3. We may suffer persecution.

Jesus warns in the "Beatitudes" that we may be persecuted and reviled because of our allegiance to him (Mt 5:10-12). Yes, even members of our own family may turn against us (Mt 10:34-39), or members of the church, albeit false brethren, may seek to cause us distress (Php 1:15-18).

John mentions those who were "slain for the testimony of Jesus" (Rev 6:9) but there were also those who suffered persecution in other forms, for example discrimination in not being allowed to buy or sell (Rev 13:17).

4. We must see the purpose in suffering.

Jesus says, "I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, so you can become rich" (Rev 3:18). Only by going through the fire of pain can we attain the glory of God. By allowing us to suffer, God is removing the dross by the cross. Only by constantly coming up against difficult tests can our faith be made strong. When we understand that fact, we can react properly and "count it all joy" when we suffer various trials (Jas 1:2-4).

5. We must be in God's hands.

At the end of all the tribulations, John heard the multitude in heaven shouting, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God!" (Rev 19:1).

Jesus says, "Behold I am coming soon! My reward is with me" (Rev 22:12).

When things get really bad, just hold on, because our God has got an outcome that nobody can change. "What he opens, no one can shut; what he shuts, no one can open" (Rev 3:7).

We must simply wait for him to turn the key. We will not be required to endure more than we are able to bear (1Co 10:13).

God actively binds Satan. "God is faithful and will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear" (1Co 10:13 again).

What may seem like two times or even ten times too much trouble to us, is only half what we'd get if God did not bind the hand of Satan even as he did in ancient times for Job.

6. We must bear our trials through prayer.

In John's visions, he saw "bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev 5:8 Rev 8:4).

Sometimes we get discouraged, and feel like those souls of the beheaded who cried, "How long, Lord?" (Rev 6:10). We don't know how long, but we know it's not as long as it seems. In the meantime we persevere in prayer.

7. We must keep in mind the crown.

"Be faithful until death, and I will give you a crown of life" (Rev 2:10).

In the turmoil of life, and in its turning shadows, we are encouraged if we remember that the unchanging Father knows our suffering and our needs. The King of Kings is fighting on our side, and he will not let us down (2Tm 4:8, Jas 1:12).

"Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me"

John 14:1