

3. He show us that our suffering gives us perseverance.

“Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” (Romans 5:3-5 ESV)

“Persistence is the single most important ingredient of success in life...When confronted with a failure or disappointment, you have only two choices: You can give up, or you can persist...If I could pass on one character trait to young people in the world – one single quality that would help them achieve success in life – it would be persistence. It’s more important than intellect, athletic ability, good looks or personal magnetism. Persistence come from a deep place in the soul. It is a God-given compensation for what we lack in other areas of our life. Never underestimate its power.” Rich DeVos, *Hope From My Heart*

4. He shows us that He uses our weaknesses to make us strong.

“For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12:10)

“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)



Cultivating Shalom: Part 4

“The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.” (Numbers 6:24-26)

Hebrew word for Peace is *Shalom*. *Shalom* is the sense of well-being that comes when brokenness is made whole again.

Shalom is actually a manifestation of divine Grace.

“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:3-7 ESV

“The irony is that we attempt to disown our difficult stories to appear more whole or more acceptable, but our wholeness—even our whole-heartedness—actually depends on the integration of all of our experiences, including the falls.” Dr. Brene Brown

Crossing Over

The root word for *Hebrew* means “one from beyond” or “from the other side”. The related verb *aver* means “to pass, cross, or traverse”.

To be Hebrew means to cross over! The literal definition is one who passes through a liquid or watery medium and comes out dry on the other side.

We have an Enemy

“For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan blocked our way.” (1 Thessalonians 2:18, NIV)

The Greek word for “blocked our way” means to “cut a ditch in the road.”

“Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.” (2 Corinthians 11:24-27 NIV)

“That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12:10 NIV)

Chaos = disorder, disarray, disorganization, confusion, turmoil, disruption, upheaval, mess, shambles, free-for-all; anarchy, lawlessness, train wreck.

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” (Genesis 1:1-2 ESV)

The Hebrew word for “create” is *bara* that means to form or fashion. The word carries the idea of “cutting out.”

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:28-30, ESV)

“to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” (Ephesians 4:22-24, ESV)

What does God show us by getting us out of a ditch?

1. He shows us that He makes a way where there seems to be no way.

2. He shows us that we give others the comfort that we have received.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 5 For as we share abundantly in Christ’s sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-5 ESV)