

## 5-Day Devotional: Keeping Our Eyes on God Through Suffering

### Day 1: The Choice of Worship

Reading: Psalm 77:1-20

Devotional: When life crashes down around us, we face a critical choice: will we worship our pain or worship our God? The psalmist Asaph models this transformative shift. He begins drowning in despair, questioning whether God has forgotten him. But notice the pivot—"Then I thought, to this I will appeal." He deliberately redirects his attention from his suffering to God's mighty deeds and faithfulness.

What we focus on grows larger in our perception. When we meditate on our problems, they become overwhelming giants. When we meditate on God's character, His presence overshadows our circumstances. Today, make a conscious decision: What will you give your mental and emotional energy to? List three attributes of God and spend time reflecting on His greatness rather than your struggles.

### Day 2: The Danger of Self-Exaltation

Reading: Matthew 18:1-5; Matthew 23:8-12

Devotional: Jesus issues a startling warning: unless we change and become like little children, we will never enter the kingdom of heaven. This isn't about being childish but childlike—humble, dependent, trusting. Job's downward spiral accelerated when he began cataloging his own righteousness and past glory. He shifted from seeking God to defending himself.

Pride is deceptive because it often masquerades as legitimate self-assessment. We recount our good deeds, our faithful service, our sacrifices—and subtly begin to believe God owes us better treatment. But the greatest in God's kingdom are servants, not celebrities. Examine your

heart today: Are you keeping score with God? Have you been rehearsing your own goodness rather than His grace? Humble yourself, and God will lift you up in His perfect timing.

### Day 3: Training for Suffering

Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-19; James 4:1-10

Devotional: We don't like to think about suffering, yet Scripture repeatedly tells us to expect it and prepare for it. Peter instructs those who suffer according to God's will to "commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good." This isn't pessimism—it's spiritual preparedness, like having a first aid kit before an emergency.

Paul understood this. He considered himself a "dead man walking," already spared by grace, so he boldly walked into danger trusting God's sovereignty. Whether he lived or died, God had him. This perspective transformed fear into freedom. Today, consider: Are you living with the assumption that life should be comfortable, or are you prepared to trust God through hardship? Build your spiritual emergency kit now—memorize promises, practice gratitude in small trials, and cultivate the habit of immediately turning to God when difficulties arise.

### Day 4: The Source of True Wisdom

Reading: Job 28:1-28; Proverbs 9:10

Devotional: Job eloquently describes humanity's ability to mine precious metals from deep in the earth, yet asks the penetrating question: "Where can wisdom be found?" His answer echoes through Scripture: "The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding."

We live in an information-saturated age, yet wisdom remains elusive. We can access countless resources but still make foolish decisions. Why? Because wisdom isn't discovered through human effort alone—it's received through relationship with God. Fearing God means reverencing Him,

acknowledging His authority, and aligning our lives with His truth.

Today, assess where you're seeking answers. Are you mining human philosophy, popular opinion, or your own reasoning? Or are you digging into God's Word and asking the Holy Spirit for insight? True wisdom transforms how we live, leading us away from evil and toward righteousness.

Day 5: God's Armor, Not Ours

Reading: Ephesians 6:10-18; Romans 3:21-26

Devotional: We can easily fall into the trap Job encountered—relying on our own righteousness rather than God's. Paul lists the armor of God, but the critical truth is this: it's GOD'S armor, not ours. The breastplate isn't our righteousness but Christ's righteousness given to us.

Standing before spiritual enemies in our own strength is like wearing a thin undershirt into battle. We need the impenetrable protection of Christ's perfect righteousness credited to our account. This doesn't mean our righteous living is irrelevant—it means it flows from grace, not toward earning it.

As you face today's battles—temptation, discouragement, spiritual attack—consciously put on God's armor. Declare, "I stand in Christ's righteousness, not my own. I hold the shield of faith He provides. I wield the sword of His Word." Your adequacy comes from Him. Let this truth liberate you from performance anxiety and empower you for genuine spiritual victory.