

When Times Are Bad, Stop And Consider

You've probably recognized and lamented that in recent years at *all levels of society* people's lives and the relational atmosphere have grown more tense, greedy, and ungodly. Bullying and maliciously speaking ill of others has become a national pasttime. And many Christians tend to look beyond themselves and blame the darkness on the unbelievers in our land. But consider this. Our Father is allowing this uneasy discord and societal chaos for a particular purpose: to refine and purify the lives of those who claim to be His yet live otherwise.

Picture the *outer four rings* below as different beliefs and values that people entertain and still consider themselves "Christian." Our Father is bringing about difficult events in people's lives to confront those who hold these views so they will seriously consider what *He* regards as righteous and acceptable. It's an intense and intentional form of sanctifying. It's evident in both Testaments that our Father winnows those who presumptuously think they belong to Him yet cling to beliefs and values that He is against. He's bringing out a remnant who love and serve Him alone *wholeheartedly* in obedient trust.

The sad testimony of Christianity today is that *it's acceptable* to own any of the values or beliefs in the outer four rings and blithely attend services in any faith community. But our Father is bringing about events to *confront* those whose lives and values misrepresent Him so they may turn and embrace *His only standard* for people who truly are His: ***Living in love with Jesus as your Lord as you do Father's will to His glory and totally depending on the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.***

Our Father is eliminating the beliefs and values of the outer four rings until ONE value—His—is embraced!

