inside. And in this day the pressure is going to come from God as never before. It has to, because we are awfully green. We're not mature.

54. Remember, I read to you over here in Heb 10:35-36:

(35) Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. (Your confidence in God is like money invested. He will give you a measure of goodies which you never dreamed possible to obtain. But It says here:)

(36) Ye have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

As I said, you say, "Lord, I need healing," but God says, "You need patience."

55. A lady went to a man's meeting in Canada. His name is Dr. Cliff, the famous scientist, philanthropist, or what... Do you know...? He was an Episcopalian who worked in the church, and who claims to be born again. I don't know, I believe he was. He had the gifts and anointing in his life. One day... Now I don't appreciate the fact that he took an old cigarette, took a little pull on it. He said he did it, not that he liked it, not that he's addicted. He didn't care for it; but, he said, it kind of embarrassed the folks he was around, if he didn't look just a little bit like them, but not really like them. I don't see that, but I'm not going to fuss about it. It's just a part of the story.

Anyway, a lady said to him one day; (She got very abusive about his cigarette.) so, he said, "Madam, isn't it true that you are arthritic?"

And she said, "I sure am getting worse."

He said, "But it is also true, is it not, that you love coffee, that you drink twelve to eighteen cups?"

She said, "Yes, I can hardly wait to get home. I sure love it."

And he said, “Lady, let me tell you: I am a scientist, have been for years,” (He’s a Doctor of Science and got his degree in chemistry.) and he said, “There is more harm in your coffee than there is in my cigarettes, because I barely touch them, but you drink coffee day and night.” And he said, “Furthermore, let me tell you this: you have prayed for your arthritis, but you will never be healed, because you are a malicious gossip. You stand or sit at your window to see something to talk about.”

She said, “My God, that’s true!”

She repented, and she was healed. God couldn’t heal her, until she developed the character commensurate with the gift.

56. “You need character,” said God, “which can only come by patience.” You need character! You think you need healing. No! You think you need a new car. No! Need a new home. No! No! You don’t need those things. Oh, you do, yes, but not like you need character. Not like you need patience. “You have need of patience.” See?

Now, listen carefully, because this is an axiom; this is a fixed principle, and this is what we have been coming to all this week. From the time that you prayed the prayer of faith until the time the answer came, there is a path that every Christian must walk upon: (I said, “He **must** walk upon.”) it is the path of Christian character development, and it is on this path that you will win the answer or lose it forever.

57. You say, “Why does God want me to have this character? Isn’t it enough that I am like Him by means of identification, that He has become my righteousness, that He has become my sanctification?”

Listen to me. Turn to the book of Romans once more, Rom 8:17. Please read:

(17) And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together.

The need for you to suffer is to the end that you will share the throne. Why? Because power apart from character is the devil, but power with character is God. You are not fit, and I am not fit to be trusted with power, unless we’ve got character.

58. What’s the matter with Washington today? No character. Your Bobby Bakers, your rotten, filthy scum that gets there because of money, skullduggery and shenanigans... There’s not a ‘statesman’ left in the world! There’s not a man or honorable man amongst them that I know of. I wish there were. What’s wrong with the world? Stalins, Mussolinis, Hitlers, Krushchevs! Read your history of the Catholic Church and just see what their popes were like. They filled their papal choir with their paramours and illegitimate children. And the mistress of one of them, Marcia, I understand it was, did her best to kill, and she was very successful, in many cases, in destroying.

Power without character is the devil, and he’s got to be destroyed. He will be, and all who are with him. Power with character alone is fit to reign, and God wants us to reign with Him. If we’re going to do it, we’ve got to have character. That’s sensible. That’s what He teaches us. That’s what the Bible teaches us.

59. Now, listen. Let me show you what happens, according to God’s Word. Turn to Ps 106:7-15. Now:

(7) Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt.

They didn’t even know what the wonders were all about when Bro. Branham came. There has never been a man, since Paul, with his power. There hasn’t been! I’ve read the histories. I’m reading the histories. Never been a man like him. All the books together can’t begin to see done what he saw done in a few years. But the people didn’t understand. They said, “Thank you,” and walked off. Israel understood not the miracles of Egypt.

- (7) They remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked [him] at the sea, [even] at the Red sea.

See? They couldn't take the training. When times got tough, they really turned their backs on God.

- (8) He rebuked the Red sea also (vs 9), nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake...

Notice: "for his Name's sake." That's why God today is performing miracles still with His great Name. He won't let that Name down. But, look what happens when you don't do right.

- (9) He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.
- (10) And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.
- (11) And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left.
- (12) Then believed they his words; they sang his praise. (Notice, a little revival.)
- (13) They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel:

See? They didn't care about His Word. Just give me miracles; give me loaves, give me fish. Now, listen (verse 15):

- (15) And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their souls.

60. I have never seen a leaner group of people today than right here in America. But you talk about the miracles and the prayer lines; they've got them. You talk about the shortcuts; they've got them. But they haven't got the Word.

They said, "Because he doesn't talk like us, he can't have it."

But he had it more than all the rest put together—by way of demonstration I'm talking about now. "It's gotta be God, because we get results. Don't we?"

Didn't Israel get results here? Huh? Sure, they got results. For His great Name—He did the mighty works over His Name, but It said, "He sent leanness into their souls." Leanness, no character.

You want God to work, but you don't want to go through the way God says for you to have... Go ahead! Go ahead! You'll be lean. You want to get prayed for without knuckling down to God? Go ahead, a worse thing will come upon you. I've got to say that's true, because God said it was.

You say, "God, I'd like this."

God says, "I want your character; I want your patience."

You've got need of it. God wants you to have both of them.

61. Turn to Ps 10:17. Here's what It says:

- (7) He made known his ways unto Moses, (but) his acts unto the children of Israel.

Did you get it? Israel never learned from the miracles. You've got to learn from the Word. Moses learned the way of God—suffering, patience, then power. They said, "Power, bless God, and that's it."

That's the devil; that's not God.

You say, "Bro. Vayle, I get confused with the way you talk. Aren't these people doing great miracles? Isn't that God's power?"

It sure is. Balaam had the power of God; so did Judas have the power of God. But the men operating weren't of God. Matthew 7:23:

(23) I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity. (You took my righteous things and perverted them.)

62. Where's character today? A man builds a big university and puts in his magazine, "You can win souls for twenty cents a piece."

I'd go rob a bank if that were so.

"The end justifies the means," where the means justify the end, rather. No matter how you get the money... "Let's win souls at twenty cents a piece."

Where do you get that stuff? That's not God.

You say, "Bro. Vayle, you're mean; you're critical."

No, I'm not. I'm showing you God's Word. I don't want you fooled. Now, if you leave this building, and you go your way, that's your business. But God delivered my soul, because I preached the truth.

63. God wants your patience which gives you character, which makes you fit to rule on the throne. He made known His ways unto Moses, the meekest man ever known, but all Israel got was His acts. Now, if you want to get healing, if you want to get a loaf of bread, if you want a better house, or a better car, or what do you want? Or, do you want what God wants you to have? Now you can have both. You can have both. It says: [Mk 10:29-30]

(29) There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

(30) But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

See? You can have it. God said you can have it, but you get it God's way. If you get it any other way, you will have leanness of soul; something is going to happen to you. You want a fat soul tonight or a lean soul?

64. Do you really want God? You've got to suffer. I'm sorry.

You say, "Bro. Vayle, I want to get healed."

How patient are you?

You say, "Bro. Vayle, if I were healed, I'd be patient."

No, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry! You're still not learning.

“Yes, but it’s this pain here that makes me impatient.”

No, it’s your impatience that gives you the pain and makes it multiplied until you have got a pain. Now, you’ve got to take yourself by the horns, so to speak. You’ve got to gear yourself down and say, “God, I’ll pay the price now.”

Get quiet before God. Huh? You want to use ‘bulldozing’ faith? You go ahead! I’ve gotten cured that way.

65. I was in Florida in 1952. (Previously I had been praying and fasting in Canada.) I sat at the table one day, and I knew I had ulcers—the pain and all. And I looked at God, and I looked at myself, and I used ‘bulldozing faith’, and I said, “In the name of Jesus Christ you’ll not stay in this body. I command you to move!”

And they moved. Not one trace of ulcer, but what? Within less than three months it went down to the genital, urinary tract. I get up at nights now. I do not have prostate trouble. I don’t have kidney trouble. I don’t have bladder trouble. But the pain and all is there, because the nerves are there, and it’s acting up. And I would to God I had my ulcers back, honey. I could pour milk on them, but I don’t know what to do about this. I’ve been to a doctor. Forget it. He can’t help me. He tried, but it didn’t work.

When am I going to get deliverance? With patience and character. That’s what I need and I know, and I’m not fussing about this. I don’t care if I die of cancer. I mean it with all my heart. God, let me glorify Your Name by being the man you want somehow in this flesh. I’d die a million deaths of cancer, (That’s fine with me.) if I really knew that I could have certain things. I’d try to roll a peanut down a cobble street with my nose, and rip my face to shreds that I might stand before God and hear, “You’re pleasing, after my heart.”

66. I’m tired of all these great ‘acts’, so-called. Oh, I love to see God heal the multitudes. I want it, but there’s one thing that God wants out of you and me, brother/sister, and that’s character, which comes by the trial of our faith, by patience. The wheat is green tonight. Oh, how green we are! But we’ll be made ready, because He said, “I love you. You don’t love me.”

That’s true. None of us really love Him tonight. We do, you see, follow His commandments, but the effervescence is not there. That exuberance is not there. That exuberance is not there. But it will be, because He said, “I love you, and I’m not going to let you go. I’m going to chasten you; I’m going to rebuke you.” See?

67. Now, I’ve got one passage of Scripture left, Ps 66:8-12:

(8) O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

(9) Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

Notice what He promises here? Did you get it? He holds you. You won’t be moved. You say, “Holds me? What’s going to come against me so I won’t be moved?”

Uh-huh! I see you’re beginning to think. What’s He say?

(10) For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.
(How does silver get tried? In the furnace!)

(11) Thou broughtest us into the net; (Oh, I thought the devil did it!) thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

(12) Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads.

And this is what we hate. Oh, boy! We don't even want the preacher to have any authority.

"Well, I've got the Holy Ghost!"

If you really had the Holy Ghost, you wouldn't talk that way, but I know a lot of folks who 'think' they've got the Holy Ghost. Well, I've got the Holy Ghost; I know what He does. I don't know what Holy Ghost you've got, but it's not the One Who wrote the Book, not the One Who spoke through Paul, not the One Who spoke through David. You've got your own 'holy ghost', and he's not too holy, because he goes against the Holy Ghost which is holy. Huh? "He caused men to ride over their heads." He sent prophets, and they said, "Kill 'em."

68. Tell me tonight; I think you can do it. Are you a people who can open your mind and listen without questioning? Because, if you are not, you haven't got the Holy Ghost; because, when you've got the Holy Ghost you can listen and not question; because, while you are questioning, you will miss it with your question. You can just listen, but you have got such faith that, because you've got the Holy Ghost, you can't be deceived, and by the time you walk down the road, half a block, you'll be all 'shook up' by the Holy Ghost, and you will know which way you're going.

But the average person (who is a Christian by denomination only) while you are talking, he is popping a million questions and not hearing one thing you say. Because, when the Holy Spirit is come, "He will lead you..." He will guide you, He will teach you, He will protect you.

69. The open mind is the secret of receiving the things of God. It says Israel's mind was closed shut, their minds were darkened and blinded, and they can't get to God because of a closed mind. I hope your minds have been opened. The Word says:

(12) Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

The wealth of God is only poured upon the meek, but "they shall inherit the earth," and nobody else. Noah was meek, and he owned the whole world with his three sons and the four women, making eight in all. There it is!

70. Now, God has given you faith—a measure of His Own faith. It is called the 'faith of God', the 'faith of the Son of God', the 'faith of the Lord Jesus Christ'. It is called the 'faith of Jesus.' It is your assurance, your guarantee, your ability to receive every promise in the Book. It will give you victory. Make no mistake about it. But, remember that your faith will be tried. Not that God is withholding anything from you (No, sir.) but God, in His love and goodness, is also preparing you to reign with Him at the same time He is giving you your answers.

71. Now, let's just check this out for a second before we close and go home. I ask you a question: do you think God could trust you tonight with a million dollars? You've often thought you wanted a million dollars. Let's be honest now. Would anybody tell me tonight he is ready to handle a million dollars? I'd like to meet you, because I never met one who could, outside of William Branham. He turned it down flat.

Dr. Buckman, although I know he didn't believe like we believe... I don't know if he was ever born again. He was more of a moral reconstruction agent, rather than a born-again believer, to my knowledge. I don't know, I just understand that's the way it is. He turned down a million dollars, because he knew he couldn't handle it. Frankly, I couldn't handle a million dollars. I couldn't handle fifty thousand, because that gives me ideas, and I don't know that they are God's, because I'd like to do something for some people, and it might not be what God wants me to do.

72. Now, let's go a step further. Tonight, could any of you handle a gift of healing? Now, listen. That's a good 'prestige getter', if you want to get recognized. It's a pretty fine gift to have, and it will do a lot of good. It will get rid of insanity; and, if it's used with real authority, it will cure any disease. No cancer, no cripple, no nothing will stand before it. Now, that's a nice gift, but could you handle it? Now, be honest.

See now, what are we driving at? What do you want tonight from God? What is it you are praying for? That's good; I am not talking about that. I'm talking about something material-like. Praying for character is good but the only way you can get character (Let me warn you.) is this: God, help me now to get ready, so when the blows come, I'll take them in Your Name and say, "Thank You, Jesus."

If you just ask for character straight, it won't work. Don't ask for patience straight. God cannot give you patience. It is affliction that brings patience; persecution worketh patience. Nothing else will do it. Remember the lady who came to her pastor and said, "Pastor, I've called you here today, because I've just got to have help."

He said, "What can I do, Sister dear?"

She said, "You must now pray for patience for me, because I've had it."

He got down on his knees, and he said, "Send this lady persecution."

She said, "Stop it. Don't you understand? That's my trouble. I want patience."

"But," he said, "Sister dear, tribulation worketh patience."

73. Character is a victory, not a gift. Remember that. Fruit-bearing and answered prayer go hand-in-hand. "If you abide in me and my Words abide in you, **then** you can ask what you will, and it shall be done" (Jn 15:7)

But I ask you in all sincerity tonight: what do you want from God? What is it you lack to be in light? Now I'm not just talking about things you need. Maybe you need a new house; maybe you haven't got a home. Maybe your kids need help for school. Maybe you need something in your home, in your personal relationships as you walk this earth. You've got needs, physical needs, because we're all human. What is your need? Ask for it; ask for it!

And then, say, "Now, God, try me!" And every day you are tried, and it looks like you're not getting it, say, "Hallelujah! It's getting closer!" Say, "Glory!" Do it, breathe it, mean it, and something will begin to happen to you, and say, "God we got through good today; now, make it a little rougher tomorrow."

74. Let me tell you how this works in a nutshell. I don't mean to explain it this way; but, listen to what happened. Listen! This is kind of silly, but it's kind of cute. When I was in Florida one night, and for days I had been having a pain in my back, you know, like when you get a blood-clot they tell you how excruciating it is? Well, I got this pain. It wasn't a blood-clot.

When I lay a certain way, it was like a toothache. And, when I lay another certain way, it wasn't bad. I said, look, we're going to get the cure, and we're going to get it the easy way; but it's going to be the hard way, because it's going to be a short-cut. Then, I lay in a position where it really hurt, and I'd say, "I challenge you in the name of Jesus!" And I lay there, and it hurt me, and I would say, "Oh, you got me!" And I'd bend over, and I'd wait a while, get my breath, and I'd go back and lay in the same position where it would hurt, and I'd say, "I come again against you in the name of Jesus, and I'm gonna lick you!" And I lay a little longer this time, and then, I couldn't take it. It got me. About the fifth time it never came back.

Now, that's a silly little illustration, but it's what we do in our life. But, keep on guard.

"God, the answer's mine. Now it has been rough today, and I've taken it; it will be rougher tomorrow. It's okay. That's all right. I'm going to get it, because I'm following Abraham."

And he said what God said he was; and through a process he became what God said he was, because he developed patience, and thereby character; and suddenly this faith sprung into reality, and he got it.

75. Now, let me show you something here, and I'll let you go. Faith, hope, love: 1, 2, 3. Faith is 1; hope is 2; love is 3. Love is the highest; therefore, faith is lower than hope. God gave you the measure of faith. If you bulldoze your faith, you can bypass hope—you can go clean by—and pass this love, too. When Bro. Branham came, he came with faith, every spirit brought under control, no miss. I saw two-thousand, with no miss, healed in one night. That was faith.

Then, he brought the word 'hope', and they said, "Phooey on hope. We will go back to faith." And like Israel, the Pentecostals died in the wilderness, because they were the ones who said, "We want him," and they didn't want him after all.

But those who take hope, the Word, and live by the Word with their faith, will go... Where? To a hope which never fails. Is that right? "THUS SAITH THE LORD," found in the Bride. Is that right? Then, Who comes? Love. God comes! Love crowning the pyramid. We're raptured! And oh, how you're going to love Him just before He comes. I think we're just going to go around screaming. (I want to do that.) I want to literally tear around screaming, "I love Him! I love Him! I love Him!" and mean it. I want to get real emotional. I want to jump so high I'll jump fifty feet; and, when I come down, I'll walk straight. Not jump fifty feet, and when I come down, walk crooked. But I want to walk straight.

76. You see what I'm talking about tonight? Do you get the message? Huh? Well, I think you do. You're lovely people. So, time to go. Let's sing like Bro. Branham sang, "I love Him."

"I love Him. I love Him, because He first loved me. And purchased my salvation on Calvary's tree."