

STAGES OF CHANGE

Pastor Andy Gray

1. Disbelief & Denial

- a. If you're going through it... Psalm 57:1 (NIV84) Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.
- b. If you're with someone going through it... focus on being with them. Romans 12:15 (NIV84) Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

2. Anger, Distrust, & Blame

- a. If you find yourself going through this... Psalm 142:1–2 (NIV84) I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy. I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble.
- b. If you find yourself being blamed, repent if need be, if it's unfair – be patient and rest confident in your integrity and God's presence. Psalm 41:12 (NIV84) In my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever.

3. Despair - compounded by severity, surprise, and "settled-ness."

- a. If you're going through it... Psalm 120:1 (NLT) I took my troubles to the Lord; I cried out to him, and he answered my prayer.
- b. If you're with someone going through it... struggle with them... Romans 15:30 (NLT) Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to join in my struggle by praying to God for me. Do this because of your love for me, given to you by the Holy Spirit.

4. Perspective – sifting through unmet and unclear expectations.

- a. Most expectations are unconscious, unrealistic, unspoken, and un-agreed upon.
- b. If you're going through it... Acts 20:35 (NIV84) In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Ok to NEED).
- c. If you're with someone going through it... struggle with them... Galatians 6:2 (NIV84) Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.

5. Spiritual Growth

- a. If you're going through it... Psalm 42:5–6 (NIV84) Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. My soul is downcast within me; therefore, I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.
- b. If you're with someone going through it... struggle with them... Ephesians 5:19–20 (NIV84) Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

6. Accept & Embrace

- a. If you're going through it... Romans 8:28 (NIV84) And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
- b. If you're with someone going through it... Hebrews 10:25 (NIV84) Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

7. Joy and Continuing the Mission

- a. If you're going through it... Romans 5:2–5 (NIV84) through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.
- b. If you're with someone going through it... struggle with them... Ephesians 6:19–20 (NIV84) Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.