

# **The Process**

By Andy Zoppelt

Let me tell you a story of the process in which we find ourselves in this struggle of all struggles. It is a struggle that hinders every man, woman and child from finding the purpose for which they were created. Every atom of God's creation is waiting for the restoration of the image of God to reappear: man in the image of God, subjecting creation once again to the absolute authority of the Father.

Rom 8:19, "For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God." (NKJ)

It is in this process that many fail. We fail to realize first and foremost the process is the act of a loving God, second, that in the process we are restored into the image and fellowship of the Lord and third, it is in the process that we are to have joy through faith. The natural man has no comprehension of this Divine process in which we find ourselves. We experience excruciating pain and confusion because most of us relate to sight, feelings, hearing and social achievements like: marriage, job, happiness, success, etc.. Because of the sensate and soulish way we relate to life, we fail to see the intrinsic redemptive value in the pain of the process...

## **My allegory of the process:**

Sam is a hungry man looking for deeper meaning to life and the reason and purpose for his existence. One day he meets a man that tells him about the Lord. something in Sam leaps and is quickened to respond to Jesus as His Lord and redeemer. Sorrowfully, and with repentance, he confesses and forsakes his sin and commits himself to the path of faith in the Lord. He is thrilled to the new expression in his life and the sense of finding the truth and the path that will deliver him out of all his distress. Remaining in Sam are the old agendas: a wife to end his loneliness, a good job to provide for a family and the needed new

car, a desire to love and be loved and restored. All these burdens seemed to have been lifted and gone with this initial encounter with the Lord and Sam is happy. He believes since God is love and cares for him that God will take care of those things he sees is missing in his life. God was now going to make life easier.

### **The honeymoon is over**

The Lord spots a weak demon with seemingly nothing to do. This spirit spots Sam and begins to stir up some self-pity over unanswered prayer: "You didn't find a wife yet Sam, maybe God doesn't love you, maybe you are not good enough. You still have a lot of sin in your life. God doesn't care for you like He does everybody else."

Sam begins to focus on and become critical of God's character and wonders if He really does care. He goes through the process of confusion, guilt, rejection, doubt, "Where is God?" it seems to Sam that God has abandoned him. There are moments when his spirit is encouraged, but then he quickly falls back into his same negative circle of reasoning.

A year of the ups and downs goes by and Sam gets tired of the roller coaster ride and takes a position in God: "Though He slay me, I will trust Him."

God begins to pour in fresh new revelation, Sam senses a deeper walk with the Lord, and begins to feel his newly developed spiritual muscles. He believes that he has achieved an unshakable place with God. God becomes so real and his praise has even greater depth and meaning.

The enemy seems to have left him. He senses the victory, but then comes another test a spirit of greater strength is permitted to expose more of Sam's carnality. The eye of the Lord watches expectantly on His saint.

Sam once again is thrown into confusion, doubt, guilt and rejection. He questions the reason and purpose for this

unfortunate and painful event. He spends nights in tears crying, "Where is God, what is He doing, what is He saying?" The pain persists, his reasoning only adds to the fire and plunges him deeper into the depths of despair and doubt. There seems to be no end to this pain, he cannot bear it for another day. Jesus watches as His child begins to resolve his commitment to the Lord. "Though He slay me, I will trust Him. now is the time to express my love and commitment to you Lord, now that I find no reason to."

Sam is once again lifted to new revelation and insight. His faith and commitment seem even surer. His understanding of the "test" is bringing in new meaning. Remaining, however, is the test of his "life" and "who" he is and "whose" he is.

This next test becomes even more intense, but the father knows that His son Sam is ready.

Spirit after spirit, sin after sin, weakness after weakness is tested, all followed by disillusionment, doubt and confusion. Each time Sam develops a greater resolve: "Though He slay me I will trust Him."

God establishes His holiness where there was sin; God establishes His strength where there was weakness; God establishes His hope where there was Sam's personal carnal dream. God becomes Sam's guide, his provision, his stay and trust in the storm.

There is left one last enemy for Sam. God finds His defeated foe Satan, nervously looking for his next victim - perhaps some church, some pastor, some apostle..... maybe Sam.

God says, "Have you considered my servant Sam?"

"Oh yes," says Satan, "Your hand has protected him against all that I have sent against him."

"You may personally touch my servant, but do not take his life," says God.

God permits Satan to test what is remaining in Sam's life to be tested, Satan knows the areas that others have missed. Sam is plunged into the worst nightmare that he ever experienced. Night and days of tears, overwhelmed by discouragement, brothers betraying his trust, finding fault. every sin that he has committed surfaces once again; every weakness he had surfaces to haunt him. He fails in his responsibilities. his future holds nothing but the deepest gloom. All looks lost. His finances, his health, his friends, his family....all is threatened. His weakness and doubts shame him. His immaturity overwhelms him. he cannot see the end of this major trial, which seems to be lasting forever. "Oh god purge my heart, cleanse me from all unrighteousness, deliver me from this pit of destruction. Why have you hidden your face from me? this is more than I can bear. I have lost all hope. I have lost all faith. I find no reason to support my faith. Day after day I groan and weep. I see no end to this torture. Oh God, come quickly. the enemy has mocked and wounded my soul. Night and day he mocks me and says, 'Where is your God, why does He not deliver you, you have failed and now God is destroying you.'"

Sam's spirals deeper and deeper into his pit, it goes on and on. Slowly the victories of the past come back. Sam becomes more resolute than ever before. In total weakness and in absolute surrender Sam cries out, "Though you slay me I will trust You."

Does God return to His servant? Oh yes! with great compassion he embraces His son. He gives him authority over all his enemies.

Sam goes forth in power and humility to bring forth the Glory lost. God does with Sam what He would want to do Himself.

Every demon knows Sam and shudders at his very presence....for he is in the image of his Father. when you look at Sam, you see Jesus.

Others, jealously admiring the power given him, try to imitate him. They cry out, "We adjure you in the name of Jesus in whom Sam preaches that you come out." The spirits leap out of the man and strip them naked and say: "Sam we know and Jesus we know....." Well you already know the rest. do you get the point?

Demons only know those who conquer them. The word is spiritually passed down from Satan to the lowest demon. They KNOW! We can talk, we can yell, we can claim, but they KNOW. They know if you have conquered them. They know if you stand for Jesus through all your testings. They KNOW!

Count it all joy my brothers when you fall in the middle of testings of all kinds and you seem to have nowhere to go. Does that statement sound familiar?.... It should, it is from James 1:2, the Andy version of course.

When you begin to understand the reason and the purpose of the process, you will begin to understand the will of God. Each test is not to bring you to some bottomless pit, but to bring you a step closer to Jesus.

Why do we fight the Devine process, the hand of God that brings pain and healing into our lives? You can answer that as well as I. The god of self holds firmly to our lives and will not surrender without the greatest of fights.

Again I say, and listen carefully to the voice of jesus pleading for you, to go on and not get stuck: Count it all joy my brothers when you fall in the middle of testings of all kinds and you seem to have nowhere to go....."Though He slay me I will trust Him"

### **Why does God try us?**

2 Chr 32:31, "...God left him (Hezekiah) to test him and to know everything that was in his heart." (NIV)

There is much in our hearts that lay hidden and unexposed. In a test, all our past, all our weaknesses and all our needs surface.

We will either legitimizing them by feeling sorry for ourselves and like the spoiled child judge God for His indifference. or we will recognize that the trial has nothing to do with who we are, but the person that God is trying to make us into.

If we can grasp the purpose that God is trying to give us - life and not death, our struggle will not be so hopeless. In our struggle to save the selfish life, we push God aside and therefore experience death. The more death we experience, the more we are convinced this is further evidence of God's indifference and punishment for our sins. This whole thing has nothing to do with us and everything to do with Him. We must be focused on Him and He will direct our paths.

We have such strong ties to self. If this force is not broken, God can never use us in a full sense for His glory. If God uses selfish men that believe spirituality is achieved by getting what they "want," then once God begins to use them, there will be a mixture of God's plan and man's. It is this mixture that often destroys the purposes of God. Envy, jealousy, anger, etc., cannot be mixed with forgiveness, mercy, kindness, loyalty etc.. Words like holiness, purity, perfection and godliness are the roots that God is trying to develop and plant in our hearts. As long as the negative qualities of self are present, there will be war.

Testing and trials are a war over "who" you will serve and not whether or not God loves you or forgives you. Self is totally unimportant. It all comes down to trust. it is "what" and "who" you choose to focus on and live by. It is a question of self-pity vs. worship and thankfulness to God.

Passing the test is your passage into the next step into a closer walk and greater enjoyment of Him. It is a prelude to power. Our passions and proclivities are the enemies of our soul and not God. James makes that point very clear:

"When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but

each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed." (James 1:13-14, NIV)

It is our own passionate wants that fuel the fire of our trials. It is because we fail to let these passions go that we have problems. We are absolutely convinced we will never be happy unless we get what we "want." We serve "IT" and hold on to "IT" as our source of security, fulfillment and most of all life.

"But I say, walk (live) by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh

sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one

another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (Gal 5:16-17, NAU)

"Against" speaks of an internal war. The problem is that most of us do not understand that we are fighting for our lives. The heavier the problem, the greater self wants to be in control. If "self" does not get its way, it cries, it complains, it judges God, it becomes angry and therefore it loses the battle for achieving real life and peace.

If we try to match our understanding against God's we wind up ruthlessly cutting God short.

*Isa 45:15, "Truly you are a God who hides himself..." (NIV)*

In most trials God takes a silent position. He does not speak to us. He does not answer our prayers and He gives us no visual hope in the situation. In our "self" nature, we see no way out. We cannot understand how God could do such a thing to us, so we approach it with our carnal minds and fall flat on our faces. (By the way, it is not God bringing on the situation, it is our relentless passion to have it our way)

Oh the pain is tremendous and I don't want to play that down. It is overbearing. It is overwhelming, there seems no hope whatsoever. God leaves us to "choice." He hides Himself to see "who" we will serve....self or Him.

We will never know the strength of what we want until we see that it is our god. You cannot serve God and Self. I capitalize the "s" in self on purpose, it is when we serve self that it becomes our god.

we must understand two things in the trial, one, God wants us to trust in His love, in His word and in His character. Two, God wants to deliver us by His power and a miracle so that we will know Him and become dependant on Him no matter what the situation, no matter what the feelings.

The length of the trial depends on us. The intensity of the trial depends on us. The result of the trial depends on us. We say, "Where does God then come in?" If we trust and focus on God in the test, we inherit His promises and His life. He will give us and make available to us His life and give us access to His promises and His power.

God does not bless a double-minded man. What does that mean? It does not mean a man that has thoughts that go back and forth, that is the natural war within the inner man. It means a man that says "I want you God," but in his mind what he really wants is for God to serve him, he has a double mind. He says one thing and wants another. He cries to God for the benefit and not the surrender of his own life. The evidence is in the fact that his "wants" are in the primary and serving God is in the secondary.

### **The joy starts by faith**

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you (Should)

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, NIV)

Let us let God develop His plan, He wants to show us His power and His faithfulness. We must be patient and let go of our sinful nature. It's joy unspeakable when we have exchanged our lives for His.

Count it all Joy!!!!!!!!!!!!!! What a life He gives, what a life we will have. Keep looking and expecting better things through having faith in the midst of your trials.