

Life, Love and Family Daily Fact Sheet
Dr. Tim Clinton

“You Are Loved”

- **5 Steps for Increasing you Faith in Spite of Hardship** (Clinton & Hawkins, 2009):
 - **Trust God**—sometimes God allows suffering and trials to come into believers’ lives to strengthen their faith. Rejoice because of what God will do in your life and what He promises for your future. Cast your cares on Christ because His faithfulness and love for you never changes (Ps. 46; 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Heb. 13:8). Allow God to help you endure (Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:7-10; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 Peter 4:12-13).
 - **Seek His Lessons**—what do you think God is trying to teach you in your present situation? What would you like to learn while going through this? How would you like to come out of this on the other end?
 - **Seek His Actions**—what could God possibly be doing in your situation? Where do you see His hand at work? Acknowledge the Lord’s work in your life and praise Him for it.
 - **Take Small Steps Forward**—what small step can you take today to being the process of improving your life and your relationship with God? Commit to making progress and changes each day in order to see positive improvements.
 - **Get Support**—consider joining a small group in your church. As believers, we are not meant to walk through life alone. Seek godly mentors and find others whom you may trust to pray for and help you.

- **Dealing with Doubt** (Habermas, 2001):
 - Doubt is a common experience. Unfortunately, it’s been given a bad rap. Doubt is often referred to as the opposite of faith—unbelief or the unpardonable sin. It is also erroneously defined as something one ought not to admit.
 - Questioning God can be sinful, but it is not always so. When properly handled, doubt can be the first step to a positive, strong, and dynamic faith.
 - Biblical examples of doubt:
 - During his severe suffering, Job began to doubt God. He learned a tremendous lesson, however, when he realized that he knew enough about God to trust Him in the many things he did not understand (Job 42:1-6).
 - Abraham is known as the man of faith, and yet on many occasions he showcased his doubts. In spite of the promise that all people would be blessed through him, Abraham still asked for assurance (Gen. 15:8). Later, when God repeated His promise, Abraham went so far as to laugh at God (Gen. 17:15-17).
 - John the Baptist wanted to know if Jesus was really the Messiah, or if he should look for someone else (Luke 7:18-30).
 - Thomas questioned the Lord’s resurrection (John 20:24-29).
 - Paul related his struggle with unanswered prayer (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

- The believer who doubts God because of personal pain needs to internalize the same lesson the Job learned. We also know enough about God to trust Him in those painful areas that we do not understand.
 - Since God raised Jesus from the dead, thereby insuring heaven (1 Pet. 1:3-5), we have an *ultimate* answer to suffering. The victory comes as a process.
- **Quotes:**
 - *“What you believe about your future affects the way you live your life today.”*—JJ Heller
 - *“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved.”*—Helen Keller
 - *“I believe that being successful means having a balance of success stories across the many areas of your life. You can’t truly be considered successful in your business life if your home life is in shambles.”*—Zig Ziglar
 - *“You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.”*—Mae West
 - *“Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.”*—Joshua Marine
 - *“The only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle.”*—Steve Jobs
 - *“Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact.”*—William James
- **Key Thoughts:**
 - God uses our trials to shape our personal and spiritual lives for the better, and for His glory.
 - Paul tells us, “We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28).
 - Many times, events that are out of our control lead to discouragement. Realizing that God sees the events in our lives before we do should help us to not feel so overwhelmed.
 - Times of trial and discouragement should be looked at as an opportunity to grow in Christ and rediscover the person He designed you to be. This is a time to step back and look at life, perhaps changing some goals or behaviors.
 - Be ready for what God has in store for you! Having confidence in the Lord’s plan and work in your life will, in turn, increase your confidence in yourself and is a huge step in overcoming any trial or discouragement.

- **Verses:**

- *“For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’”—Jeremiah 29:11*
- *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”—Philippians 4:13*
- *“The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.”—Proverbs 16:9*
- *“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”—Ephesians 3:20-21*
- *“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”—Romans 12:2*
- *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”—Philippians 4:5-7*
- *“And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”—Romans 5:3-5*
- *“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.”—2 Timothy 1:7*
- *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”—Proverbs 3:5-6*

Endnotes

Clinton, T. & Hawkins, R. (2009). *The quick-reference guide to biblical counseling*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Habermas, G. (2001). *“The Thomas Factor: Treating Doubt.”* *The Bible for Hope*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.