

God's Gym: 8 – Lifting Heavy Weights

If we don't know what He's after, we won't like what He's up to.

“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed (1Peter 4:12,13).

1. Don't be surprised.

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:2-4).

2. Consider it pure joy.

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

3. Remember that God is in control.

- *God causes . . .* He is in charge of what walks through the door of my life.
- *all things . . .* Not just some things, or certain kinds of things; but all things.
- *to work together . . .* It is the combination of things that God mixes together as a recipe for my growth.
- *for good . . .* The end result is good, even if the means to that end is difficult.
- *to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose . . .* This is a promise He makes to His children. I'm in the gym with my Father!

“Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep His commands” (Deuteronomy 8:2).

*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those God foreknew He also predestined **TO BE CONFORMED TO THE LIKENESS OF HIS SON**, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers (Romans 8:29).*

4. See God's goal for you: Christ-likeness.

5. Lean into your spiritual family.

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it (1Corinthians 12:26,27).

“Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

*“But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation.
My God will hear me. Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise;
Though I dwell in darkness, the LORD is a light for me” (Micah 7:7,8).*

5. Wait upon the Lord.

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4).

The Plan of the Master Weaver

Our lives are but fine weavings
That God and we prepare,
Each life becomes a fabric planned
And fashioned in His care.

We may not always see just how
The weavings intertwine,
But we must trust the Master's hand
And follow His design,

For He can view the pattern
Upon the upper side,
While we must look from underneath
And trust in Him to guide.....

Sometimes a strand of sorrow
Is added to His plan,
And though it's difficult for us,
We still must understand

That it's He who fills the shuttle,
It's He who knows what's best,
So we must weave in patience
And leave to Him the rest.....

Not till the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why--

The dark threads are as needed

In the Weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.