

Summary

Pastor Mark Van De Zand delivered a Mother's Day message focusing on finding value in trials and challenges when our faith is under fire. Drawing from 1 Peter 1:3-9, he emphasized that while everyone will face difficulties in life, these trials serve important purposes in our spiritual journey. The pastor shared personal experiences, including his parents' divorce during his college years, and acknowledged that Mother's Day can be particularly challenging for some - those who have lost mothers, struggle with infertility, or have difficult family relationships. He outlined four key values found through trials: our faith is proved genuine (like gold refined by fire), our Father is praised when we use the gift of faith He has given us, our fellowship with Christ deepens as we share in His sufferings, and our future is secure in the hope of resurrection and eternal life with God.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together today to study Your Word and grow in our faith, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us. Help us to be receptive to Your Spirit's leading and to see how Your truth applies to our lives, especially as we consider how to live faithfully through trials and challenges. May this time together strengthen our faith and draw us closer to You and to one another. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one tradition or memory from Mother's Day (either as a child or as a mother) that brings you joy or makes you smile?

Key Verses

- 1 Peter 1:3-9
- John 16:33
- Romans 8:28
- Philippians 3:10-11
- 1 Peter 4:12-16

Questions

- Pastor Mark mentioned that 'every single one of us will be going through moments where our faith is under fire.' What are some common types of trials that test our faith today?
- How does Peter's comparison of faith to gold being refined by fire help us understand the purpose of trials in our lives?
- The sermon emphasized that when we use the gift of faith during trials, God is pleased and praised. Can you think of a biblical example where someone's faithfulness during difficulty brought glory to God?
- What does it mean to have 'fellowship with Christ' in our sufferings, and how might this perspective change how we view our own trials?
- Pastor Mark mentioned that some people may struggle with Mother's Day due to loss, infertility, or difficult family relationships. How can the church better support those who find certain holidays challenging?
- According to 1 Peter 1:8-9, believers can have 'inexpressible and glorious joy' even without seeing Christ. How is this possible, and what does this joy look like in practical terms?
- The passage speaks of an inheritance 'that can never perish, spoil or fade.' How does this eternal perspective help us endure temporary trials?
- Pastor Mark said we can have 'joy amidst the junk' in our lives. What are some practical ways to cultivate this joy during difficult seasons?

Life Application

This week, identify one current challenge or trial in your life and intentionally practice viewing it through the lens of faith. Each day, spend time in prayer asking God what He might be teaching you through this situation and how it might be refining your faith. Look for opportunities to trust in God's sovereignty and goodness, even when you don't understand His purposes.

Key Takeaways

- Trials serve to prove our faith genuine, like gold refined by fire, demonstrating its authenticity and value
- When we exercise faith during difficulties, God is pleased and praised, just as we delight when someone uses a gift we've given them

- Through our sufferings, we fellowship with Christ and share in His experiences, which unites us more closely to Him
- Our future is secure in Christ, giving us hope that all pain, mourning, and trials will one day end in perfect peace
- We can have joy even in the midst of trials because our faith is founded on Christ who has already conquered all troubles

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the reminder that our trials have purpose and that You are with us in every difficulty we face. Help us to trust You when our faith feels under fire, knowing that You are refining us and drawing us closer to Yourself. Give us the strength to use the gift of faith You've given us, especially during challenging times. May we find comfort in knowing that we fellowship with You in our sufferings and that our future is secure in Your hands. Help us to support one another through trials and to be a source of encouragement to those who are struggling. We pray this in Your precious name. Amen.