

# Accepting Adversity and Tragedy

## Lesson 3 Listening to God

### Introduction and Review

In the previous lessons we established the need for dependence on revelation from God to give us true insight into His character and His plans. In a moment of crisis, all too often we lean on our emotions to form our opinions about the goodness of God. This explains why it is so important to go to God's revelation - the Bible - in times when we are not tested, to establish as deeply as possible, a true picture of God and His abiding care for us.

### Gift of Christ

If we could ever come to a full appreciate of what God did in sending His Son to die for us, we would never question God's love for us. There are many passages that could be examined in this light but we will look at only a few:

1. Degree to Which We Deserved Christ's Sacrifice
  - a. Read Romans 5:6-11.
    - i. What are three words used to describe us (vs. 6, 8, 10)?
    - ii. With each description, what is God said to have done?
    - iii. How does this action of God compare to what might be expected in our actions toward one another?
2. Degree to Which We Needed Christ's Sacrifice
  - a. We are familiar with the passages that explain all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23) and that the wages, i.e. the just reward of sinners, is death (Romans 6:23a), but read on in each passage. What has God done for us in Christ?
  - b. Note the description given of our condition without Christ in the following passages:
    - i. Ephesians 2:1-3 (again read on another verse or two).
    - ii. Ephesians 4:17-19
3. Degree of Christ's Suffering
  - a. Begin with the account of Christ's prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and read through to His death on the cross (e.g. Mark 14:32 - 15:41).
  - b. Read Hebrews 5:6-8.
  - c. Carefully meditate on what this suffering was really like for God the Son who owed us nothing.
4. Abiding Benefits

- a. Besides being the act of atonement that provides for our forgiveness, note what else the gift of Christ accomplishes:
  - i. Hebrews 2:17-18
  - ii. Hebrews 4:14-16

### **Constant Concern**

From beginning to the end, the Bible describes a God who cares for His people. Please take the time to read through the following passages. When finished, consider the total weight of these scriptures and the fact that they are but a small sample of similar verses throughout the Bible:

1. Isaiah 41:10
2. Psalms 55:22
3. Psalms 138:3
4. Matthew 11:28-30
5. I Timothy 6:17b
6. Hebrews 13:5-6
7. James 1:16-17

### **Spiritual Blessings**

As we will note below and in subsequent lessons, the world that really matters is not the physical one that we can touch and feel, but a spiritual realm that we understand by faith (II Corinthians 4:18, 5:7). God is a God who has given us everything we need spiritually:

1. Read carefully Ephesians 1:3-14
2. II Timothy 3:16-17

### **Eternal Life**

We will come back to this theme repeatedly in this class, regardless of the hardships and sorrows endured in this life, God promises His children an abundant, eternal life in His presence. Clinging to this promise not only assures us of the goodness of God, it gives us the hope necessary to accept adversity and tragedy, and not allow them to overcome our faith. Once more, we have so many passages to choose from:

1. Hebrews 2:10-15. What did Christ overcome?
2. I Corinthians 15:50-57. What will we put on? To whom belongs the credit?
3. Revelations 21:3-5. Contrast life eternal to sorrows and tragedies.