

Perspective on Sufferings Part 3

From Travail to Triumph: Responding, Not Reacting

As we've seen in Parts 1 and 2, *perspective* is everything when it comes to suffering — especially when people are involved.

Our key scripture, **Galatians 4:19**, has kept us anchored:

"My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!" (RSV)

Paul showed us that spiritual travail is not a one-time event — it is an ongoing part of the believer's life as we labor in faith, both for our own growth and for the formation of Christ in others.

Like a woman in childbirth, there is pressure, pain, and perseverance until the promise is fulfilled.

We saw that while waiting, we are called to stand — not passively — but actively, through prayer, patience, and persistence.

We also discovered that:

- Travail affects us spiritually, mentally, and even physically.
- Sometimes, like natural childbirth, there's no *epidural* — no shortcut to avoid the process.
- God's method is often more like *spiritual Lamaze* — preparing us with strategies, scriptures, and spiritual breathing to cope and *conquer* through faith.

But now, in **Part 3**, we shift focus.

Because here's the truth:

Often, it's *people* who apply the greatest pressure during our time of travail — especially when they are ungrateful, selfish, or even wicked.

And it's at this vulnerable point that the enemy tempts us not just to suffer, but to *react* in the flesh. (*Unrenewed mind*)

Why? Because if we react wrongly, we risk sabotaging the very thing we are believing God for — cutting off the communication bridge God wants to use to bring the breakthrough.

So today, we move from the *internal struggle* of travail to the *external challenge* of how we deal with people during that process.

Our key question becomes:

Will I *react* in the flesh or *respond* by the Spirit?

Remember:

- Reacting is flesh-driven — impulsive, emotional, and defensive.
- Responding is Spirit-led — deliberate, compassionate, discerning.

We'll see today that if Christ is truly being *formed* in us, it will show in how we respond even to the ungrateful, the selfish, and the difficult.

As Jesus said in **Luke 6**, loving those who love you is easy — but loving your enemies, doing good to the unthankful and wicked — that is when you show that you are truly a child of the Most High.

So, let's press in today:

- To learn how to *respond*, not react.
 - To keep the bridge open, not torn down.
 - And to move from mere coping to *conquering* — because we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. (Romans 8:37)
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Closing — “Let Christ Be Formed in You Today”

As we close today, I want to bring us back to that cry of Paul in **Galatians 4:19**:

"My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!"

This is not just Paul's cry. This is *heaven's cry* over your life.
That in every pressure, every pain, every person problem —
Christ is being *formed* in you.

And let me say this plainly:

Travail is unavoidable, but reacting is optional.

You will have pain, but you don't have to abort the promise.

You will face difficult people, but you don't have to let them detour your destiny.

You will feel pressure, but you don't have to lose your peace.

Some of you today are right in the middle of travail:

- Believing God for a loved one.
- Praying for a breakthrough.
- Standing for healing, provision, or restoration.

And the pressure is on — not just from circumstances but from people:

- Ungrateful people.
- Selfish people.
- Wicked people who seem to be going out of their way to test your faith.

But today, God is calling you to make a decision:

Will you *react*, or will you *respond*?

Will you let the flesh rise up, or will you let Christ rise up in you?

Because here's the truth:

Your *response* could be the very key that keeps the bridge open for God to deliver the answer you've been *travailing* for.

Your *response* could be the salt and light that draws them back when they're ready.

Your *response* is the evidence that Christ is not only *forming* in you — He's *shining* through you.

Here is a call for a response

If you're here today and you say:

"Father, I'm in travail — but I want Christ to be fully formed in me. I want to respond, not react. I want to overcome, not just cope."

Let's pray together:

"Father, today I choose to let Christ be formed in me — in my mind, my heart, my words, and my actions.

In my suffering, help me not to react in the flesh, but to respond by Your Spirit.

Manifest the grace to keep the bridge open.

Manifest the strength to travail until the promise is fulfilled.

And let my life show the fruit of Your Spirit, even in the pressure.

Today, I say — I will not abort the promise. I will not react and sabotage what You are birthing.

Let Christ be formed in me — fully, completely, and visibly.

In Jesus' name. Amen."

Key themes from this series while being easy to repeat daily:

Daily Travail Declaration

(Say this out loud every day this week)

Today, I choose to let Christ be formed in me.

I will not react in the flesh — I will respond by the Spirit.

I will not abort the promise — I will travail until it is fulfilled.

I keep the bridge open with love, grace, and patience.

I am more than a conqueror — I overcome, I endure, and I prevail.

Christ is being formed in me, and His fruit is showing through me.

I believe, I press on, and I will see God's promise come to pass.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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