



Adversity & Trouble
Passage September 3, 2017

I. Introduction:

- A. When I a brand new believer I was in the Marine Corp. I was going through some tough transitions from my old life of drinking and drugging to being a follower of Jesus! At times it seemed like a struggle for my life, but God used a simple little poster on one of the officer's desk to inspire me. It said this "No pain, no gain!"
- B. Pain is a great word to associate with adversity and trouble. It may not be physical pain, but there can be a lot of emotional, mental and spiritual pain associated with hard times! And the reality is that pain is one of the primary tools that God uses to bring about gain, growth, Christlikeness in our lives!
- C. But the thought that many of us have as Christians is that these difficulties are destroying us, they are ruining my life, so rather than welcoming them as a gift or blessing from God, we struggle against them, get angry about them, wonder why God has left us and is against us!
- D. Some Christians even think that if you are walking well with God you will not go through any tough times! As their reasoning continues, if you are going through tough times then you must have some sin in your life that has brought this on! You must confess your sin, change your ways so your life will be back to "all is well" real soon!
 - 1. And actually as you read the book of Proverbs you could possibly come away with this kind of thinking – The good get good and the bad get bad!
 - 2. Turn to: Prv 12:21; 15:6
 - 3. Here is Pat Peglow's version of these verses which I think catches the original intention in light of all the rest of the revelation of Scripture – If you walk righteously with God you will not create any unnecessary trouble and messes for yourself, but if you walk wickedly and ignore God and His ways, your sin will create all kinds of trouble and messes that will negatively impact your life!

- E. I could take you to other places in Proverbs that says basically the same thing, but I want to remind you of an very important Bible study principle about Proverbs we learned early on in the series.
1. Every proverb is fully true but is not necessarily the whole truth!
 2. What that means is this – While what each proverb teaches is fully true, it does not tell the whole story, as you need to consider other proverbs and passages to understand and balance out the whole truth about any topic.
 3. An example of this is in Proverbs 24:16, and as I read this passage note the context is that of trouble and calamity.
 - a) Read
 - b) Seems pretty clear to me here that good people got trouble 7 times, but by God’s grace they were able to get back up each time!
 - c) So the good do not always get good; trouble is a part of their life!
- F. So the general principle we learn in Proverbs is that the good **primarily** get good because they do not create any unnecessary trouble to their lives, while the bad **primarily** eat the fruit of their own ways with more trouble.
- So what I want to do this morning is take a few minutes to share 2 other important balancing truths to this truth from other portions of Scripture. Let’s start by looking at ...

II. The Book of Job

- A. Let me first tell you the story of Job, then we will look at the lesson the book teaches us about tough times.
- B. Story
1. The story starts off with Satan accusing Job before God that he is a paid lover! Job only loves You, God, because You protect him and give him a bunch of good things. But take those good things away, and he will curse you to your face! Read 1:6-12
 - a) Note here that Job was considered by God as the most righteous man on earth!
 - b) Note here also that the trouble that Job is about to go through was not a making of his own sin, but a satanic attack, but even more ultimately a test that God allowed to prove and grow Job!

- c) Believers, sometimes our trouble comes because of our own foolish decisions or sins, but sometimes trouble comes from Satan, from the world or our flesh, and even sometimes God just allows it to grow us!
 - d) So we make a big mistake to assume that all trouble comes from sin! Our trouble may come from our sin, but it may not too!
 - 2. As the story goes on, Satan was able to take away all the many possessions that Job had, he killed all 10 of his children, and he took away Job's health. Things got so bad that Job cursed the day of his birth and wished he had died at birth!
 - 3. Job had 3 friends who came to comfort him in his pain. Rather than being a comfort, they added to his pain by their bad advice of calling Job to repent because obviously he must have sinned, otherwise he would not be having all this trouble! They held the principle of Proverbs without any balance or exceptions, as they believed that the good get good and the bad get bad. Since Job is going through bad times, he must of done something bad!
 - a) Job's pain worsened under their visit to comfort! So much so that he got to the point he felt that God had grasped Job around the neck and has made him God's target.
 - b) He said his only hope was the grave!
 - 4. Now it was interesting to note the Job's theology of good and bad was the same as his 3 friends'. He also believed that the good get good and the bad get bad. He believed it so much so that He accused God of wronging him by giving a good man like him so much bad!
 - 5. When you get near the end of the book, God makes a visit to Job and, through a series of rhetorical questions, makes him understand that life is bigger than he is strong, and life is smarter than he is smart.
 - 6. At the end of the story Job repented and retracted what he said about God wronging Him. He realized there were things going on in his life that he just could not understand. Read Job 42:1-6
- C. There is 1 major lesson we learn about trials from the book of Job: God gives blessings and trials equally out of His goodness and purposes, which are often beyond our ability to understand!
- The 2nd balancing truth I want to give about trials comes from

III. 2 Cor 4:7-11

- A. This is one of those go-to passages for me, one of those that could be in my category of life verses that I go back to over and over that have made a big difference in my life.
 - B. The context is simple:
 - 1. Paul is talking about not losing heart in the ministry because of those who do not respond to the gospel message we bring.
 - 2. But then he talks about how God has shone into our hearts and given us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!
 - 3. Then He says that we have this treasure (the glory of God in the person of Jesus) living right inside of our bodies which he calls earthen vessels!
 - 4. Then he says the reasons for this dichotomy of the great and powerful and glorious Jesus living inside of these fragile bodies that are given to breaking easily is so that no one will be confused as to where the real power in our life comes from! Listen to v7
 - C. Now he goes on in verses 8-11 to explain to us that God uses pain, trials, trouble, adversity, which he also calls as being delivered over to death, as the means to break down the control of our flesh so that more of Jesus, the very glory of God, may be manifested in our lives!
 - 1. Listen and watch for this as I read this section!
 - 2. The principle here is simply this: God uses trials to break down our flesh and increase the practical presence and power of Jesus in our lives!
- So what do I do with all of this today?

IV. Life Hack

- A. This is how you apply this truth – The next time you face adversity, a trial or something painful in your life dare to believe and refuse to doubt that Rom 8:28-29 is true in your life right now!
 - 1. Read Rom 8:28-29
 - 2. That simply means that whatever you face in your life, good or bad (and it really does not matter what the source of that bad is – your foolishness or sin, Satan, the world or your flesh) God is bigger than all of them.
 - a) Put the stake in the ground of your heart that God is going to use it to make you more like Jesus (that is the good that God is working in all your circumstances).

- b) Whenever any thought or doubt comes to your mind that is contrary to Rom 8:28-29, refuse to entertain or allow that thought to continue in your mind.
 - c) Instead use it as a reminder to thank and praise God that He is using this adversity to make me more like Jesus!
3. Dare to believe that He is using this pain of yours to make great eternal gains in your life and for His glory! Because “No pain, no gain!”