

“YOU CAN’T HIDE FROM TROUBLE”

The truth of this message title was enforced by a humorous event that I experienced. I was entertained by a lovely Christian family for dinner. After dinner the children wanted to play with Trouble. The family had a big, black Labrador Retriever dog named Trouble. The kids would hide while the Father held the dog and then he would let Trouble loose and he would find the children. The Dad remarked, “You can’t hide from Trouble, he’ll find them every time!”

Trouble, not the dog but the reality, found Jesus every day. A good example of a day in the life of Jesus is seen in Mark chapters 4 and 5. There is a variety of troubles with which Jesus was confronted is listed:

- The Depths of the Sea threatened the disciples when a storm arose; Chapter 4;
- The Demon possessed Gadarene confronted Him in chapter 5;
- The Death of Jairus’ daughter – 5:21-24;
- The Diseased woman came to Him – 5:25-34.

All of these troubles Jesus dealt with on the same day. He never had a day on earth when He was not surrounded with people who had troubles. The world has not improved since Jesus was physically on earth. What is the biblical perspective concerning trouble? Here are three truths that we need to adopt and apply as we live and minister in a misery-filled world.

I. THE UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH THAT WE MUST RECOGNIZE.

The uncomfortable truth that we must recognize is that we cannot hide from trouble. It is a human trait that we either find trouble or trouble finds us. You can’t hide from trouble! Jesus informs us that “Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” (Matt. 6:34) That is, there are no trouble-free lives on the earth!

Did you ever look up the word “trouble” in the dictionary? I never have, for like everyone else, I know what trouble is without having to read a definition of the word in a dictionary!

All are subject to troubles, both sinners *and* saints as the following scriptures show: Job 5:7; Job 14:1; Mark 4:35-41; John 16:33; Acts 9:15-17 etc.

Trouble comes from various sources – principally from the world, the flesh and/or the devil. However, if you could kick the person responsible for most of your troubles in the backside, you wouldn’t be able to sit for a whole week!

II. THE UNBALANCED VIEW THAT WE MUST REJECT.

There is an unscriptural message being propagated by some that God will always come to our rescue and get us out of any trouble we get into if we have enough faith.

That is not taught in the Bible either by precept or example. In fact there are plenty of biblical evidences to the contrary including the following:

- John the Baptist was not delivered, Matt 14:6-12;
- Jesus was not delivered, Matt 26:39-44;
- Stephen was not delivered, Acts 7:54-60;
- Paul was not delivered, 2 Cor 12:8-10;
- John, on the Island of Patmos was not delivered, Rev.1

God is going to deliver us one day by catching us up and away (I Thess. 4) but in the meantime we have much to learn in the midst of a troubled world.

ILLUST. An old woodsman gives this advice about catching a porcupine: "When you find a porcupine, dash in and drop a large washtub over him. The washtub will give you something to sit on while you ponder your next move." Sometimes we get into sticky situations from which God will not deliver us. Ponder that! This leads to the final thought on the subject:

III. THE UNDERSTANDING THAT WE MUST RECEIVE.

If we are to be true disciples of Jesus Christ, we must understand that the God Who "leads His dear children along, some through the waters, some through the flood, some through the fire but all through the blood" has a purpose for every trouble and trial we face.

Example: Joseph. Joseph was sold by his brothers, became a slave in Egypt, was imprisoned, finally he was elevated to the second in authority to Pharaoh. What a story! Want to hear how Joseph viewed all that happened to him? Here is his testimony that he gave to his devious brothers: "you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."

Example: Paul and Silas were in jail. What did they do? Did they beg, plead and that God would get them out? No! "at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them." (Acts 16:25) And what was the result? Paul and Silas had the opportunity to witness to the jailer he was born again! God's purpose for Paul and Silas to be in prison was accomplished.

Examples abound of God permitting His people to be in peril in order to accomplish His purposes. Let us remember that "that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose." (Rom.8:28) That is, they work together both for God's good purposes and our good as well.

CONCLUSION

There is no troublesome situation that God allows that we cannot survive. Take a good look at Romans 8:37 – “in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” Where are we “more than conquerors”? **“IN ALL THESE THINGS”!** Where?

“IN” them! How are we going to conquer if there is no conflict, no contest, no difficulty, no trouble?

Whatever trouble you are in or are facing:

- Analyze the reason you are in the situation that is troublesome. Is this of God’s design or your disobedience?
- Agonize in prayer to God, asking for His wisdom as how best to deal with the dilemma, ask for His power to endure and/or His enablement to be a good testimony;
- Appropriate the promise of God that “we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

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