



Through Suffering, God Can Change Us for the Better

with Alain Alfonso

DISCUSSION

1. When you were young, were your parents mostly aligned as far as their spiritual beliefs, or were their beliefs very different? Were they able to reconcile those differences, and if so, how did they do that? What impact did those differences make on your own spiritual journey?
2. Do you have any siblings? If so, where do you fall age-wise among your siblings, and what kind of role did that put you in when you were growing up? Were you satisfied to serve in that role, or did you feel overlooked or unfulfilled? How do you think that shaped your formative years and your current identity as an adult?
3. Do you have any family members who have struggled with addiction? At what age did you become aware of those struggles? How have your opinions about, or feelings toward, that family member changed as you have grown and matured?
4. Think back to the most difficult time in your life—a period of misfortune, challenges, or emotional trauma that lasted for weeks or months. Were there any ways in which you changed for the better during that time? Were there any ways in which you regressed? Were those improvements or regressions temporary, or did they become permanent? What are your emotions when you look back on that period now? *1 Peter 5:10*

5. What was the best thing that happened to you during the period of struggle you discussed in question 4? Did that life event give you a degree of hope that your life would get better overall? Was it difficult to reconcile the happiness that event or achievement gave you with the frustration and sadness you were feeling in other areas of your life?

6. Have you ever spent a substantial amount of time in a foreign country such that you had to adapt to that country's culture? What was the hardest thing about that process? Was there anything about that country that you thought your own country or community could benefit from by adopting? *Acts 1:8*

7. Have you ever done an evaluation or assessment of your spiritual gifts? Based on the understanding of spiritual gifts you gained from Alain and Nate's discussion, what spiritual gifts do you think you might have? How might you be able to share those gifts with others right now? *1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Romans 12:4-8, Ephesians 4:11-16*