



GETTING HIT BY
TRIALS

by Julie Caldwell

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I'll never forget Marianella, a pitcher for Venezuela's National team. Years ago when I played against them, Marianella frequently and purposefully hit me with her 68 mile per hour fastball so she would not have to pitch to me. Getting hit by her fastball was painful. But often times what can be even more painful than getting hit by a pitch is getting hit by trials.

Whether you are coaching or competing as an athlete, you and I are bound to encounter difficult circumstances both on and off the field.

- Is there anything you are experiencing right now that you would consider difficult? Or can you think of a time when you walked through a hard time? If so, explain.

Within the past two weeks, I have had two fairly difficult situations that have come my way. First, my new year began with a couple of visits to the emergency room as a result of an infection to one of my fingers. I have no idea how it began, and it will never be the same. And second, one of my cousins was murdered in a senseless act of violence.

We all walk through hard stuff! This is nothing new to mankind. And sometimes there are just no good answers to the trials that come our way. But how we choose to respond can be the difference between growing angry and bitter, getting stuck in the "why?" or moving forward in a healthy way.

We are not the only ones who have experienced trying times. Joseph had a few difficult situations of his own. Read chapter 37 of Genesis, as well as chapters 39-41.

In his youth, Joseph was sold as a slave by his brothers. Later, he was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife. And to top things off, he was forgotten in prison by the chief cupbearer.

- How do you think you would have responded in these situations if you were in Joseph's shoes?

Joseph's response to difficult situations amazes me. Rather than growing angry or bitter towards all those who brought these trials upon him, he saw things from a different perspective. He had a Kingdom perspective. He believed that *what others intended to harm him, God intended for good* (Genesis 50:20). You see, God had a bigger plan in store; He was preparing to save an entire nation. Not only that, God was developing Joseph's character through these difficult times.

I believe that in allowing difficult circumstances to come our way, God has something bigger in store for us and through us. So how can we move forward through our trials in a healthy way? Here are a few things I'm proactively choosing as I think through my situations...

- I'm trusting to believe that **NOTHING** comes my way without it first being filtered through God's hands of Love! As God was with Joseph, He is *with* me and *for* me. And He has purpose in allowing it to come my way.

- **I'm allowing God to minister to my heart.** While God often times uses the body of Christ to walk with me through the trials, only He can truly meet me in those places that need His healing touch.
- **I'm looking for the GOOD that God wants to bring forth from my trial.** I am asking Him if there is anything He wants to reveal to me, anything He wants to develop within me. After all, He is in the process of conforming me into the likeness of His Son (Romans 8:29)! In her workbook, *A Woman's Heart*, Beth Moore wrote, "If we are never able to get outside that which is *comfortable*, we will often forfeit the very thing that is *conformable* to Christ." Trials definitely pull us out of our comfort zones and give God an opportunity to produce something GOOD as we cooperate with Him!
- **I'm speaking God's Word over my situations.** For starters, here are a few passages on which I've got a grip: Isaiah 55:8-10, Romans 8:28, and 2 Corinthians 1:3-7. "*Lord, thank You that...*"
- **What would you add to this list?**

This morning as I read [Psalm 84:5-7](#), my heart was refreshed by God's word to me that He can take my valleys, my places of weeping and make them a place of springs! Now that's pretty powerful!

So, how will we choose to respond to the trials that come our way? May we walk in the *reality* of God's Kingdom, and may He be glorified as we cooperate with Him in allowing Him to accomplish everything He intends!

"Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca (weeping), they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion." (Psalm 84:5-7)

Additional Scriptures on trials: 1 Peter 4:12-13, James 1:2-4, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18



Competitive Edge Int'l
PO Box 64243
Colorado Springs, CO 80962

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