

*FOCUSING*

*&*

*TRUSTING*

*IN*

*GOD*

*IN THE MIDST OF*

*DIFFICULTIES*

*&*

*STORMS*



*JEAN - CLAUDE GUILBAUD*

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This recourse is a pamphlet containing my experience with God in the hospital San Juan de Dios in San José, Costa Rica in May of the year 2021

Unless it indicates the contrary, all biblical references have been taken from the Holy Bible.

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## STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe:

The Bible to be the inspired, only infallible and authoritative Word of God.

There is one true God externally existent in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, substitutionary death on the cross, bodily resurrection, ascension to the Father and His return in power and glory.

The Great Commission of the church, to go into the entire world and preach the Gospel to every person.

The resurrection of both the saved and the lost, the saved to eternal life in heaven,  
and the lost to hell.

## CORE VALUES

### **Supremacy of Christ**

We declare Christ as sovereign Head and Chief Architect of the Church, and submit ourselves to His will, words and ways.

### **Lifestyle Worship and Praise**

We desire to express God's supreme value and worth in our personal lives and in the corporate worship of the church.

### **Corporate Prayer and Fasting**

We rely on private and corporate prayer and fasting in the life and growth of the believer in executing each ministry.

### **World Missions**

We commit in taking Christ's message all over the world.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this short pamphlet, primarily to the love of my life, my beloved wife, my friend, my partner of 45 years, Matilde, for being at my side during this difficult time, for her compassion, patience, emotional and physical support but most of all spiritual by praying and calling on God for me while I was gravely ill in the hospital San Juan de Dios in San Jose, Costa Rica, but most of all to my eternal God, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for taking care of me, strengthening physically, spiritually and for giving me another opportunity to serve Him.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank my biological sister Elisabeth (Betty) Guibaud for her emotional support during all the days she was on the telephone with my wife; to our brother in Christ Fred Kindhart of Macedonia World Baptist Missions for his emotional, mental and spiritual support towards my wife in encouraging her; to Pastor Sergio Matarrita, his wife Eloisa for their compassionate hearts demonstrating the love of Christ and to all the faithful members of Bible Baptist Church of Calle Blancos for their support in prayers and help; to all the pastors here in Costa Rica; the churches, all the brothers and sisters in the United States for their faithful prayers; last but not least, our neighbor Alex and Regina Fatima Melendez for their unconditional help when they brought me, in a grave state, to the hospital, accompanying my wife, patiently, all night long.

Truly, I have no words on how to express my gratitude.

Thank God for all of you and may the Lord bless you All in a special way!

# *PRE - INTRODUCTION*

## PRE - INTRODUCTION

This morning, more than anything else, I want to direct myself to you Brethren of Calle Blancos, even though there were other Brethren here in Costa Rica, the United States and all around the world praying for me and my wife during this difficult time; but I want to thank the Lord for each and every one of you for your prayers and support during the time I was in the hospital, also for your compassion and care for us, my wife and I. You have demonstrated fraternal love not only in words but as well in actions, as James mentions in his Epistle chapter 2: 14 – 17. God is immensely pleased of your actions and that is the way it should be between brothers and sisters in Christ, because there are many that talks, preaches of the love of God for the Brethren but do not practice it neither demonstrate it. Beloved, there are many Pharisees and Sadducees in the vineyard of the Lord today and I assure you that each and every one of them will give account to God one day for their actions. Brethren, this is call hypocrisy in the eyes of God. Beloved brothers and sisters, with all my fraternal love, I charge you before God and our Lord Jesus Christ not to let the enemy, our adversary the devil rob us of this joy, the blessing to serve with love the brethren. Remember that our Lord Jesus Christ came to serve not to be served, and He did it with unconditional love for us and for the whole world.

The Lord put in my heart one verse from the Word of God which I want to bring to the table of your hearts and I pray that it will be a blessing. This verse is found in the book of Romans chapter 8, verse 28 which says: **“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”**

Meditating upon this verse, much things were swimming in my mind when I was in the hospital and the only title that came to mind regarding this text is: Focusing & Trusting in GOD in the midst of Difficulties & Storms.

Brethren, allow me to ask you a question: What would be your reaction in the midst of difficulties and storms in your life?

I want to propose one thing regarding this question, the only answer is to ask God for physical and spiritual strength, peace and wisdom.



# *INTRODUCTION*

# INTRODUCTION

Beloved Brethren, when I was in the hospital, I was meditating upon a lot of things, my wife, my family, the ministry but more than anything else upon God and His Words. The situation in the hospital was not favorable, three COVID – 19 cases around me and my condition was not enjoyable to say the least. With these things swimming in my head, a lot of verses from the Bible were coming to mind but the only one that was engraved was Romans 8: 28 which we read earlier. I remember lying down on the bed, looking up at the ceiling, watching all the other sick people around me, and talking to the Lord during the commotion of the day and the silence of the night, filled with sadness and crying on the inside saying, have mercy on me Lord, this is the fourth time that I am in the hospital for the same problem, in a strange country, I don't know what is going on but one thing I do know that you Lord is in control of everything; you have me here in the hospital for a reason, a purpose and you allow some things in our lives to make us reflect and to call our attention, one thing I ask of you Lord according to your will, give me another opportunity to continue the work that you have started in us, my wife and I, so we can see your glory manifested.

Brethren, without a doubt we can see the powerful hands of God upon us, His care, protection and provision since the beginning of this glorious journey. The powerful hands of God in the midst of difficulties, in the midst of adversities, in the midst of discouragements, slander and murmurings even from some brethren; but the Lord always reminds us, don't be discourage for I am with you because I have chosen you for this mission in order to make a difference in Costa Rica; also the Lord knew of this problem that I have ever since we set foot in Costa Rica, He knew that I was going to have another disagreeable and unpleasant episode, not just on my part but also the anxiety, heartache, the desperation and preoccupation on my wife's part. The Lord protected us for almost one year and a half waiting for our residency because He knew the health insurance that we had was not going to be sufficient in order to pay for all the extra bills; His mercy and compassion for us was in no doubt a confirmation for who He is in protecting us until today. Beloved Brethren, allow me to say this, the Lord knows the depths our hearts if truly and really we take things seriously with Him, than He helps us, protects us and provides for our wellbeing and for His glory.

Meditating upon this passage, I want to bring to the table of your hearts four objectives with respect to difficulties and storms in our lives.

*I*

*PERSUASION IN  
GOD  
IN THE MIDST OF  
DIFFICULTIES  
&  
STORMS*

# I. PERSUASION IN GOD IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULTIES & STORMS

*“And we know...”*

First of all, allow me to give you a definition of this word “persuasion”, basically it means a conviction, certainty, confidence and security in someone and in this case it is God. So, Paul by saying *And we know...* is not a question of guessing or a speculation, it is not an expression where there is no hope or a supposition, but of security, certainty, assurance, of conviction and of confidence in God in regards to whatever happens in our lives. So now, the question in regards to that persuasion is: How is it known? How do we know it? Well (1) By the testimony of God, because His words tells us that in Psalms 128: 1, 2.

***<sup>1</sup>Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.***

***<sup>2</sup>For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.***

So, here, we see God pronouncing blessings upon all who puts their confidence in Him and all those who fear Him; that is why, us, believers we can say with certainty that *we know*, it is not a soothsaying, a guess, nor a supposition, but it is God whom does not retain His blessings upon the just, especially if we walk in His ways.

In Isaiah 3: 10 also says *“<sup>10</sup>Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.”* Beloved Brethren, God does confirm to us that all will go well when we put our confidence in Him and that He will bless us. Brethren, when our conviction is strong in serving God, greater our faith will be when we trust and wait upon Him. (2) Also by our own experiences, we are sure of these facts and effects in our lives as well as in others, when we go through difficulties. Our experiences in our lives shows and confirms to us that God is in control even as we go through disagreeable obstacles in our way; sometimes, God permits these difficulties and obstacles, those deep holes and high bumps, going through dark valleys without seeing a way out, strong storms that could toss us around and giant waves that can drown us, all these difficulties can be before us sometimes, in our lives, to test our faith and to strengthen us spiritually as we depend on Him instead of being independent not needing His help. Beloved brethren, the sovereignty and capacity of God in managing each and every aspects of our lives is demonstrated in the fact that He knows everything, He is omniscient, and that He is in control; we just cannot outguessed what God has in mind, only believing and depending on him.

Brothers and sisters, many times we cite this same verse, the same words *“And we know ...”* but we do not totally and completely believe it from our hearts, and sometimes we do not put it in practice, we give excuses in order to give space to the flesh; and when the strong storms comes, trials and afflictions, difficult and displeasing moments, sometimes we feel that we cannot resist them and we ask ourselves, where is God now!, during this time that I need Him more than ever. Brethren, we shouldn't dare say nor ask God why is this happening to me? only ask to help us to go through these afflictions, difficulties, tests and strong storms. So, beloved brethren, if we know that God is in control of everything, then why do we worry, become anxious and preoccupied? (Philippians 4: 6 *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”*) We must be dependent on Him, not to be independent of Him; sometimes we inflict pain upon ourselves due to the fact that deep inside the core of our soul we want to be in control, instead of recognizing humbly and accepting the facts that we cannot.

# *II*

*PEOPLE OF  
GOD  
IN THE MIDST OF  
DIFFICULTIES  
&  
STORMS*

## II. PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULTIES & STORMS

*“...to them that love God...”*

Brothers and sisters, bear in mind that Paul was talking to believers not to the world. The holy scriptures of God tells us that the people of God will always confront situations but God will deliver us from them according to Psalms 34: 19 ***“Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.”*** And also in 1 Peter 5: 9 ***“whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”*** In other words, the same afflictions that are experiencing the other brethren in the world, practically we are going to experience them as well in one way or the other perhaps not to the same degree. As believers, we must realize that God is and will be with us in whatever situation that we are going through in our daily lives.

Brothers and sisters, in the midst of these situations there are difficulties, strong storms, dark valleys and that is where we must focus and trust in God not in our circumstances; and if we are going to dwell on our circumstances, let us be honest, that will not help us to grow in the Lord. God direct us according to His perfect and divine will in our lives and the key is ***“...to them that love God...”***; this is the perspective of a true believer whom is born again. Brethren, how can we say that we love God and at the same time we want to do everything our own ways, our own understanding, giving way to our flesh and emotions instead of leaving the Holy Spirit of God to guide us; if this is our intention of doing everything ourselves, in our own ways, without counting on Him, then God will say: [that is fine, I will back up and retain myself, and when you are ready to listen to me, I will be ready to help you as it has been my intent from the beginning]. This is the reason why we must discipline the flesh, put it under subjection; that is the old nature, the old man who is always fighting with the Spirit and when we discipline the flesh, then we will be able to walk in the Spirit because God is Spirit and all who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth according to John 4: 24 ***“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”*** Brethren, we must accept this fact that the world does not love God, the world is the enemy of God as James rightly said in his epistle 4: 4 ***“... know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”***, in other words, the affections of the world, the desires of carnal things, the addictions and devotions to worldly things, fellowship with the men and women of the world are the enemy of God and against Him; these things will keep away our soul from God and God from them. Brethren, if our intention is to be friend with the world, having fellowship with the world and if this is our resolution, then it will be impossible to have the favor God and His blessings bestowed upon us. Brethren, the world will never understand the things of God because for them it is craziness and they cannot understand according to Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 2: 14 ***“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”*** As believers, if we are truly born again of the Spirit of God, we can surely appreciate and affirm this very fact that we love God, it does not matter what happens or will happened in our lives, we suffer for the cause of Christ. So beloved brethren as believers, we must have a new perspective, a new way of thinking, to love God with all our hearts and to put all our confidence in Him not in our circumstances.

*III*

*PROMISES OF*  
**GOD**  
*IN THE MIDST OF*  
*DIFFICULTIES*  
*&*  
*STORMS*

### III. PROMISES OF GOD IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULTIES & STORMS

*“...that all things work together for good...”*

Here, Paul does not say some things, but *all things*, the good and the bad, the pleasant and displeasing, even sin God will permit so we can learn from it. The confidence that Paul expresses is in the present tense not future, in the midst of difficulties, conditions or situations that may seem impossible but in the eyes of God they are not. It is a privilege for us believers knowing that all things that happens in our lives is for our good; not only afflictions but all things. All the providence of God is for us believers, His children; God wants to bless us not harm us. God is able to work all things of which occurs in our lives, good or bad, pleasing or not for His glory, sometimes temporarily but always eternally for our spiritual good. Sometimes we are afraid to believe that some things which occurs in our lives that are not pleasing can be for our good, in the very moment we cannot understand it, but later on as we reflect and meditate on these things we are able to understand what God had in mind and come to a conclusion that He was right in every aspect.

Brethren, even though we must and need to confront the difficulties of the present time (Romans 8: 18 ***“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”***); but God will permit these trials to come in our lives and is able to work them out for our good and for His glory if we let Him. As believers sometimes we have a difficult time to let go (because we want to know the facts) and to let God (because He is omniscient and sovereign). This promise is for those who love God, His true children, not the unbelievers; even though that promise could take time before it comes to pass but God is always on time. As human beings, with our finite minds, we always want to see the results immediately but God has other plans, and His ways which are perfect are for our own good; sometimes His answers can be Yes!, No! or Wait! (Psalms 27: 14 ***“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”***). Brethren, everything revolves around the timeline of God, not ours. So as human beings with such finite minds, can we truthfully understand and grasp the mind of God? But be it as it may, as believers, we must believe and trust in the Lord and put all our confidence in Him (Proverbs 3: 5, 6, ***5Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”***), and ***“...that all things work together for good...”***.

I know that there are a lot of people and even believers as well who are going through tough and difficult times and torments in their lives, thinking and asking themselves if they are going to be able to resist these torments, strong storms and dark valleys as it seems impossible to calm them down and see the light at the end. Sometimes these torments come unexpectedly, some are behemoth and strong and sometimes scary, but we do not know what to do nor how to handle them; but sometimes we expect these torments and we are prepared to confront them and sometimes these torments come out of nowhere and that is where the anxiety, the preoccupation infiltrates our lives. Beloved brethren, needless to say, there many kinds of torments, storms and difficulties in our lives like a financial crisis, loss of a job, a tragedy in the family, being far away from our family, loss of a loved one, a marriage relationship that is destroyed, rebellious children, legal and family problems, or health problems like me in this case, or sometimes an internal conflict and we do not know what to do or where to turn to, like this world crisis of COVID of which we are experiencing and has created many controversies, inexplicable conflicts and we do



not know what to do, who to turn to and whom to believe, but GOD is in control of everything despite what the world may think or say; sometimes we complain, we get desperate because of situations of which seems infinite but let me say this, complaining will get us nowhere and will not help us to grow in the Lord, only sinking deeper and deeper in our own incapacities and misery; this is what the enemy wants, to drown us, to play with our minds, to disturb and destroy us until he gets the victory, but one thing I do know, God through His words will reach and touch us in the midst of these difficulties and torments if we allow Him; like me alone in the hospital, counting on His grace and mercy, depending only on Him and nobody else.

Beloved brethren, there are two classes of people in this world in regards to torments, those are going to go through them and those who are in them. Brethren, let me say this: torments are going to come in our lives and we cannot escape them. Sometimes God permits these torments and difficulties in our lives in order to call our attention and sometimes we need these torments to demonstrate our necessity for God. The word of God tells us in Matthew 5: 45 ***“that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”*** In other words, none of us, saved and unsaved, we will have the luxury to escape these afflictions, torments; but unfortunately there are many who thinks once they are saved, born again, following Christ that their lives will be like fragrance of roses, without problems, beloved that is not true, totally false and contrary to what the word of God says.

Brethren, the good news is that God is always in the midst of difficulties and torments, therefore there is no need for us to be preoccupied or to be afraid, we are not alone during these torments because God is with us. God is in control and will always be in control, but sometimes God allows these torments in our lives and sometimes He stops them without having us to go through them. Brethren, allow me to ask this question: Do you believe that God sleeps during these torments that we go through in our lives? His words tells us NO according to Psalms 121: 4 ***“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”*** God will never leave us in the torments alone, He will always be with us from the beginning, during and at the end; therefore there is no need to be afraid even though these torments may seem extremely strong at times but God will calm them and He will walk with us as we go through them. Brethren, even though the world is in crisis, but us believers we are in Christ Jesus depending on His protection and provision. Amen!

*IV*

*PURPOSE OF  
GOD  
IN THE MIDST OF  
DIFFICULTIES  
&  
STORMS*

## IV. PURPOSE OF GOD IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULTIES & STORMS

*“...to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

Beloved brethren, all things are connected with a purpose according to God, even though we do not understand all the things that are happening in the world and which are going to happen, even in the lives of believers, His children, that all things come with a divine plan and for a purpose according to God of which we do not comprehend, because of our finite minds. According to the prophet Isaiah 55: 8, 9 which says:

***<sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.***

***<sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.***

Therefore, there is no need to try to comprehend and guess the plan of God or even what is going on in our lives; with all assurance God has a purpose not only with His people but with the whole world. These words that Paul wrote *“...to them who are the called...”* is the reason for the calling of God of which is solely for His purpose and good pleasure ever since the beginning of creation; it is not according to our will and dignity but His plan which is for a purpose.

Beloved brethren, God is not working in the lives of His people to keep us content, to satisfy the desires of the flesh, but to fulfill His purpose and divine plan in us. In our finite minds we will never understand why these torments and difficulties comes and invades our lives but the primordial purpose is to make us strong and to deepened our faith in the One who has created us.

Brethren, the divine perspective of God is that we are called with one sole purpose, to serve Him even in the midst of difficulties and storms; not only that, but His final objective is to transform us in the image of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. Now, the day when will be able to comprehend and realize this divine fact is when we can say, without a doubt, I understand and see what God had in mind, what Jesus did for me at the cross of Calvary and that all things that occurs in my life was and is for His glory.

# *CONCLUSION*

## CONCLUSION

Dear readers, thank you for having opened your hearts and being patient in reading this short pamphlet, we saw:

- I. Persuasion in God in the midst of difficulties and storms
- II. People of God in the midst of difficulties and storms
- III. Promises of God in the midst of difficulties and storms
- IV. Purpose of God in the midst of difficulties and storms

Beloved brethren, as born again believers of the Spirit of God, if really and truly we love God, our confidence and security should be in the Lord, not in men, nor in our capacity to do things. As believers, we have this comfort, that assurance, and the understanding that God, truly, work all things for our good. The Lord promises us that all things will work together for good to them that love Him according to His purpose and perfect will in our lives, furthermore because we have been called for one sole purpose, to serve Him in whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, whatever the difficulties, storms or afflictions we are going through and we must grasp this thought that all these circumstances are temporal, and in the light of all that we will see the glory of God manifested in our lives when we endure these difficulties and storms in our lives. So beloved brethren, let us focus our minds and hearts on the LORD and trust Him in everything instead of dwelling upon our circumstances of the present day, leaving everything in His hands regarding the future because He is in control and to accept His resolution of His perfect will for us in our lives as we depend on Him instead of being independent of Him.

To Him be all honor, glory and praise because He is worthy of all in every way. Amen!

# *INVITATION*

# INVITATION

Dearest brethren, listeners and readers, I want to give you two invitations today; these two invitations could be my last or yours in receiving them.

Please, let us bow our heads and close our eyes.

The first invitation is directed to the people of God.

Brethren, sometimes we feel dismayed, discouraged with all the things that is going on in the world, not only in the world but also in our personal lives; perhaps our focus is on material things or even on ourselves instead of spiritual things, in the Lord! If you want to renew your faith in the Lord, simply present to Him this simple prayer in the silence of your hearts: ‘Lord Jesus, forgive me for not focusing on you, forgive me for my lack of faith, sometimes I feel that the storms and difficulties want to dominate me, even though I know you are by my side walking and holding me, ready to help me. Please forgive me! Thank you Lord for being at my side and holding me up during these storms and difficulties. I do ask in the precious and glorious name of Jesus, Amen!

If you have prayed this prayer or you have read this pamphlet, do not be ashamed to raise your hands or humbly kneel down wherever you are asking God for forgiveness.

The second invitation that I want to offer, is there anyone here today in this service or perhaps a reader reading this pamphlet, with all humility can you say, I do not know the Lord Jesus as my Savior, and I want to receive Him as my Lord and Savior of my life, I recognize that I am a sinner and that I need a Savior. Now with this simple prayer in the silence of your heart, can you say: “Lord Jesus, forgive me of my sins, save me, I confess that I am a sinner, I want you to be the Lord of my life, I receive you in my heart, write my name in the Book of Life, I want to be a new creature conforming to your Spirit in order to serve you. Thank you Lord for saving me and to you I give all the honor, glory because you deserve it and are worthy of all. Amen!”

If you have prayed this prayer or you have read this pamphlet, do not be ashamed to raise your hands or humbly kneel down wherever you are.

The Lord has His arms wide open to receive you; you have been saved and forgiven by the grace of God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2: 8 and 9 says: “<sup>8</sup> ***For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest any man should boast.***”

If you are conscious of what you have done today, do not be afraid or shameful to come at the altar, with humility, to make it public or if you have read this pamphlet, make it public to everyone with all joy and be proud of the Lord that you are a new creature and His Spirit is in you. The word of God says in 1 Peter 5: 5 “***...for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.***” In 2 Corinthians 5: 17 “***Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.***”

Loving Father in heaven, thank you for these decisions and that your name be glorified Lord Jesus. Bless us and help us to live a life for you as you have given us a new life for this sole purpose. Amen!