

## Challenges

Around the turn of the twentieth century, a bar of steel was worth about five dollars. Yet when forged into horseshoes, it was worth ten dollars; when made into needles, its value was 350 dollars; when used to make small pocketknife blades, its worth was 32,000 dollars; when made into springs for watches, its value increased to 250,000 dollars. The more it was shaped, hammered, put through fire, beaten, pounded, and polished, the greater its value. L.B. Cowman Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way. James 1:2-4 (The Message)

I must admit, I don't like to be put through fire or pounding. I understand the concept; I just don't like the process. Sometimes we encounter circumstances *beyond our control*. For me, it was a devastating breakup. Other times, *we choose* to take on something challenging. For me, it was law school.

Neither was a walk in the park. However, I don't think God intended them to be. Going through each challenge better prepared me for something else in life....hopefully, for the betterment of His kingdom. I encourage you to accept the hard things in life and look for how God is going to use them to make you more valuable for His kingdom.

Excerpts inspired by Debby Priddy, Human Resources, Camp Ozark.