

## **“Our Position (when facing Opposition)”**

November 4, 2018

### **Ephesians 3:13-16**

**CORE:** In the NT, the word “church” (*ekklesia*) is much more than a weekly meeting or a meeting place. It describes “*a called out people.*” Our “calling” is **two-fold**:

- **Called out to surrender to Jesus** (*free from every other inferior influence!*)
- **Called out to influence the world** (*authority to transform; bring Heaven!*)

This will be met with **OPPOSITION**.

**“Tribulations”** (*thlipsis*) “*to pressure; oppress; to inflict pain—both physically and emotionally—in order to shut down.*”

#### **1. Part of life in His Kingdom**

- ***“In the world, you will have tribulation. But take heart, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33 ESV)***
- ***“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:11-12 NIV)***
- ***“For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake.” (Philippians 1:29 ESV)***

#### **2. God does not send tribulations**

- He is not conflicted or cruel—*i.e., sending sickness, then asking us to pray for healing*
- ***1 Corinthians 14:33- “God is not the author of confusion (inconsistency).”***
- ***1 Peter 5:8- “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (swallow up).”***
- The only way he can “swallow” us—is if we swallow his **lies**: *i.e., “God doesn’t care. You’re on your own. Evil will win. It’s not worth it, etc.”*

#### **3. God turns trials into gold (Job 23:10) (“...for your glory” Ephesians 3:13)**

- He takes what was intended to be **destructive**—and makes it **productive!** (*i.e., Joseph to his brothers: “What you intentionally meant for evil...”*)
- ***“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.” (1 Peter 4:12-13 NIV)***

- ***“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” (2 Corinthians 4:17 NIV)***
- The **“test”** in the trial is not to **fail you**—but to **prove** He’s the **Faithful One!**
- It’s not about what you’re **going through**—it’s about **what you’re coming to** that matters most!

#### **4. He is “very present” to “help (us) in trouble” (Psalm 46:1)**

- ***“Very present”***—the closest possible proximity
- Being **part of “Father’s...family in heaven and on earth” (Ephesians 3:14)** is what matters most!
- ***“When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.” (1 Peter 2:23 NIV)***
- ***“Those who suffer for following God’s will should enfold their lives into the Creator, who will never fail them, and continue to always do what is right.” (1 Peter 4:19 TPT)***
- Let Father’s **acceptance** be your dwelling place—not their **rejection!** (What we  **dwell on**—we  **dwell in!**)

#### **5. See resistance as a “faith builder.”**

- Despite what is happening “outside” you—focus on what the Holy Spirit is doing “inside” you: ***“Strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.” (Ephesians 3:16)***
- Every day the choice between life and death is set before us (***Deuteronomy 30:19***)—the words of our mouth set the climate for our soul (“*inner man*”)—Caroline Leaf
- We are **not** victims—we are **“the captains of our souls”**—Caroline Leaf

#### **CLOSING-**

***14” So I kneel humbly in awe before the Father of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, 15 the perfect Father of every father and child in heaven and on the earth. 16 And I pray that he would unveil within you the unlimited riches of his glory and favor until supernatural strength floods your innermost being with his divine might and explosive power.” (Ephesians 3:14-16 TPT)***

*Possible song: “We Will Not Be Shaken” (Bethel Music)*