

WHY PAIN IS NOT IN VAIN

When you have troubles to deal with—whether it's your family, your job or your health—your perspective will determine how well you cope. And your basic perspective should be this: My troubles have a purpose; this pain is not in vain.

Each time my wife, Kay, gave birth, I saw the glow on her face when a newborn was placed in her arms—her effort and pain were worth it all. You could say that within Kay's life there was new life. And the troubles you face can produce a sense of new life in you.

"God whispers to us in our pleasures . . . but shouts in our pains," C. S. Lewis once wrote. Our troubles carry potential benefits: They grab our attention when we're ignoring something important and help us develop greater character and maturity. It's only when we feel the heat that we begin to change, grow and mature. Troubles produce perseverance, and the more you persevere, the better you'll get at handling pressure. You'll know to never give up but keep on keeping on. This gives you confidence in the reliability of your own character and in the power of God to guide you through hard times.

Now I'm sure you have noticed

Surviving setbacks and heartbreaks allows us to mature, grow and feel grateful—if we know how to embrace them

that the potential benefits that trouble carries are not guaranteed. Your troubles won't automatically help you to mature. Many people become bitter rather than better.

The benefits of trouble only emerge when you embrace the perspective that good can come out of heartbreak. This means I may not be thankful for troubles but I can be thankful in spite of them.

How can you be thankful when you have lost your job, your health or your spouse? For one thing, rather than look at what you've lost, look at


all you still have. You're alive, for one thing. So a question to ask yourself is, *What am I taking for granted? My children? My friendships? My home?*

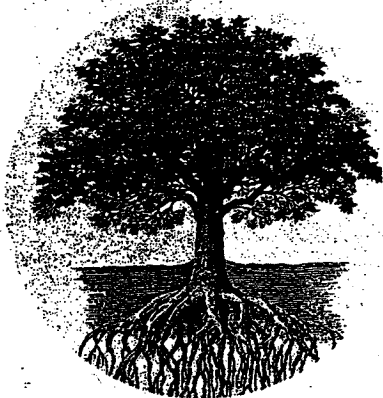
There is an old hymn we used to sing: "Count Your Blessings, Name Them One by One." We need to do that, even in the midst of trouble. When times are tough, that's when we need to be reminded of everything God has given us.

Becoming a truly thankful person can be the healthiest change you make in your life, better than any diet or exercise plan. Many people think that love is the healthiest emotion to develop, but I think it is gratitude.

When you are thankful in spite of your circumstances, you're more resistant to illness and stress. Your troubles can help you to develop an attitude of gratitude.

There's no doubt at all that if you're not facing trouble now, you will face it sometime soon. It's just a natural part of life.

As you consider your troubles, don't ask, "Why me?" Instead ask, "What can I learn from this?" Then, trust God and keep on doing what's right. Don't give up—grow up! 



You can learn more about living The Purpose Driven Life by going to www.purposedrivenlife.com or by e-mailing Rick Warren at askrickanything@purposedrivenlife.com.

HERMENEUTICS

(The study of the methodological principles of interpretation. The word itself is derived from the Greek God Hermes, whose was to communicate messages from the gods to humans).

EXOGENESIS

Deriving from Biblical texts ideas which are there within them already without adding or subtracting anything.

**Based upon trust in God
God is first**

Accept God's Word as is

Let God be God

Let (God's) chips fall where they may, for me or against me

**Accept correction, direction
From God**

**"Yes, Lord."
Lazarus came out
To Moses, "Go"
Israelites freed**

God's values, priorities, agenda

God's resources

EISOGENESIS

Inserting into one's interpretation of Biblical texts one's own ideas which are not there originally.

**Based upon trust only in oneself
I am first**

Impose My Word

**Edit messages from God to be
Compatible with my wishes**

**Correct, improve, enhance, make
compatible, agreeable to me**

**Don't tell me...
Don't feel that way...
Don't think that way...**

**No way
Adam and Eve ate the apple
Jonah refused to go
Israelites' golden calf**

My values, priorities, agenda

My/Our human resources