

# “Interpreting Troubles”

## 1 Thessalonians 3:1-10

“It is a common thing for men to look upon pain as wholly evil. But deeper reflection shows that suffering is not thus purely evil – a thing to be feared and hated. It is often an instrument employed for good. Suffering will make the joys of heaven more rich and sweet. Remember that all discipline benefits or injures according to the spirit in which we receive it.” **T.W. Maya**

### I. “Oh we got trouble!”

- A. What hardship or trial are you currently facing? Or recall a past trial.
- B. How did you respond to that trial in your thoughts and actions?
- C. How did your response to the trial please God?
- D. How did your response to the trial not please God?
- E. What Scripture did you turn to for strength and guidance in the trial?
- F. Which brothers and sisters in Christ encouraged you in your trial? How did they specifically encourage you in the trial?
- G. What does 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 say about trials and comfort?

### II. “Oh I got trouble with my troubles!”

- A. Facing trials and troubles may tempt us to think:  
(Check each statement that you have been tempted to think.)
  1. God is not at \_\_\_\_\_ in this; He cannot possibly be part of this.
  2. Things are not \_\_\_\_\_ out for me.
  3. God is \_\_\_\_\_ with me.
  4. This is not \_\_\_\_\_.
  5. If God \_\_\_\_\_ me, this wouldn't be happening.
- B. Consult the following Scripture regarding troubles and comfort and write down what they teach you: John 9:1-12; Job 1:6-12; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Proverbs 4:23; Isaiah 45:1-7; James 1:12; 1 Peter 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:12.
- C. What is a proper interpretation of 1 Corinthians 10:13, and how does it encourage you to face your trials with confidence in God?

D. Some Early Application:

1. Calamity, tragedy, trials, and hardships are not necessarily \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Trials are not necessarily an indication that God is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The spiritual benefit in trials comes in my \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance of them, and in my confidence and trust in God's sovereignty, and my belief that He has my best interest in mind.
4. The test of trials becomes a solicitation to evil if I choose to \_\_\_\_\_ God and \_\_\_\_\_ His Word.
5. God will always provide a way for me to escape the temptation of unbelief and rebellion when I am enduring a trial.

III. "Oh I'm not troubled by my troubles anymore!"

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ tempts us to turn away from Christ, and tempts our faith to be weakened. (**1 Thessalonians 3:3-5**)
- B. "Faith" in 1 Thessalonians 3:1-10 is not the collection of gospel truths, written doctrine, but "faith" is \_\_\_\_\_ belief in that doctrine.
- C. Timothy's mission in Thessaloniki was to:
  1. "Strengthen" = \_\_\_\_\_
  2. "Encourage" = \_\_\_\_\_
- D. "Disturbed" in 1 Thessalonians 3:3 means: \_\_\_\_\_
- E. When Paul said "we" in 1 Thessalonians 3:3-4, he meant: \_\_\_\_\_
- F. Why did the Apostle Paul warn the Thessalonians about affliction before the affliction appeared?

IV. Seven Elements of Caring for Others Spiritual Well-Being in 1 Thessalonians 3:1-10. Measure yourself by the standard:

- 1) Christian affection and desire for fellowship in 3:1a; 2) Sacrifice in 3:1b-2a; 3) Compassion in 3:2b-4; 4) Protection in 3:5; 5) Delight and joy in spiritual progress of others in 3:6-8; 6) Gratitude to God in 3:9; and 7) Intercession in 3:10.