

*Even if we don't know the reason for our trials,  
we can know that the Lord will never abandon us.*

WE DON'T ALWAYS

# KNOW

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## ***"Why?"***

Have you ever asked this simple question but not received an equally simple answer? Sometimes when bad things happen to us or to people we love, we want to know why. "Why did my grandma have to die?" "Why did my friend's dad lose his job?" "Why did I fail my test when I studied so hard?"

Just wanting to know "why" seems like such a small thing to ask for. That's all we really want to know when we're facing difficult trials, right? To just have someone sit down and explain all the reasons why you're going through what you're going through. Right then and there.

But unfortunately, that's not usually how this life works. There are some things we may not ever completely understand here on the earth. And when we don't get a straightforward answer, it's easy to get discouraged or frustrated.

### **Why do we not always know "why"?**

We know Heavenly Father has a plan for us, and we know we will all have to face trials throughout this adventure we call life. But trusting the Lord without knowing all the answers while feeling that looming fear of the unknown can be really hard sometimes.

So how can we do it? How can we trust in God's plan for us, have faith, and feel joy when we're



# “WHY”

faced with all sorts of trials that don't always make sense? Well, the key is understanding that sometimes not knowing all the answers is all part of learning to trust God and His plan.

Moving forward with faith without knowing “why” allows us to turn to the Lord for help and grow closer to Him. Nephi was a great example of this!

In 1 Nephi 11:17, he says, “I know that [God] loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things.” So, when you're feeling bad about not understanding everything, remember that even Nephi didn't always know all the answers. But he kept going and trusting, and so can you!

## Why doesn't God just take trials away?

When I was facing some difficult challenges as a teenager, I remember praying to Heavenly Father and asking Him to just take them away from me. I knew He could. I knew He had the power to. But every morning when I woke up, the trials would still be there! I would be devastated. My heart would sink, my faith in the Lord would dwindle. I would feel completely abandoned.

Sometimes I thought my trials were given just to torment me. I couldn't see any point to them.

One day, I came across these words from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “When those moments come and issues surface, the resolution of which is not immediately

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“When those moments come and issues surface, the resolution of which is not immediately forthcoming, *hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes.*”

—ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND



forthcoming, *hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes.*<sup>1</sup>

I decided to focus on what I did know instead of what I didn't know. And I did know deep down that if God wasn't taking my trials away, there had to be a reason for what I was going through, even if I didn't understand what that reason was at the time. So I continued to put my faith and trust in Him. I kept hoping some “additional knowledge” would come.

And for some of my trials, that knowledge finally did come. And for others I was blessed with more patience to continue on the right path without knowing all the reasons why for now.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught that without trials and challenges in life, “there would be no test of strength, no development of character, no growth of powers, no free agency, only satanic controls.”<sup>2</sup>

There has to be opposition in all things (see 2 Nephi 2:11). Otherwise, how would we ever appreciate the good without the bad? How would we ever feel triumphant when we beat a challenge? We wouldn't be able to grow if God just magically waved trials away when we asked Him to! When I realized this, my whole perspective on adversity and trials changed. I began to see the good in them.

## How can you find the good, even in the hardest trials?

Trials bring goodness, growth, and strength like nothing else can. But sometimes it can take a while to recognize that goodness. For example, I've faced a heavy trial for years, and I may have to face it for the rest of my life.

This particular trial has stretched me, pushed me, and almost defeated me a few times. But now that I look back on everything this trial has put me through, I can honestly say that I am thankful for it. I'm thankful for all my trials.

I'm a different person now because of them. I'm more compassionate, more patient, more forgiving, more resilient, and more hopeful. Through it all, I've grown closer to my Heavenly Father and the Savior more than I ever thought I could. I wouldn't be who I am today without all my trials.

Adversity is meant to shape you into the person Heavenly Father wants you to become. Trials are definitely challenging, yes, but through it all, they allow you to reach out to God for help, and to feel the comfort, peace, and joy only He can offer you.

If you are struggling to see the good in your trials now, be patient, keep praying, and have faith. Heavenly Father can strengthen you to endure them well as you continue to put your trust in Him.

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: “Challenges, difficulties, questions, doubts—these are part of our mortality. But we are not alone. As disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have enormous spiritual reservoirs of light and truth available to us.”<sup>3</sup>

If you're facing a difficult trial, you're in good company. The Lord is very close to you. He will not abandon you. And He can give you more strength and more courage and more faith than you can imagine.

## Can you be happy when you're facing trials?

Though it may seem impossible, you truly can have joy in your trials! In fact, President Russell M. Nelson has taught: "When the focus of our lives is on God's plan of salvation . . . and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. Joy comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all joy."<sup>4</sup>

Having joy in your trials comes from focusing on gratitude, having a good attitude, serving others, and always remembering how much God loves you. He is on your side! He wants what's best for you. He has a plan. Trust Him. He can bring you true happiness. Things might not always be easy in this life, but it is possible to have joy in whatever circumstances we find ourselves in!

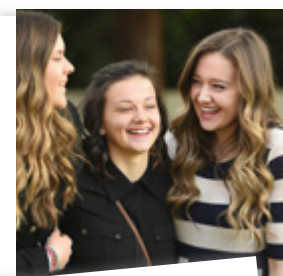
Whenever you're feeling discouraged, remember that everything will make sense one day. We will have all the answers to our "whys."

Doctrine and Covenants 101:32–33 says: "In that day when the Lord shall come, he shall reveal all things—things which have passed, and hidden things which no man knew, things of the earth, by which it was made, and the purpose and the end thereof."

I look forward to that day when everything will make sense. When all the dots finally connect. When everything will absolutely work out. Because it will! Though the tunnels of trials we enter may be long sometimes, the light at the end will never go out. It will always be there to guide us. Just keep going. Just keep trusting in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. They will be with you! And you will find true joy throughout this adventure we call life. **NE**

### NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, Apr. 2013 general conference.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 15.
3. Neil L. Andersen, Oct. 2008 general conference.
4. Russell M. Nelson, Oct. 2016 general conference.



## HOW TO HELP A FRIEND THROUGH TRIALS

If you have a friend who is facing a difficult trial, the first thing you probably want to do is fix it, right? You want to see your friend's bright smile and hear their contagious laughter, and you're willing to do anything to get them to feel like themselves again. Sometimes you can't fix everything, but here a few pointers on how you can help your friend.

### 1. LISTENING, NOT TELLING

Instead of telling your friend what to do or giving them advice, just listen. Only give advice if they ask for it. A good listener is the best medicine for someone who is struggling.

### 2. ACTING, NOT JUST ASKING

Instead of asking "What can I do for you?" Choose to act too. Extra love can always help

someone who's struggling. Show them your love by visiting them or doing something to serve them. Act. Don't just ask.

### 3. SUPPORTING, NOT SOLVING

Sometimes there are problems you can't fix. But what you can do is try to support and understand your friend instead of trying to solve their problems. Put yourself in their shoes. Try to see things from their point

of view, figure out how they feel and where they're coming from. Instead of just trying to cheer them up, validate their feelings.

Tell them it's OK to feel angry or sad or frustrated. Remember to be patient with your friend too. It might take a while for them to feel better. Just show them that you want to understand and that you're always there to support them.