

Things I Did Not Ask For

I. Unwanted Opportunities

Mark 14:35-36 (NIV)

³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. **Take this cup from me.** Yet not what I will, but what you will."

1 Peter 4:12-17 (NIV)

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶ However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

II. Desert Places

Luke 4:1-3 (NIV)

¹ Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was **led by the Spirit in the desert**, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. ³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."

A. To be avoided???

1. Revelation

2. Demonstrations of _____

3. _____

B. Guarding our heart

2 Corinthians 4:15-18 (NIV)

¹⁵ All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. ¹⁶ **Therefore we do not lose heart.** Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

C. Unusual Worship Themes

Romans 5:1-5 (NIV)

And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but **we also rejoice in our sufferings**, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

III. Late Nights in the Lion's Den

A. Someone Watching

James 1:12 (NIV)

¹² **Blessed is the man who perseveres** under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

B. _____

James 5:7-11 (NIV)

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! ¹⁰ Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ As you know, **we consider blessed those who have persevered**. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

C. God's Promise

Psalms 138:7-8 (NIV)

⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes, with your right hand you save me. ⁸ The Lord will fulfill [his purpose] for me; your love, O Lord, endures forever-- do not abandon the works of your hands.

D. The Triumph of _____

2 Timothy 4:16-18 (NIV)

¹⁶ At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. ¹⁷ But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, **so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it**. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

KEY: power, preparation, patience, service