



SCRIPTURE READING: Job 5:7

Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

INTRODUCTION:

Life is certainly a gift from God. When the Lord created the first man and woman, there was nothing but peace, love, and a troubleless paradise. After a certain amount of time, man rebelled against God and brought sin into the world. With sin came TROUBLE! Although life can be full of blessings, it is also full of trouble (Job. 14:1).

It is important to remember that God is not the One responsible for bringing trouble into the world. It is man that brought this upon himself and has passed it on. *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned”* (Rom. 5:12). Understanding this truth will help us in our troubles to:

- Not blame God and be bitter toward Him.
- Not get consumed as to why trouble comes our way.
- Depend and trust in God.
- Think about God’s solution and how He wants us to act.
- Develop sympathy for others who go through trouble.
- To develop patience.
- To make us stronger.
- To correct us when we are wrong.
- To help our prayer life
- To demonstrated the power of God and His grace.

There are too many areas of trouble to cover in just one study. The five that we will look at are very common:

- (1) Trouble with FINANCES.
- (2) Trouble with RELATIONSHIPS.
- (3) Trouble with POOR DECISIONS.
- (4) Trouble with the FLESH.
- (5) Trouble with GOD.

DAY ONE

(Proverbs 13:7) — FINANCES

“There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.”

Money is the universal passport to everywhere but Heaven, and will buy anything but happiness. Money is a tool, not a toy or a god. Your financial resources can be a marvelous servant, but a terrible master. It is alright to have nice things that money can buy, provided you do not lose the things money cannot buy. Much of our trouble comes from the lack of Biblical wisdom in handling money. Here are a few things to remember about money:

THE PURPOSE:

- (1) To meet the basic needs of life (I Tim. 6:8).

- (2) To help other believers (Rom. 12:13).
- (3) To show love and allegiance to God (II Cor. 8:8, 24).
- (4) To help those who are in need (Eph. 4:28).
- (5) To support the ministry and see God’s power (Mal. 3:10).

THE PROBLEM:

- (1) Loving money (I Tim. 6:9-10).
- (2) Thinking money is godly (I Tim. 6:5).
- (3) Debt which turns into bondage (Prov. 22:7).
- (4) Serving money as a god (Mt. 6:24).

THE PREVENTION:

- (1) Make Proverbs 30:8-9 your prayer.
- (2) Don’t break the tenth commandment... coveting.
- (3) Give what God requires of you on a regular basis.
- (4) Think a few steps ahead for rainy days.

What gets in the way of contentment? How does your treasure affect your heart according to Matthew 6:21? What is the key to giving according to II Corinthians 8:1-5?

DAY TWO

(Colossians 3:12-14) — RELATIONSHIPS

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. 14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”

Life consists of relationships. Relationships involve people. Where there are people, there will be trouble. Quite often, differences in temperaments, backgrounds, and sinful habits can easily cause trouble. Most trouble in relationships arises from three areas:

- (1) Control — the desire to lead or to be led
- (2) Affection — the need to give or receive affection
- (3) Social — the longing for socialization or seclusion

Understanding these natural tendencies will open the lines of communication. God has empowered every believer with the Holy Spirit to maintain peace within relationships and deal with the many troubles that come. The key ingredients to do this are:

- Mercy — compassion instead of punishment
- Kindness — respect; concern; grace; gentleness
- Humility — lack of pride and vanity
- Meekness — gentle; teachable; submissive
- Longsuffering — patient
- Forgiveness — offering grace and pardon
- Charity — love in action; I Corinthians 13:4-7

What person best fits the description of having all these attributes? Would you like to be around someone who was the direct opposite of all these? What one ingredient do you have to work on the most? When is the last time you prayed for God to help you with these things?

DAY THREE

(Philippians 3:13-14) — POOR DECISIONS

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Understanding the free-will of man explains a lot. God allows man to reap what he sows. This includes the bad with the good. One of the ways we learn from poor decisions is to make them. When the trouble comes, the lesson is learned. This is called experience. Trouble not only brings prayer, but also teaches us to pray more in our decisions (James 1:5).

Sometimes the poor decisions we make can paralyze us from life and discourage spiritual growth. There may even be scars and irrevocable consequences. God wants us to confess, learn, move forward, and glorify Him. The good news is that God's forgiveness, grace, and mercy through Christ allow us to do this. Here are three things we must do:

- (1) Forget the things in the past. (God has forgiven you)
- (2) Reach forward to the things ahead. (God has a will)
- (3) Keep pressing on toward Christ. (God has rewards)

What kind of things do you think Paul had to forget? If God doesn't bring up the past, why should we? How does knowing that great men of the Bible like Abraham, Moses, David, and Solomon made poor decisions encourage you?

DAY FOUR

(Romans 13:14) — FLESH

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

Although we have many enemies in the world, the one who gives us the most trouble is our flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). One of the ways to prevent it from causing trouble is to not make provision for it. Knowing your weakness is your greatest strength. The flesh is something that no Christian should ever trust in (Phil. 3:3) or glory in (I Cor. 1:29). Being filled with the Holy Spirit is a must for a Christian. It will prevent the flesh from ruling your life. *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh"* (Gal. 5:16).

Carnality is definitely a prominent characteristic in today's "Christianity." It is like a hungry monster with a vicious appetite that will never be satisfied. Solomon teaches all about this in the book of Ecclesiastes. One of the problems with the flesh is that it can easily become addicted to what it craves. This creates a control factor that quenches the Spirit (Eph. 4:30). The ruling of the flesh is associated with the "old man" or the person you were before you were born again (Eph. 2:1-6). We are to put off the old man and put on the new (Eph. 4:22-32). Quite often this can feel like a war (I Pet. 2:11).

If our flesh isn't getting the better of us with sinful activities, it will give us trouble with pain and infirmities. How to deal with pain is one of the most difficult issues in life. Whether it

is a result of old age or some other issue, finding the balance with medication and endurance hurts. The main comfort we have is to remember that Jesus understands all about pain and is there with you (Is. 53:3-5).

What does Romans 8:13 mean to you? Do you have any fleshly weaknesses that you struggle with? How can you prevent yourself from giving in?

DAY FIVE

(Jeremiah 30:7) — GOD

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."

There is coming a time of trouble like the world has never seen. It is called the time of Jacob's trouble. Jacob is referring to the nation of Israel. Jesus talked about this horrific time in Matthew 24. This trouble will be different from all other troubles due to the circumstances involved. God is going to deliberately unleash a series of judgments on earth in the form of SEALS, TRUMPETS, VIALS, and THE ANTICHRIST. You can read about this in Revelation 6 — 18. Some of the horrific trouble the world will see will be:

- Severe famine
- A one world government and religion that defies God
- Death to those who do not follow
- Demonic beings that hurt man and earth
- Poisoned water
- Grievous sores on the body
- Earthquakes like never before
- Majority of the world dies
- Satanic / demonic activity like never before

As you study end time prophecy, it is very clear that this trouble is unparalleled to anything the world has ever seen. Studying this time period allows us to benefit in many ways:

- (1) Those who are born again will not be here, but raptured out before it takes place. This gives us comfort.
- (2) No matter how bad the world gets, we will not see the worst of it.
- (3) As the day approaches and we see things getting worse, we know our Redeemer draws nigh!

How should Revelation chapters 19 — 22 help us through the troubles we experience now? Making sure you have been born again is the most important thing in the world. When were you born again? Are you ready to be raptured out (I Thes. 4:16-18)?

CONCLUSION:

As we approach life's trouble with a Biblical world view, it doesn't take long to see that our problems can be the very thing that draw us closer to God and make us stronger in the Lord (Rom. 8:28). We can take comfort in knowing that our Saviour knows what we are going through (Heb. 4:15-16). Nowhere in the Bible does it say a Christian is supposed to have a trouble-free life (II Tim. 3:12). The reality of life is dealing with trouble. It is in our afterlife that we will have no trouble. What a day that will be! *"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away"* (Rev. 21:4).