

1-21-2024, COTR Texarkana

Title: Trouble with a Capital, "T", pt-2

Purpose: Provoke people to look for and embrace the positive benefits of trouble.

Truth for Today: Trouble can produce positive spiritual benefits in our life.

Text: John 16:33

Topic: Trouble, Jonah, Discipline, Abraham, Spiritual Maturity

Series Title: Trouble with a Capital, "T"

Series purpose: Provoke people to face trouble with an unshakable faith in God.

Trouble with a Capital, "T", pt-2

I. 1-[Early voting info table; ivoterguide.com](#) 2- [Mortgage balance](#) pymt. next week \$38,130

II. Introduction

- A. Review series, Trouble with a Capital, "T". Context, Jesus is preparing his followers for trouble. Sandwich, [\[Jn. 16:33 \(NIV\)\]](#) "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. **In this world you will have trouble (NLT many trials and sorrows). But take heart (NKJV be of good cheer)! I have overcome the world.**"
Last week we looked at trouble in the life of Job. Job was a godly man and God blessed Him. Satan attacked Job and nearly destroyed His life. Trouble was a spiritual test that tried to make him give up his faith in God. He didn't give up and God blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the 1st.
- B. Today we'll deal with the question, 'Is all trouble bad or can some trouble be good for us?' Trouble is never fun, but can it be good for us? Clearly some trouble is a painful spiritual attack but sometimes there can be a beneficial side to trouble.
- C. [\[Ja. 1:2-4 \(NLT\)\]](#)...when **troubles of any kind (ESV various kinds)** come your way, consider it an **opportunity for great joy**.³ For you know that **when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow**.⁴ So **let it grow**, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect (*NIV mature*) and complete...
- D. Title: Trouble with a Capital, "T", pt-2. 3 examples of positive benefits from trouble.

III. Trouble can get us back on track with God: Jonah

- A. [\[Jonah 1-3 \(NIV\)\]](#) The word of the Lord came to Jonah...:² "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me."³ But **Jonah ran away** from the Lord and headed for Tarshish...⁴ Then **the Lord sent a great wind**...and such a **violent storm** arose that the ship threatened to break up...]
1. Jonah didn't want to go to Ninevah (Assyrians, modern day Iraq) because they were a ruthless, pagan nation and other prophets said they'd one day attack Israel.
 2. Last week satan sent a great wind and killed Job's kids; today God sent the storm.
- B. [\[Vs. 15\]](#) Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm...¹⁷ Now **the Lord provided** a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.]
1. Jesus said this is literal, [Matthew 12:40 (ESV) For just as **Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish**, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.]

- C. [2: 1 From inside the fish Jonah prayed...² He said: “In my **distress** I called to the Lord, and he answered me...⁹... What I have **vowed** I will make good...¹⁰ And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land. ¹ Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: ² “Go to...Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.” ³ **Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord...**⁵ The Ninevites believed God...¹⁰ When God saw what they did and how **they turned from their evil ways**, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.] 120k people
- D. Life App #1: Trouble, a.k.a. discipline, is good when it makes us get back on track with God. [Hebrews 12:6–11 (NLT) For the **Lord disciplines those he loves**,¹⁰... God’s discipline is always **good for us**, so that we might share in his holiness. ¹¹ (NCV) We do not enjoy being disciplined. It is **painful** at the time, but later, after we have learned from it, we have peace, because **we start living in the right way**.
- E. Psalm 119:67–68 (NLT) **I used to wander off until you disciplined me; but now I closely follow your word.** ⁶⁸ You are good and **do only good**; teach me your decrees.
- IV. Trouble can deepen/ mature our faith: Abraham
- A. Context, near the end of Abe’s development as the ‘Father of faith’. He taught the human race how to be made right with God through faith. The test of time was his trouble. He had to wait 25 years between the promise of a son and the fulfillment. Now what God was asking him to do was trouble with a capital, T. [Ge. 22:1–18 (NLT)...**God tested Abraham’s faith...**² “Take...**Isaac, whom you love so much...** Go and **sacrifice him** as a burnt offering...]
1. God never intended he kill his son like pagans; the request was a troubling test.
- B. [Vs. 3 The next morning Abraham got up **early**...⁵...Abraham told the servants. “The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and **then we will come right back.**”...]
1. Fact: Sacrifices are killed. So, how was Isaac going to come back? All Abe knew was God had earlier promised Isaac would have descendants like the stars of the sky. [Hebrews 11:19 (NLT) Abraham reasoned that **if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again...**]
 2. Life App #2: Facts may say impossible, but faith says possible. Angel to Mary re. virgin birth, [Luke 1:37 (NKJV) For **with God nothing will be impossible.**”]
- C. [Vs. 7, Isaac turned to Abraham and said, “Father...where is the sheep for the burnt offering?”⁸ **“God will provide a sheep...**”]
1. Life App #3: When God makes a promise, He will do what we are unable to do if we have faith. Faith believes when it doesn’t see.
- D. [Vs. 8 And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. ¹¹ At that moment the angel of the Lord called to him...¹² “Don’t lay a hand on the boy!”...**now I know** that you truly fear God...¹⁸ And through your descendants **all the nations of the earth will be blessed**—all **because you have obeyed me.**”]
1. Every time his faith was tested it was a fresh round of trouble. Just like a test in school, (1) we can walk away and not graduate or (2) study, pass the test, and be promoted. Abe passed the test and became the ‘Father of faith’ for the world.

E. Abraham didn't always have mature faith like this. [Genesis 17:15–17 (NLT) Then God said to Abraham, “Regarding Sarai, your wife...¹⁶ And I will bless her and give you a son from her...¹⁷ Then **Abraham...laughed to himself in disbelief.** “How could I become a father at the age of 100?” he thought. “And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?”] This wasn't the only time Abe's faith was immature. He and Sarai grew tired of waiting and decided to help God. Abe slept with Hagar and Ismael was born.

1. Life App #4: Faith grows/ matures when it is tested. Sometimes we fail the test, but God will let us retake the test and when we pass, he promotes us!

V. Life App #5 Trouble can make us depend on God more: Paul

A. [2 Cor. 1:8–11 (NLT)]⁸ We think you ought to know...about the **trouble** we went through in...Asia. We were **crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure...**⁹ In fact, **we expected to die.**]

1. This doesn't sound like God is causing the trouble; it sounds like spiritual warfare
2. When life is overwhelming and we feel like we'd be better off dead, don't consider suicide. It's the devil's big lie.

B. [Vs 9] But as a result, **we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God**, who raises the dead.¹⁰ And **he did rescue us** from mortal danger, and...**he will continue to rescue us.**¹¹ And **you are helping us by praying** for us...

1. When we're living trouble-free, healthy and have money there's a certain amount of independence and self-reliance even believers have. But When our life is shaken and we are out of control, we can: (1) Fall apart and give up on God, (2) Seek God at a deeper level and depend on Him more. That's what Paul did when trouble came. Trouble can make us depend on God more...and that's a good thing
2. **Testimony** anxiety/ panic attacks. I felt helpless to engage life but I found a strength in God I'd never experienced before. [Phil. 1:6 (NKJV)] being **confident** of this very thing, that **He who has begun a good work in you will complete it** until the day of Jesus Christ]

VI. Conclusion:

A. We began by asking the question, ‘Is all trouble bad or can some be good for us?’ Clearly some trouble is bad. Satan's attack against Job was bad but some trouble is good. (1) Trouble was good for Jonah because it made him get back on track with God. (2) Trouble was good for Abraham because it deepened his faith, (3) Trouble was good for Paul because it made him depend on God more.

1. Some trouble may be good for us, too, if we respond with obedience, growing faith, and dependence on God.

VII. Response

- A. Prayer
- B. Souls

VIII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

IX. Supplemental material

- A. Abe shows us how to pass the test of faith by not letting doubt win or quitting when doing what God asks is hard.
1. [Romans 4:16–21 (NLT) So **the promise is received by faith**...Abraham is the father of all who believe. ¹⁷ That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, “**I have made you** the father of many nations.” This happened because **Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life** and who creates new things out of nothing. ¹⁸ Even **when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing** that he would become the father of many nations. For **God had said** to him, “That’s how many descendants you will have!”
 - a. Life App #4: Faith in a promise from God trumps logic and reason. The facts screamed impossible but Abe chose to believe the God who said possible.
 2. [Vs 19 And **Abraham’s faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead**—and so was Sarah’s womb. ²⁰ **Abraham never wavered in believing God’s promise.** In fact, **his faith grew stronger**, and in this he brought glory to God. ²¹ **He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises.**]
 - a. How do we reconcile the OT when he laughed and doubted, e.g., Hagar? Life App #5: The development of faith is a process. We doubt but retake the test and believe.