

# Lesson 7

## Breaking Ground

### Read

#### Chapter 7

1. *“ (...)If you are a child of God and you’re walking in obedience to His voice, the trials you face may actually be tools used by our loving Father to either eliminate what does not belong in your life, or strengthen your testimony, and prepare you to fulfill His calling for your life.” (p.104)*

After reading this chapter, did you receive any new insights into how different trials you faced in the past helped strengthen your faith? Jot down some of your thoughts below:

Trial	How I responded	How it strengthened my faith

2. *“When we turn our attention from our pain to God’s plan, we gain a fresh perspective into each valley and we also learn what true gratitude is about: focusing on the Giver, not His gifts.” (p.104)*

How can you turn your attention from your pain to God’s plan? Keeping that concept in mind, List some practical ideas of how you could change how you respond to life’s trials going forward. Share it with your group:

3. Romans 8:28 is the backbone of this chapter. During this discussion, I would like to expand our understanding of this verse in the context of the chapter:

*“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to **become conformed to the image of His Son**, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.”*

According to this passage, God gives us a promise that affirms that everything believers go through will be used for their good and His purpose, which translates into “His plan”. The next verses also show that God has predestined us to become conformed to the image of Christ. How do trials help us become conformed to the image (likeness) of Jesus? Share your thoughts below:

Verse 29 says: “*these whom He predestined, He also called.*” This speaks of Kingdom work. How have the trials you faced help you with your work for the kingdom?

Identifying your calling:

Making you sensitive to the pain of others:

Shaping your testimony:

Equipping you to help others who face similar circumstances:

4. On page 109, I present two paths for every believe when facing trials. We can choose to become Bitter, or we can choose to become Better. The bitter road is an easy one - we choose to make the pain go away for a moment by “numbing it”, thus choosing not to grow through the pain. The better road is the hardest one because it is full of deliberate choices.

On the chart below and based on the different “Breaking Ground” processes mentioned in this chapter, list some fleshly responses to troubles and then list deliberate steps you can take to take the “better road”:

Breaking Ground Process	The Bitter Road	The Better Road
Through Illness (pg.105)		
Through Loneliness (pg.111)		

<p style="text-align: center;">Through Financial Loss (pg.114)</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Through the Death of a Loved One (pg.116)</p>		

5. “We turn to God for help when our foundations are shaking, only to learn that it is God who is shaking them. ~ Charles C. West

This chapter starts with this somber quote by the late seminary professor. As you read the chapter, you can understand how I have fully grasped the concept that God had a purpose for each trial I have faced. This book would not even exist were it not for the lessons learned through each breaking ground process.

*“The mountaintop is a promise. The valley is a holy teaching ground.” (p.122)*

Now think about your life and about the hardest trials you have faced so far. After reading this chapter, can you better see God's hand in the valley? How has this particular chapter shed light into one or all of your trials, current and past? How can these concepts help you face trials in the future? Write your thoughts below and share it with your group.

6. Based on what you wrote above, using bible concordance or the website [www.openbible.com](http://www.openbible.com), search scriptures that will help you stay focused on God's purpose for your trials. You can search: "*Loneliness*", "*sickness*", "*provision*", "*healing*", "*comfort*", etc. You can write the verses below to share with your group.

Next, I suggest you put these verses in 3x5 cards, commit them to memory and put them in places you can see every day. **Whenever your heart falters, commit to read or recite those verses and tell your heart to believe!**