



2 Questions for times like these

feminine hearts alive

Staying centered in Jesus rather than getting swept away by fear

First Question:

Truthfully, what has been the posture of your heart in the last 2-3 weeks?

You can feel the fear ramping up everywhere and you can see the panic in people's eyes. These are unprecedented times and uncertainty about the future is uppermost in everyone's minds.

We see inflation rise, we go to the gas station and experience increased prices, we hear about supply chain issues.

It would be so easy to just jump on the fear train and ride it with everyone else.

But do know this, you and I have a choice in how we respond to uncertain times when it feels like all the "sure" things in our lives are being threatened and going through tremendous upheaval and change.

There is a way to actually walk with Jesus through this so you grow and become more intimate with him.

How? By choosing to go with faith, finding your life in Jesus and turning to God in these times so He is your source of life, security, and hope.

James put it this way: **James 1:2-8(MSG)**

² Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides.

³ You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors.

⁴ So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.

⁵ If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help, and won't be condescended to when you ask for it.

⁶ Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought. People who "worry their prayers" are like wind-whipped waves.

⁷ Don't think you're going to get anything from the Master that way,

⁸ *adrift at sea, keeping all your options open.*

These tests/challenges actually expose where and what we have been putting our trust in. The testing of our faith, James says, develops perseverance which leads to us becoming more mature. That is, we come out the other side more alive, more true, more intimate with Jesus. Our part is the choice—how we see the tests, not giving way to fear, and going to our true Father to ask for his help. When we do this, we grow, we thrive, we persevere as God comes through for us. Believe it or not, you can choose whether or not your heart gives way to fear.

Second Question:

Do you see that the offer from Jesus in times like these is life, real life that comes in no other way?

I wish it was true that the times I have grown the most in my walk with God have come when I have been on vacation and living a life of ease and comfort. But, honestly, the times I have grown the most in my own heart and life with Jesus have come through times of pain, challenges, trouble, and uncertainty. Mint juleps in the real world don't compare with the pain of relationships, child problems, health issues, or financial crises. At least when it comes to growing my heart and life with God.

Here is the amazing thing: if we see the Larger Story and that what God is really up to is our transformation at a heart level, then it does put the trials and troubles in perspective. We can see the trials for what they are: the very vehicles that God works through to produce character qualities in us (like faith, hope, love, truth, courage, and strength) that would come in no other way.

James puts it this way: **James 1:12(MSG)**

Anyone who meets a testing challenge head-on and manages to stick it out is mighty fortunate. For such persons loyally in love with God, the reward is life and more life.

James 1:12(NIV)

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him

Do you see it? Do you see the offer? The crown of life—you and I receive more and more life from God.

This is a game changer. This can totally change your perspective and give rise to immense desire. You mean if I say no to fear, and don't give way to fear, and don't jump on the fear train, and turn to God for his help, his perspective, his words, his strength, then the result is that I become more alive, more free, more true, more in love with God, and experience greater joy and peace? The answer: a resounding **"YES!"**

Believe it or not you can choose whether or not your heart gives way to fear.

So everyday in the midst of all the uncertainty and fear trains running loose everywhere, you and I get the choice to choose God, and the result is we receive more and more of the life of God in our hearts and souls. That is such an incredible offer!