



## The Unexpected: Making Me Better or Bitter?

**Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. 1 Peter 4:12-13**

Like many of you, I have been praying for the Christians in Afghanistan. My earthly mind prays for guidance and protection. My heavenly mind prays for endurance, joy in the midst, and grace in death. I can't imagine the trials that they are choosing to endure by remaining faithful to their Lord and King, Jesus. Your choices may not be life and death like so many of our Afghan Christian brothers and sisters, but you still have to choose whether to allow circumstances to make you better or bitter.

Does the opportunity that comes with new challenges excite you or depress you? I spoke to an older woman who found herself in a very small apartment in a rough part of town. Her neighbors were different from her. She had to ride a bus. And she didn't have any friends nearby. We spoke for a long time, and it became evident to me that she would choose to let her circumstances make her bitter. Rather than putting out cheerful plants, sitting outside, making cookies and greeting her neighbors, she chose to stay inside and complain and be bitter.

We can choose to be better in the face of disease, death of a love one, abandonment, or many other experiences of life. Peter gives us the answer to how we are to respond to these surprising fiery ordeals earlier in the same book. 1 Peter 1: 13 says, Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

**1. Prepare your minds for action**– Are you being transformed and renewed through the reading of God's word and prayer? Do you have your marching orders from the Commander in Chief? Have you been training for action through making biblical and wise decisions?

**2. Keep sober in spirit**– *Sober* means to have a sound mind not deterred by outside sources. Is your spirit set to accept the trial that is before you knowing that God is not surprised, and He has the answers and knows what is best for you in the eternal perspective? Or are you floundering around like a fish out of water seeking your answers from friends, self-help books, and quick fix answers. Panic is not of God. Faithfulness, hope, and steadfastness are of our Heavenly father.

**3. Fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ**– So events and emotions in your life seem unfulfilled? Are you seeking comfort, material success, or release from your situation in something other than Christ? Our hope is not in this world. We are aliens here. Our hope has already been realized in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Salvation is a permanent solution. A massage, party, or binge is temporary. We need each other to remind us of our eternal home, our eternal hope in Christ Jesus. He's coming again and we will dwell in all fullness for eternity!

In light of your present day circumstances, how are you doing? Are you going to choose to be bitter or better today?

[Read Dara's blogs](#)

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### Upcoming Events

Conventions for homeschooling are done for 2021. If you would like Dara to come and speak at your church, women's retreat or

homeschool group, contact her at 325-450-9711.



## Service Spotlight

I am very humbled to announce that Practical Proverbs for the Older Student and Practical Proverbs for the Younger Students are now both available in Russian and being distributed to pastors, youth directors, mission workers, and teachers in 14 Russian speaking nations. I will also have a few copies available by December. Thank you for your donations that made this possible.

God,  
Thank you for Your faithfulness. That You would use my book so abundantly to draw others to Jesus and to teach and train Christians around the world is more than I ever dreamed. Wow! You are a gracious God. Amen

Mission Eurasia is interested in printing our women's Practical Proverbs Bible Studies as these nations are in dire need of such tools. Next month we will let you know how you can make this dream a reality as well.

