

Title: I Accept My Desert

Debra Gray, Garden Gathering, 6/8/25

Hallelujah, that song that we sang about made us aware of something about these afflictions. Somewhere in that song, it says, "All of a sudden, I became aware of the afflictions, but it is grace," that enablement that God gives to us, to be able to handle, to be able to endure, to be able to persevere, to be able to stay under, and to be able to make it through whatever it is that we are going through at that moment. I just want to bring an encouragement to us about endurance and being able to handle your desert place. "I accept my desert place." I once would not say that, "I accept my desert place." But it's a place of growing. It is the most important place. Sometimes we think being up high is the most important place, but when we are down in the valley, that "Lily," Jesus, is down there with us. He helps us grow. He helps us bring character forth in our life. He helps us to make it through and to persevere.

The Bible says that if we stay under that, we can be *in want of nothing*. Now y'all might hear me go back to the King James Version. I might do a little bit of Amplified Version. I might do a little bit of ESV. But, as it says in the Living Translation, if we stay underneath it and try not to "squirm our way out," that patience that is needed to produce in us will come forth, and it will do a mighty work in us." Then we will look back on that and say, "I made it through. I went through that. God was with me. He was with me all the time."

Sometimes we have to focus. That word came forth on Wednesday about "focus." Brandy preached the whole lesson. She just came forth with all I was planning on saying. You know, it's one Spirit, and when God speaks to one, we should have a witness inside of us. That what He said to her, He is saying it to us. We need to have that witness, and we need to have that agreement. As we have that agreement, that thing will come to pass for us. It will happen for us. We will grow in it. We will mature in it. We will let it have its perfect work in us. We can be *in want of nothing*. We can go through anything that comes our way, because we know that God's grace is there to help us. "I accept my desert. I accept my desert place."

We're going to look at a few scriptures. Y'all know how we do around here. We just go through a whole lot of Scripture, but it's to build us up. It's to build that wall. Just think about it. When that architect is drawing up those plans, and they begin to build something, they have to do it line upon line. That's what we do here with the word. We bring the word, "line upon line, precept upon precept. Here a little, there a little." We learn from it. This all *came* up from a lesson that I'm learning. He is teaching me how to be able to "count it all joy." How to be able to look to God when you're in that fire and furnace of affliction. Look to God, the "author and the developer of our faith." When we take our eyes and we look to Him, we know that God has this. God, you're going to handle it for me. You're going to help me. But, we have to have that agreement with Him, and believe. To know without a shadow of a doubt is something that we have a resolve in.

We have to be determined, that "I'm going to make it through this." I have to be determined that God is with me. It may not look like God is moving. It may not feel like He is moving. You may say, "Why am I in this place?" But, God is saying, He is with us in those places. So, I praise Him that as we come out on the other side of it, we can look back and say, "Look what my God has done." That is a song. "Look at what the Lord has done." God has done some things for us. Sometimes it feels like we are not going to get out from under this, or "I'm not going to get through this. What am I going to learn in this?" What we learn is to persevere. We learn to endure. We learn it.

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It was said again last week. It's not just for us, and it's not just for me. I'm not going through this thing here just for myself, but it's for me to be that "written epistle that is read by all men." I'm going to say that again. "It's the written epistle, that is read by all men." That's what we are. We are the book. Sometimes people don't open up the word. But what they do is, they read us. We should be so full of the word, that when they read it, they can get help. Because they're looking at our lives, what we have gone through, and where we are. They ask, "How did you handle that? How did you go through that?" You say, "It was because of the word of God, because the word of God is in my heart. I put it there so that I won't sin against Him. I placed it there so that nothing shall offend me. The Word says that I am not offended because I love His law. We love His law because we're not offended. When we love this word, it helps us. It helps me know how to treat that person that treats me badly and know how to pray for them. I didn't want to pray for them. But, look here, God said, "Pray for them."

When He says, "Pray, He means not just, "Lord, bless them." No, you are going to have to spend some time praying. You are going to have to spend some time crying. "Oh, God, help them and help me." When I pray for them, it delivers me. We have to change. I have to change my way of thinking. When I pray for somebody that is treating me ill, when I pray for somebody that is insulting me, when I pray for somebody that has persecuted me and lied about me and I have done nothing wrong, that helps me to be delivered. God, want us to do these things so that we can show that we are from Him. Don't I want it to be made known that I'm from Him? When I'm being made known that I'm from Him, I don't have to make excuses. They see how you are walking. They see how you walk. Thank you. See friends, there you go. That's what we need. We need people like that.

1 Peter 4:12 ESV

"Do not be surprised at the fiery trial which comes upon you to test you as though something strange were happening to you, but rejoice in so far as you share in Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed." Hallelujah! "If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed because the Spirit of Glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of us suffer as murderers, even murderers with our mouth. "Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed. But let him glorify God in that name."

Now the scripture says that "if the prophets were persecuted before you, how much more we are we going to be persecuted." How much more am I going to have to go through this? God said He's no respecter of persons, and whatever He took them through and helped them through, He is going to do it for Debra. He going to help me get through that because it was already done. "There is nothing new under the sun." It may come in a different suit. It may come dressed in a different way, but, "There is nothing new under the sun." So, whatever happened then is going to happen now, and I just have to believe that God is going to help me.

Now, in this suffering, there are many different levels of things that we go through to be proven by Christ. There are many fires, trials, and levels that we go through, to be in agreement with what Christ suffered. You all know I like to unpack the Greek word and for this word suffering, it is "pathema." It means, "to suffer, to experience and to have pain." Now we have to look at pain in a totally different way. The Bible says, "Let this mind be in us, which is also in Christ Jesus." So, my mind has to change over here on this left side, to come over here on this right side. I know that the pain that I'm going through, Christ suffered it as well. We have to have that revelation, knowledge and enlightenment in our spirit man. No matter what it is, Christ already went through it. He's the Great High Priest. He already knows the afflictions and the sufferings that we go through. He already knows it. He has already been through it. He has already tested it, and He already passed it.

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It's the same thing with us. I'm going to be tried as gold. When I'm being tried as gold, then I can come out pure like He wants us to be. A test is a test of our faith. It's a test of our faith that brings endurance, steadfastness, patience, perseverance, and it produces these things on the inside of us.

We have to grow up. Just think about the house. Think about the architect again. Think about the house being built. If you take some hay and try to build a house, it's going to be worse than the three little pigs, who built that house the wolf blew down. Everybody knows that story. But if we build upon the Rock, the Bible says that when those winds come, when the floods come, and when everything comes, we will be able to stand and be like a palm tree. We are going to bend with the wind, but we are going to keep on standing, because we know that "our Redeemer liveth, and greater is He that is in me than he that's in the world." "If God be for us, He's more than the world against us." "If God is for me, He's more than he who is persecuting me." He's more than he who is talking behind my back. He is more than those that are trying to throw those arrows.

We need to have that whole armor on. I have been taught here, you don't take that armor off. The whole armor of God is something that you put on and you keep that on. Why? Because, it's faith. It's the helmet of salvation. It's the breastplate of righteousness. It's girding my loins with truth. It is having my feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. I have on this equipment that I need to keep on. Don't think you are going to take it off and put it on. Brandy says, "No, you keep that armor on." So, I have to keep it on, and not take it off. Thank you, Jesus.

We carry His name. There's a resolve we have to make. There's a place in God that we have to settle. We have to settle in Him. So, get in your seat. Sit back and settle in and love God. Let God handle the ways and tell us what we need to do. Speak the Word. When we speak the Word, and have that agreement from our head, and from our heart, then we can say, "Peace and be still to the storm." Even though you are in it, you are going to be able to handle it. Hallelujah, because it comes to test us.

1 Peter 1:7 NKJV

"That the genuineness of your faith is more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire. It will be found to the result of praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Hallelujah. Okay, I'm going to say this on the second part of that scripture. That second part in the Amplified version says that, "This proving of our faith is intended to redound to your praise and glory and the honor when Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One, is revealed." When it is revealed to us, hallelujah! It's testing, because I told you all, it comes with many different colors, perseverance, faith, endurance, holding on, not letting go. Hold on like a bulldog. Everybody can identify that when a dog holds on like that bulldog. You know, his jaws are so tightly gripped that nothing can take him apart. My son used to have a pit bull named Chino, and he wanted you to try and take it away, but there was no way you could because he had such a grip on it. That's the same thing we have to do. If you allow me to say it, "Hold on even though hell is coming against you, hold on to that word. Do not let it go.

Know that God is there with you in it." You know what you can do. Say, "God, you said this, and you said that. This is what you said. God, you said to put in remembrance your word. So, here I am bringing it to you. You said this, and so I'm waiting for it to happen. You said this to me. You told me that, when I was in the bed crying. When I was on my knees weeping, you said this to me. So I'm waiting for this right here, that's Texas talk. I'm waiting right here for this to come to pass." God said it to us. We have to believe what He has said to us. He's going to do it.

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Don't compare yourselves with others being blessed and what's happening in their life. Praise God with them, because the Bible says, "Rejoice with those that rejoice." I'm going to rejoice with them, because when my day comes they will say, "Look at her!" Nobody is going to be able to shut me up, because I'm going to shout it from the mountain top, like the word says. In this being tested and tried, in this fire of affliction, and in this furnace of where the gold is being tested, do like Job who said, "God, you know the way I walk. You know my way."

Job 23:10 NKJV

"But He knows the way that I take. When he has tested me, I shall come forth as gold."

Job 23:10 NLT

"But He knows where I am going. And when He has tests me, I will come out as pure as gold."

He tested me like gold in the fire, and He is going to do what? "Pronounce me innocent." He is going to pronounce me innocent, because I stayed underneath that. I went through that fire. I believe our God. I believed him. Hallelujah.

Proverbs 17:3 NIV

"The crucible for the silver, and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart."

Uh oh, He tests the heart. This is what it is. The whole thing matters and comes down to my heart. What is in my heart? Have I put the word in my heart? Have I believed God from the heart? Is what God said true? Because, you know what the enemy will come and do. "Did God say?" Yes, He said it. He sure did. He said it, and I'm going to believe it no matter what.

Isaiah 48:10b ESV

"I have tried you in the furnace of affliction."

So, don't think that we are not going to go through times when you are crying out to God for "the more." That's it around here. There is always more. When there's more, more comes. God comes to be with us in that more, even though it's hot, and even though it's fiery, God is still there with us in the midst of that.

I Corinthians 3:13 MSG

"Each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done."

That building of that house is going to tell what kind of material that I use, and what kind of material I put in that house to help me to be able to stand through all of this I'm going through. How can I use the word of God? What am I using? Am I using myself? Am I using somebody else's stuff? Whoa, whoa. I just saw the picture of Saul trying to give David his armor. David said, "I can't use that. That's too big. That doesn't fit me. This is not my portion. But, I have a "Rock" on which I can stand on." Praise our God. Hallelujah. My goodness. Oh, my Lord, You are so good. Thank you for your revelation knowledge.

I Corinthians 3:9b-13 MSG

"Or, to put it another way, you are God's house." Say, "I am God's house." Hallelujah. "Using the gift that God gave me as a good architect, I designed the blueprints, Apollos is putting up the walls. Let each carpenter who comes on the job take care to build on the foundation!" So, that's got to be proper first, because He's the Chief Cornerstone. He's the foundation. Remember, there is only one foundation, the one already laid: Jesus Christ. Take particular care in picking out your building materials. Eventually, there is going to be an inspection." There is going to be an inspection, hallelujah.

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“If you use cheap or inferior materials, you will be found out.” We are going to be found out if we use the wrong thing, or if we use the wrong material, so we have to use the right materials to build upon this. “The inspection will be thorough and rigorous. You won't get by with a thing. If your work passes inspection, fine. If it doesn't, your part of the building will be torn out and started over.”

I don't want to do a makeup test. No, Lord, no makeup test. Let's pass that thing the first time and get her done. Right? Let's do it the first time. God, bring it and let's get that thing done, because I don't need those makeup tests. I don't know about y'all, but when I was in school and we did makeup tests, talk about squirming. I would ask, “do I have to?” Y'all, let me tell on myself. Okay, so we were in fifth grade. I wish my friend was here so she could hear this, but her mom was our teacher who caught us cheating on a test by writing on the palms of our hands. Then I needed something, so I raised my hand. She looked at me and said, “Put your hand down.” We were all in trouble. Everybody got in trouble because everybody was cheating. You can't make it through life cheating. I can't make it through life cheating. I have to put that word in my heart. I have to study to show myself approved so that I can be the workman that needs not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. I need to learn that lesson and not have to write stuff on my hand. Jesus help us.

That fire is going to test us and prove the workmanship of each builder. Glory to God. If we are insulted, do you know what insult means? When we are insulted, it means they mock us. They talk about us. They say stuff that's not true. Every believer is going to go through something that's not true. Every believer is going to be around a group of people that are going to just talk so crazy about you. You want to go to God. I did, saying, “I did not do that. I did not say that.” He doesn't want you to try to defend yourself, but you can go to Him. We can go to Him and say, “Lord, You know. You see everything.” Nothing is hidden here with Him. Everything is wide open, and laid open before Him. He sees everything that I've said, everything that I've done, and everything that I tried to do. I didn't do everything that they made up. You could just tell Him that.

Jesus, my Lord. I thank You, Father, for opening up our eyes. Thank you for giving us revelation. Thank you for opening up our hearts. Thank you for helping us to receive. Reveal your word to us in each and every stage of our walk. Reveal yourself to us.

Acts 5:41 ESV

“Then they left the presence of the council, (Sanhedrin in another version), rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.” That's the resolve we have to have. We have to get it in our minds, get it in our hearts, and believe for that I just went through. I went through it, and “I'm going through it with joy. I am rejoicing, and I'm going to rejoice on the other side.” Why? Because, “I did it.” Because I was counted worthy to suffer for His name. Change the way we think about suffering. Change the way we think about a fiery trial. Change the way that my mind is trying to take me right now. Heal me, and help me to change so that I can know that I can rejoice in it. When we rejoice in it, that's when the chains fall off.

That's when the walls that try to separate us from God fall down. That's when those things fall down and they can't rise up again, because we have chosen to rejoice, knowing that I was counted worthy. I was counted worthy y'all, to go through that test. I was counted worthy for God to help me through this situation. It came on this side of me. It came in behind me. It came on this side of me, and it was in the front of me. It was everywhere. But, I was counted worthy, because of it. “I know that my Redeemer lives. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. I am redeemed.” We have to say that word and believe that word, because of all kinds of evil.

Matthew 5:11b ESV

Says, "Blessed are you when they... "utter all kinds of evil against you falsely, on my account." That's why it comes, because it's false. When that false comes, we have to know they didn't know Jesus. They don't know who you serve. They don't know who you are in love with, and they don't know who you made a covenant with. They don't know who you are in agreement with, so they treat you as evil. Matthew 5:11 takes us right back to that scripture that all of this came about in Matthew 5:43-48 where Jesus talks about loving our enemies and praying for them. All of this comes back to that. Every bit of it comes back to them not knowing Who it is that we love. Who it is that we call upon to answer prayer for us. Who it is that when we have a need, He says, He is Jehovah Jireh, and that He meets every need that we have because we cried out unto Him."

They didn't know Him. The Scripture says, "If they had known it, they would not have done it. If they had known it, they would not have done what they did. They didn't know. Just think about the passion of the Christ, when Jesus was up on that cross, and everything started getting dark. They didn't know what happened? They wouldn't have done it, but they did it, not knowing that part of this scripture. My subtitle says that "Glory is just around the corner." It's just around the corner. Glory be to God. Hallelujah.

John 15:21 ESV

"But all these things, they will do to you on the account of My name, because they do not know Him who sent Me."

They didn't know it. That's when we have to come back with that word, "resilience." I am learning new words. Resilience means, "to have the capacity to be able to withstand, to recover quickly from difficulties, and to spring back into shape." Oh, let me give an example, y'all think about a rubber band. Pull it out of place and it comes right back. We need to have that type of a spirit to come back from the difficulties.

I heard it taught in here when I first started coming. I was walking through here to go down to my K1 class, and heard Brandy say, "Do not faint in the day of adversity, because if you do then your strength is small." She spoke that in the "Who Am I" class and that scripture has reigned in my heart for eight years. Every time I get ready to go through something. I hear, "Do not faint. Don't become weary. Don't give up. Don't let the enemy know your hand." He doesn't know everything. He is waiting to hear what's coming out of our mouth. That's the only way he knows anything, when we speak it. As a man thinks in his heart so is he. Think it, and it's going to come out of my mouth. What's in my heart's is going to flow up out of my mouth. So, I put that word in here. Put the word in there, so that in a day of adversity, we will not faint, because we have strong faith. We get strong. We get strength from the Lord. We sung the song with the words that He said. Don't just go by the words, but, "The joy of the Lord is my strength." The joy of the Lord is what helps me to get through.

Think of the book of Nehemiah about what they were going through when he wanted to come back to help rebuild the city. What happened? He said, "The joy of the Lord is my strength." I'm going to take that word. I'm going to believe what you said no matter what comes or what goes. "I have to hang on to God's unchanging hand," the old saints used to say. "I have to hang on to God's unchanging hand no matter what, because I know that my Redeemer liveth," Resilience. Jesus, Jesus, hallelujah,

Hebrews 11:26 AMPC

"He considered the contempt and the abuse and shame borne for the Christ (the Messiah who was to come) to be a greater wealth than all the treasures of Egypt, for he looked forward and away to the reward (recompense)."

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This is speaking of Moses. I love Moses. You can't ask me what is my favorite scripture, because I love them all. Moses looked forward to what God was doing. He knew that there was a better way. There was a better way. Hallelujah! Jesus is that Way. He's that Way, the Truth and the Life. He is it. There is nothing before Him, and there is going to be nothing after Him. That is it. That's it. Right there. "He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt. For he was looking toward the reward." He was looking for something different. He was looking for something that wasn't built by man's hands. He was looking for the God, the Holy One of Israel, who knows all things, and can do all things, and does not make mistakes. He knows exactly what He is doing, and He knows the timing and when to do it. He knows the timing, and He knows the path that we each take. So He knew that He had to do something different. He looked. I just finished looking at it, too. Saying, "Lord, you are just something. He just lines things up.

Moses was in in the world, in the best place, in Egypt. He had everything. He had everything. He didn't want for anything. But the Holy Ghost rose up on the inside of him. Jesus rose up on the inside of him. Saying, "There is a better way. Do not agree with the world, but come over here to this side. Know that I have a reward and a recompense for you, and it's much better than what Egypt can give you." It's so much more and so much better than what the world wants to give us. So, we have to have that in our hearts to know that God has something great for me. God, You have things for me. You have what scripture says, "I know the thoughts and the plans that I have for you, plans of good and not evil; to bring you to an expected end. I have the plans."

Therefore, I'm going to agree with what your word tells me. I agree with your word and know that God is alive and well. He sees each and every one of our doings. He sees each and every one of our plans that we have made. You know He tells us to make plans, so He can change them. So, He knows it. Has He done it? Has He done it to me? Has He done it for anybody else but me? He doesn't make you make the plans. "You go right on here, go on here. Make the plans. Because soon as you make the plans, I am going to change them. I'm just waiting on you to make them, so I can change them for you." That's the right way to go. May not feel like it. May not seem like it. Just as the lyrics of the song said, "I don't see Him working. I don't feel Him working. But, you know, God is always at work." So, we just thank Him and bless Him in the name of Jesus.

"Father, we thank you, hallelujah. We honor you, God. We laugh with you, because you are so good to us and so faithful to us. Your faithfulness never ends. Your loving kindness is better than life. You are with us through the ups and the downs and the highs and the lows, and we choose to glory in it, Father God, even in our afflictions and our infirmities. Because you said that when we do that, "you will rest the tent over us." Your word, you will come and rest the tent over us. As we go out through this day, as we go out through this month, as we go out through this year, help us to have a resolve. Help us to know that we have resilience on the inside of us, and that you are with us. "Greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world." If you be for us, you are more than the world against us. We are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus, who loved us and gave Himself for us. Help us to stand and be like a palm tree. Help us, Lord God, and let this word bring fruit. Let this word bring fruit. Let your fruit come God, in the mighty name of Jesus. We choose to thank you. We choose to honor you. Thank you for the privilege of being called your child. Thank you for the honor Lord God. We bless you and we praise You. It's in Jesus' name, we pray, amen. Praise the Lord. Thank you, Debra. We hear the word and we receive it. Now, let's walk in it.

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