

Common Factors In Our Trials

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

The potter had walked me through every phase of his pottery business. He had shown me the raw material, clay that had been dug from the earth; he had explained the significance of the drying process; he brought me into the room where the potters were forming vessels; he pointed out the benefits of sitting at the wheels; and at last he brought me into the firing room, where the vessels were hardened in the brick kiln.

Noticing that the small furnace was full of vessels, I asked the potter why he waited to fire so many at one time. His reasoning was that it reduced the time and the costs involved in the detailed process. While looking at all the vessels neatly arranged in the brick kiln, the Lord spoke to my heart, “And you thought you were the only one going through the fire!” I realized afresh that all of God’s people go through similar conflicts.

One of the meanings of the word “temptation” is “adversity, affliction, or trouble.” The term is indicative of the trials the Lord sends our way to test or prove our character. In the previous verses in the chapter, several examples from the Old Testament remind us how weaknesses can surface in adverse circumstances. With that in mind, we are exhorted to humbly depend upon the Lord as we face the common factors in our trials.

The trials of life always involve common pressures! We do not have to vote on it—troubles will be our portion. “Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble” (Job 14:1). What you face will not be exactly what I face, and my conflict will not be your conflict. Our troubles are not all alike, but we all alike have troubles. In every life, and on every level of life, we experience common pressures.

The trials of life usually follow common patterns! The word “taken” in the phrase, “There hath no temptation taken you,” means “to take, to lay hold, or to seize.” The idea is that troubles lay hold on us. I don’t go around looking for troubles and conflicts, do you? But the truth is that they are looking for you and me! In God’s infinite wisdom, He knows that they are for our good, for our benefit, and He sends them to lay hold of us.

The trials of life definitely affect common people! While men are prone to divide the human race into groups according to our means or abilities, at our best we are all merely common human vessels. Consequently, there are no “big I’s” or “little you’s” in the kingdom of God. Realizing that no believer can escape the trials of life, may we yield to these common factors as the Lord uses each trial to save us from ourselves.