

### Introduction

We have received and believed **the glorious Gospel of Christ** that has changed the lives of those of us that are saved!

And because we have **received and believed the glorious Gospel of Christ**, we now have the ministry of sharing the same with our lives and lips!

Nevertheless, *"this treasure"* of **the glorious Gospel of Christ** that we have, we still at present have in earthen vessels! (Vs 7)

And because we are in these earthen vessels, our circumstances may get difficult! (vs. 8-12)

If things were not difficult, there would be no threat of fainting!

### **I. WE NEED TO MAINTAIN A RIGHT ATTITUDE IN THE FACE OF NEGATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES! (Vs. 8-10)**

#### **A. We are going to experience some trouble as a result of being fallen men in a fallen and cursed world!**

**The frailty of mankind makes trouble certain. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble"(Job 14:1)**

- 1. Being part of fallen mankind subjects us to sickness, growing old, and eventually physical death.**
- 2. Both being part of fallen mankind and living in a sin-cursed world subjects us to people warring and fighting for their sinful lusts and their self-interests. (James 4:1ff)**
- 3. That old Adamic nature—the flesh—causes us to have discontent with what we have and wish for what the other man has—his physique, his job, his wife, his talent, his property, his etc.**

(The Bible calls it covetousness!)

The Adamic nature was in control when we were in our natural state as a lost man! But it can also be in control as a Believer if we choose to live after the flesh rather than walk in the Spirit!

*Galatians 5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

So, it doesn't matter if we are young or old, wicked or moral, saved or lost, **we all live in a troubled world—And trouble is the heritage of fallen mankind!**

### **B. We are going to experience some trouble as a result of and to the extent of our activity in sin!—i.e. Troubles come as a result of sin!**

*Galatians 6:7-8 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*

The laws of God were not given to because God is a prude! They were given to not only reveal the holy nature of God, but they were given to keep us back from the things that have consequences and bring us trouble!

The drunkard has woes which the sober one does not have. Dope, gambling, adultery, hate, covetousness, you name it—All sin brings its own troubles.

And for the child of God, since *"whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth,"* then we know God can and does allow trouble to come our way to chasten us! (**Hebrews 12:5-11**)

**BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS  
CHRISTIAN SUFFERING  
2 CORINTHIANS 4:8-11**

Now understand that chastening may be by means of **sickness** or **unhappy circumstances** or a **guilty conscience**, or ever **how the LORD chooses** because of the Christian's sin or failure!

But God's purpose in His children's life is to bring them back into obedience—back into HIS WAY!

**C. Troubles come to those who choose to live Godly!**

**a. Troubles may come our way as a result of persecution!**

*2 Timothy 3:12—"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"*

Paul was imprisoned, beaten, whipped, and stoned for his faith!

We must remember what Jesus said in *John 15:18-21*: "*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep your's also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.*"

**b. Troubles may come as God in His lovingkindness allows it to come to one of His own in order to make us our best!**

**Suffering teaches us to look to God!**

*Psalm 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*

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*Psalm 119:71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*

*Psalm 119:75 I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.*

**Suffering teaches us to lean on God!**

*2 Corinthians 12:8-10 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

**c. A good Christian may suffer also by sharing the heartbreak of God over sin and the compassionate tears of God for the world's sorrows.**

*2 Corinthians 11:28-30 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.*

No doubt Paul suffered much over the Corinthian Christians whom he had to rebuke! He longed to help them get back to where they needed to be!

He suffered over the Galatian Christians who were led astray by Judaizers; forsaking Paul's teachings.

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He suffered in his burden that Israel might be saved and said, *"My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1)*, and even the turmoil of his heart on this subject he expressed thus: *"I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:3)*.

**He suffered being forsaken by co-workers!**

John Mark! (Acts 13:13)  
Demas! (2 Timothy 4:10)

**He suffered evil at the hands of Alexander the coppersmith!** (2 Timothy 4:14)

Jesus set the pattern. *1 Peter 2:21, 22* tells us, *"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."*

And we see that pattern in the Apostles and early believers in the book of Acts.

The story of blessed saints of God in the past shows clearly that a good Christian must suffer persecution.

John the Baptist was imprisoned and beheaded.

James, the brother of John, died by the sword of Herod (Acts 12:2).

Peter and John were imprisoned again and again. They were beaten (Acts 5:40,41).

Spirit-filled Stephen was stoned to death for his witness.

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I fear that we have been so accustomed to a decadent and lukewarm Christianity that we do not see the glory there is in being able and willing to suffer for Christ. But good, godly Christians should.

Paul was troubled on every side. Yet in the midst of all the troubles of the world, what joys He had!

Oh, we must heed the sweet words of Jesus, *"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33)*.

*Troubled = pressured, pressed closely*

*Distressed = cramped*

*Perplexed = to have no way out, to be at a loss (mentally)*

*Despair = to be utterly at a loss, to be despondent, altogether without help, or means*

*Persecuted = pursued*

*Forsaken = deserted*

*Cast down = thrown down.*

*Destroyed = to destroy fully. (Paul's stoning)*

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