

JESUS ZONE: GLORY IN TRIBULATIONS

“But we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

Romans 5:3-4

When we first decide to become competitive lifters, dreams of platform glory are likely to enter our thought processes. The ensuing muscular fatigue and pain resulting from our first real squat, bench, and deadlift workouts, however, can often push those dreams aside, at least for a few weeks!

Powerlifting is a sport that demands us to push our bodies through muscular soreness and pain in a smart, consistent manner. We learn, over time, that platform success comes with a price. And for those that endure over the long-term, the training – and all the time, aches, and pains associated with it – becomes reinforcing in itself.

The Apostle Paul shares a similar correlation to the problems we encounter in life. When we accept Christ as our Savior and become a Christian, many of us assume that God will shield us from problems. Jesus, however, reminds us in John 16:33 that “in the world [we] will have tribulation.” The difference is that problems and trials work for the believer, not against him. Although rejoicing during times in our lives when problems confront us runs contrary to human nature,

as believers we know that personal growth will result, molding us more into the image of Christ.

Romans 5:3 teaches that “tribulation produces perseverance.” According to www.BibleTeachingNotes.com, the word “tribulation” means “intense pressure,” and the word “perseverance” means “staying under.” It denotes staying power. Those justified by faith can rest in the assurance that tribulation produces perseverance, and perseverance produces character. The term “character” comes from a word that was used to describe the process of purifying metal by removing the impurities. God uses tribulation to prove and improve our character, and “character” produces “hope.” Believers that enjoy peace with God face life’s problems and trials differently than others because they face them with the confident assurance that they will work to strengthen the believer’s character and develop steadiness in life. Since the believer experiences the sustaining hand of God through life’s difficulties, hope in God is never disappointed.



Thomas Gerhauer (left) and Sarah Crane (right) have faced tribulation with grace and courage

In this month's "Prayer & Praise" section, you will read about many lifters experiencing various forms of tribulation in their lives. In addition, you will read about men and women that have never set foot on the competitive platform that are facing insurmountable odds. We need to pray for them, encourage them, and be there for them.

Sarah Crane is a young teenage girl that has been diagnosed with Stage 4 colon cancer. To the best of my knowledge she has never lifted competitively; she is, nonetheless, a child of God that an entire community has rallied around (www.sarahstrong.org). Lucy

Gallo is a second grader that just lost her dad; she's hurting, and needs our prayer. You'll also read about members of our family – the powerlifting family – that are experiencing tribulation and need our support.

As stated at the onset, powerlifting requires us to persevere. And while our quest can result in great reward, it is one of choice. Our brothers and sisters listed in "Prayer & Praise" did not choose to experience their current tribulation. We need to pray for them; as our friend Tony Conyers often says, "it's not about powerlifting, it's about people."

