

“Here Comes Trouble”

1 Thessalonians 3:1-10

“Afflictions” (3,7), “Tribulation” (4), “Temptation” (5), “Distress” (7)

With God we can be confident that there is a divine purpose in every difficult circumstance. There are also certain strategies we can adopt to help us become “More than conquerors” during the trouble.

As we look at the timeline before the worldwide great tribulation, we must be prepared to have a strong testimony during our own personal tribulation.

What are some things we should know that will help us during afflictions, tribulations, temptations, and distress?

1. GODLY RELATIONSHIPS ARE ESSENTIAL (1-2)

A. Find people that truly care about you.

- i. Paul said he could “no longer endure it” being away from them or hearing about how they were doing. (vs.1,5)
- ii. 1 Peter 4:7–10 ⁷ But the end of all things is at hand...above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” ⁹ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.
- iii. Philippians 2:19–20 ¹⁹ But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. ²⁰ For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state.

B. Work as a team and not as an individual

- i. 1 Corinthians 12:14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.
- ii. Galatians 6:2 ² Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
- iii. “We have a great group of guys that really sacrifice every night, care about each other, and try to play the right way.” Steph Curry

2. MAKE SURE TO MANAGE EXPECTATIONS (3-5)

A. There are **appointments** – It helps to be told ahead of time (Verses 3-4)

- i. 2 Timothy 3:12 ¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

- ii. 1 Peter 4:12¹² Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;
- iii. “Unfortunately, many young believers - and some older ones, too - do not know that there will be times in every person's life when circumstances don't add up - when God doesn't appear to make sense. This aspect of the Christian faith is not well advertised.” - James Dobson
- iv. What happened to Jesus’ original apostles? – John died of extreme old age in Ephesus. // Judas Iscariot, after betraying his Lord, hanged himself. // Peter was crucified, head downward, during the persecution of Nero. // Andrew died on a cross at Patrae, in Achaia, a Grecian Colony // James, the younger brother of the Savior, was thrown from a pinnacle of the Temple, and then beaten to death with clubs. // Bartholomew was killed in Albanopolis, Armenia. // James, the elder son of Zebedee, was beheaded at Jerusalem. // Thomas, the doubter, was run through with a lance in the East Indies. // Philip was hanged against a pillar at Heropolis (Abyssinia). // Thaddeus was shot to death with arrows. // Simon died on a cross in Persia (now Iran). // Paul was beheaded during the persecution of Nero // ...and Jesus?
- v. Matthew 13:20–21²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

B. There are **opponents – it’s our enemy who caused most of the trouble (Verse 5)**

- i. 2 Corinthians 2:11¹¹ lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.
- ii. Matthew 4:2–3² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him...
- iii. 1 Corinthians 10:13¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

3. WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS... HAVE FAITH! (6-8)

A. “Faith” is mentioned in verses 2,5,6,7,&10

- i. 1 John 5:4⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

- ii. John 14:1¹ “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.
- iii. “It is one thing to believe in God; it is quite another to believe God”, “The prayer of faith is a prayer of trust. The very essence of faith is trust.” — R.C. Sproul, *Surprised by Suffering: The Role of Pain and Death in The Christian Life*
- iv. Our cat with the cone on it’s head. It’s for your own good.

B. Faith is a shield and protection in times of trouble

- i. Ephesians 6:16¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.
- ii. 1 Peter 1:5–6⁵ And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see. ⁶ So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while.

4. PRAYER IS THE SECRET TO SUCCESS (9-10)

- A. Prayer of thanksgiving to God (Verse 9)**
- B. Prayer of joy before God (Verse 9)**
- C. Prayer of petition (Verse 10)**

Affliction, tribulation, trouble, anguish, persecution, burden, distress