

# It's Still Hard

Submitted by Dr. Anthony Brown

## 1 Peter 5:10 (NIV)

*And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.*

I buried my mother in January 2021 and, one thing I'd have to admit – all these months later – is that “it's still hard.” I celebrate my mom's victory, but I miss her earthly presence, her wisdom, and her encouragement. Those words, “it's still hard,” came to my mind a few days ago as I reflected upon another situation – far removed from the death of my mother – but a situation I am still wrestling through and trying to seek direction from God. And even though there are moments of clarity and assurance, I thought to myself, “it's still hard.”

Anyone in “that space” as they read this devotion, you are coming to understand what God is saying, doing, the direction He is providing, but even with the GLIMMERS OF HOPE “it's still hard.” In this letter written to persecuted Gentile Christians, the apostle Peter reminds them that they are chosen by God and have a future hope in Jesus. Despite the challenges of today, for these believers, there was hope for tomorrow. And this is my reflection – even with this knowledge at times “it was still hard.” Perhaps that's why Peter divinely inserted this verse, after you have suffered a little while, God himself will restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.” That's my point of inspiration for the persons who are finding “it's still hard” – beyond the suffering, the pain, the disappointment, the questions, you can anticipate restoration from the God of all grace.

So, here are some reminders for those who see HOPE but are finding, “it's still hard.” First, BE CAREFUL. The verse which I focused on for this devotion is familiar, but also familiar from this chapter are the preceding verses that remind believers to be “self-controlled and alert because your enemy, the devil, is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” As you work through hard seasons, BE CAREFUL, because during these times of vulnerability the devil is looking to devour you. And our struggles can open us up to deadly attacks. Secondly, BE SENSITIVE. In another verse leading to our focus scripture, Peter reminds us “that believers throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of sufferings.” In other words, you are not in this all by yourself, so BE SENSITIVE and ready to minister to others and remember persons are ready to share in your wrestling. Finally, BE PATIENT – Peter says, “after you have suffered a little while, God himself will make you strong, firm, and steadfast.” Just BE PATIENT and know that God is working on your behalf.

Amid rays of sunshine “it can still be hard.” BE CAREFUL, BE SENSITIVE, and BE PATIENT. Your restoration is coming!