

### INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times, fire has been viewed as an effective way to treat a variety of injuries and diseases. Though this treatment causes pain, fire can help prevent infections and stop bleeding. When we have a spiritual issue, it may sometimes be necessary for the Lord to treat the issue with fire, which might be painful and disappointing to us. The question is: Can we still believe God when we are disappointed?

In John 11, Mary and Martha faced heartbreak over the death of their brother. Jesus, however, asked them to steward their disappointment and suffer well because He had a purpose — to show His resurrection power. Jesus asked them to trust Him and have faith. This faith is not simply about what we believe, but it is about how long we can believe it. In the same way, God asks us to steward our disappointment and suffer well to show His glory. Disappointment occurs when our emotions have to readjust unwillingly; but disappointment also can have purpose. The fire of disappointment produces the fruit of longsuffering in us.

The way to steward disappointment is to view it as the Lord ordering our steps. When we face trouble, the devil's method is to lead us to mismanage our pain and look for escapes. However, if we seek to escape, it often results in wasted time. God's method for our development is for us to trust Him in our pain so we will see His timing, and His plans. Sometimes, the only way to birth something beautiful is through the process of pain. What if the fireplace is the meeting place? What if challenging circumstances are the places where we experience more of God's power and glory? If the fire and pain in life is designed for our ultimate good, then maybe we can learn to steward disappointment because we trust our God.

### GETTING STARTED

1. What other good things can fire do?
2. What are some ways that people waste time with false escapes?

### LET'S GET PERSONAL

1. What is one of your biggest disappointments in life? Can you see God's purpose in it?

2. How have you mismanaged pain in the past? How are you mismanaging your pain now?
3. What battles are you fighting that are not yours to fight? What problem should you be focused on based on God's purpose?

### TAKE THE NEXT STEP

1. What current disappointment are you facing? How do you need to change your response to your pain so you can be an example of stewarding disappointment and suffering well?
2. Which of your own plans have you been asking the Lord to bless? Take time to pray this week to surrender those plans to the Lord and seek His wisdom on how to recalibrate your life.
3. Want to dig deeper? Take a look at the following passages: Ruth 2:2; Ecclesiastes 3:10; Daniel 3:24-25; Matthew 14:24-25; John 11:17-21, 32-33; Galatians 5:22.

### RENEW YOUR MIND

*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,  
kindness, goodness, faithfulness,"*

*Galatians 5:22*