

“Trials Kind of Guy”

by Cliff Char, *Elder of Music, Young Adults*

I'm a trials kind of guy. I like, in incremental and small doses, trials, that push me out of my comfort zone. Do note, the “incremental and small doses” part! In fact, I was listening to a sermon the night before Brother Ted gave his New Year's sermon on James 1:1-4 on the joys of trials, so I definitely see this as a sign that I should write about Trials.

Don't get me wrong, I do fear being pushed out of my comfort zone. And I do dislike having dreams, hopes and desires shut down. I dislike even further that an important rate limiting step of a well-thought out plan gets put out of commission so that all my plans goes to naught! And I do dislike that like any trial, more creative thought, more work and more exhausting work has to be invested.

“So what, Cliff, is it that you like,” you ask?

I like how God, through trials, speaks to me. He reminds me that it's not about my plans, but about His plans. Jeremiah 29:11—*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.* He constantly reminds me, that He knows what's best. He is teaching me to work with Him, for Him, and not for me. So when a trial comes along, He is telling me, “Nah Cliff, not that...” It's during this humbling (if I can shake off the pride thing), that I can see clearer what God wants me to do.

You may think that some things we do may not even be for Him, like at work, or working in the yard. During these types of trials, I have found that He is working on my character. Am I being patient enough? Am I being kind, gracious, and understanding? Am I using the intellectual, physical and emotional gifts He has given me to work through trials in the best way possible? Am I being God's light? You can really measure a person's character not when things are going great but when things are going bad. Is the person I am working with seeing a glimpse of God through me?

Finally, trials that God has graced us with will inevitably cause stress. We need to understand that stress can be used to propel us pass the trial, but unfortunately, if not controlled, can tear us and wear us down. We do have an option to try and control our response to the stress. Stress out of control can cause headaches, high blood pressure, heart attacks, body aches and negative and addictive behaviors. There are many techniques to regulate our stress response, but the point is, we all need to realize that stress, when not dealt with properly can get in the way of getting us through the trial. 1 Peter 5:7 “*Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.*” It does help me quite a bit, knowing that throughout the trials I have met, Jesus Christ is with me, and my anxieties and stress can be cast on Him. In fact, isn't this where we need to turn to God the most, when trials and stress are at their greatest? He is here for us, He always is.

Welcome to Journey!

EVANGELICAL CHURCH



Many thanks to our faithful elder and deacons for completing their fruitful terms!



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Order of Service

January 14th, 2024

Welcome & Call To Worship Elder Peter

Worship Buzz & Congregation

Sermon..... **Wisdom For Trials** Pastor Ted

Song of Response Buzz & Congregation

Benediction..... Pastor Phil

Sermon Outline:

Ted Kau • *Active Faith*

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.—James 1:5-8, ESV

How can we gain wisdom for trials, so they are not wasted:

1. _____ our need for God's wisdom
"If any of you lacks wisdom"—1:5
2. _____ for God's wisdom
"...let him ask God who gives generously...in faith, with no doubting"—1:5-6
3. Be wholly _____ our need for God's wisdom
"For that person...he is a double-minded man..."—1:7-8

Questions for discussion and reflection:

1. Why do we often first look to the world's wisdom when God offers His divine wisdom?
2. How can we resist the temptation to dwell in our negative feelings about a trial?
3. What trial are you going through? How can you apply the past two Sunday's sermons to not waste it?
4. Who can you/do you turn to for a listening ear, godly counsel, and/or prayer?
5. What verse, quote, or nugget speaks to you personally?



Happy New Year! Some ways to get involved:

Bible Reading: it's not too late to start a Bible reading program. Email amy@journeyec.org to join and for encouragements.

Today: Youth Parents Orientation (12:00-12:40; upstairs north room). Agenda—calendar, winter & summer retreats, open forum. Hope to see y'all.

Today: Directory Available: one copy per household. Only for personal and ministry use, not for business nor solicitations.

Tomorrow: Winter Youth Retreat Sign Up Deadline (2/2-4 Forest Home, Ojai Valley): only 8 slots left! Cost is \$295, generous scholarships are available.

1/18: Young Couples (7:30pm): save the date, continuing *Us In Mind* series.

2/4: Scouts Day: let's welcome Troop 1134 as they lead us in honoring our flag.

2/11: Super Bowl of Love & Listening Workshop (for ages 9 to 99) 
Pastor Phil will be leading a communications workshop that will help you with work, family, & friendships. All are welcome, not just couples.

2/11: Super Bowl Outreach: prayerfully consider hosting an outreach to your unchurched friends and coworkers.

2/18: Welcome Training (12:00-12:45): everyone is welcome to join, especially all officers and spouses. Come join us for an enjoyable training.

2/25: Baptism & Membership Class (12:00-2:30): if interested in professing your faith or joining Journey's mission on Easter, email amy@journeyec.org.

Deacons—Agnes Liu, Alan Hung, Allie Wong, Darryl Mu, Jeff Way, Pat Leung, Paulah Wong, Shirley Chun, Teresa Jue, Valerie Yee, Wesley Lin

Elders—Cliff Char, Hiro Kono, Joshua Cain, Peter Leung, Phil Jen Kin, Rick Chou, Ron Jue, Victor Wong

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