

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, March 20, 2013 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

**DAVID... A MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART**  
**“The Sword of Trouble That Surrounds A Life”**  
*2 Samuel 12-18, 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, 16-18*

**TROUBLE**  
*by Ray Lamontagne*

Trouble... trouble, trouble, trouble, trouble  
Trouble been doggin' my soul since the day I was born  
Worry... worry, worry, worry, worry  
Worry just will not seem to leave my mind alone

Trouble... oh, trouble, trouble, trouble, trouble  
Feels like every time I get back on my feet he come around and knock me down again  
Worry... oh, worry, worry, worry, worry  
Sometimes I swear it feels like this worry is my only friend

***“Man is born to trouble as surely as the sparks fly upward.”***  
***-Job 5:7***

***“Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble.”***  
***Job 14:1***

***“A gem is not polished without rubbing, nor a man made better without trials.”***  
***– Chinese Proverb***

Sure it doesn't feel good to go through abrasive moments of troubles and trials. Sometimes they are recurring. This was certainly true of David. The Prophet Nathan, who confronted David in his great moral failure, warned him in **2 Samuel 12:10**, “... ***the sword will never depart from your house...***” In other words, “David, trouble is going to be your constant companion for the rest of your life! Boy, you've got ‘troubles’ now!”

There is perhaps no pain harder to bear than domestic trouble. We can bounce back from trouble at work, or recover fairly rapidly from problems with friends. Even physical troubles and

infirmities or emotional battles and troubles – as hurting as they may be – can hardly be compared to the devastating impact brought on by trouble at home. Family feuds, wayward and prodigaled children, parent-child clashes, husband and wife disagreements, infidelity, and other in-house pressures have a way of breaking our spirits and stealing our joy. When you’ve got trouble at home, you’ve got real trouble, because that is where we live... the most intimate and integral (essential, basic, fundamental) parts of our lives. And listen, no one who compromises with God’s standard is immune. Not even a king... like David.

Remember this, life is full of trouble, some of our own making and some not, but everyone has troubles. Every time life would seem to cut you, and grind you, and trouble you it means God is working in you to make you a better you... a man or woman after His own heart.

Life really is marked by troubles. We all have them. No one is immune to them... not even Christians. Some troubles we face are major, many more are perhaps minor... some linger, many can be resolved about as quickly as they appear. Sometimes they come because of circumstances out of our control and our troubles seem unfair... after all it rains on the just and the unjust. At other times our troubles are the result of our fault, our own failing, our own sin and shortcoming, as in the case of David. When we are in the midst of our troubles they can all seem major at the time, and life impacting in so many ways. None of the troubles we encounter is easy at the time, otherwise it wouldn’t be called “TROUBLE.”

In the process of growth toward maturity in our Christian lives the troubles we face and deal with can actually play an essential role... it puts faith on the line, it may cause us to grow and mature in our faith walk, and it can actually create a greater reliance on the one who can truly handle the troubles, and problems, and challenges in our lives and cause us to grow closer to Him than we have ever been. This is the case whether the troubles we encounter are the unavoidable type the just come with life on this fallen planet or troubles of our own making, like David. Let’s witness King David’s misery as the sword of trouble and consequences fall on David and his family. As we watch it happen, let’s both take heed and learn some valuable lessons for own lives.

## **I. A STARK LOOK AT THE REALITY FOR CHRISTIANS**

New Christians will quite often have misconceptions about God, the Christian life and other believers and the things we face in this life... namely the troubles this life can hold. But that is not only a reality for new Christians, many who have been Christians for years. We often don’t know what to do with the trouble David got himself into and then reaped as result. That is just not the way it supposed to be for a “God-fearer,” a believer. Many carry these misconception tucked neatly in their back pocket and when troubles, and trial, and difficulties, and hardships come... when things don’t go as they expected in their tidy Christian world these misconceptions reveal themselves, and can leave devastating result. How did David emerge through is life of trouble with his heart for God still in tact. This look at the common misconceptions of Christianity is designed to dispel some of the myths that typically hinder Christians from growing and maturing in the faith even in the face of trouble.

**5 Commonly Held Dangerous Misconceptions Christians May Make: *(these misconceptions really contribute to our inability to deal with trouble in a faith growing***

*and producing way and sometimes these misconceptions are themselves a catalyst for problems themselves)*

- (1) **Once you become a Christian, you will never have any troubles (John 6:33, 1 Peter 4:12-13)** – One of the primary problems with this misconception is that it fails to deal honestly with a sin-nature that is still very much intact regardless of ones faith. Christians are still sinners, and they still fail and they still garner trouble to themselves in their fallen state in in this fallen world. Christians are often shocked when the first trial or serious crisis hits. Here's a reality check -- get prepared -- the Christian life is not always easy! You will still face ups and downs, challenges and joys. You will have problems and troubles to overcome... sins to be defeated that may at times defeat you (like David), obstacles to be overcome that at times may overcome you (like David), challenges to deal with that may at time deal misery to you (like David). Jesus said in John 6:33, *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* And 1 Peter 4:12-13 offers encouragement for Christians facing difficult situations, *"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed."*
- (2) **Becoming a Christian means giving up all fun and following a life of rules (John 10:10, 1 Corinthians 2:9)** – You know, when you read David's story it become apparent that he had a sexual appetite. Actually, that is the way God made man... with a capacity to enjoy sex in God's intended way. God didn't create David's capacity to enjoy sexual fulfillment by his taking for himself hundreds of sexual partners (wives and concubines), and committing adultery with another man's wife. But neither did God come to take the pleasures of this life from David or to destroy something God, Himself had created for man's enjoyment. The trouble David found in his life was not sex, but sexual sin, an immoral and distorted use of a God given gift. Some have bought in to the idea God only wants to ruin what pleasures and joys we have in this life... that becoming a Christian is a "kill joy"... that you will have to give up all your good times, all your friends, and that becoming a Christian makes more trouble for you than it solves. Listen, a joyless existence of mere rule-following is not true Christianity and the abundant life God intends for you. Rather, this describes a man-made experience of legalism. God has wonderful experiences and amazing adventures planned for you... not trouble free, but amazing. He doesn't desire to ruin our good time, but show us what a good time really looks like. As a matter of fact, Jesus, Himself described the life a Christian has as "abundant" when He said in John 10:10, *"... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."* (NKJV) This verses gives a description of what it means to experience real life, full life... the best life even in the midst of problems. 1 Corinthians 2:9 says it like this and reminds us that though not problem free the Christ life is truly a blessed life, *"However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"*
- (3) **All Christians are loving, perfect people (Colossians 3:13, Philippians 3:12-13)** – This misconception is troubled on so many levels itself, and can be a problem for a believer. It doesn't take very long to discover that Christians are not always loving and perfect people... that we are trouble prone individual and often "troubled" in our own

right. Quite the contrary can be true sometimes for any number of reasons. But being prepared to meet the imperfections and failures of your new family in Christ can spare you future problem of pain and disillusionment from the hands of others from whom you may be tempted to expect perfection. David wasn't perfect, but he was still a man after God's own heart. Noah got drunk. Abraham lied and Sarah laughed. Moses committed murder. Thomas doubted and Peter denied not once but three times. We are not perfect people, but we are redeemed people who are troubled and sometimes trouble. Although Christians strive to be like Christ, we will never obtain complete sanctification until we stand before the Lord. In fact, God uses our imperfections to "grow us" in the faith. If not, there would be no need to forgive one another. As we learn to live in harmony with our new family, we rub each other like sandpaper. It's painful at times, but the result brings about a smoothing and softening to our rough edges. Paul reminds us in **Colossians 3:13** that we are to *"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."* The very fact that he encourages us to have to do this "bearing with one another" implies that we are not always loving and perfect people, but rather a people who must be "beared" with. Do you get it? And he reminds us in **Philippians 3:12-13** that we aren't there yet, but rather still a work in progress when he said, *"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead ..."* In other words, I am not perfect yet... I'm still working on it, or rather He is still working on me!

- (4) Bad things don't happen to truly godly Christians (2 Corinthians 11:24-26, 1 Peter 1:6-7)** - This point goes along with point number one, however, the focus is slightly different. Often Christians begin to wrongly believe that if they live a godly Christian life, God will protect them from pain and suffering... troubles in this life. That David, got what he deserved because he was "a bad boy." The problem with that is the none of us really "get what we deserve." We all deserve ultimate trouble in hell. If we got what we deserve none of us would make it. Trouble comes to all of us, like we said earlier, sometimes at our own making and sometimes not, but we all have trouble. We can certainly make more trouble for ourselves by the poor choices we make, as in David's case, but the opposite is not true... that trouble just doesn't come to really godly and spiritual Christian who make only good choices. This just "ain't" so according to God's Word. Paul, a hero of the faith, suffered much. He lays out some of the bad things that happen to this truly godly Christian... just listen to it in **2 Corinthians 11:24-26**, *"Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers."* Some faith groups believe the Bible promises health, wealth and prosperity for all who live a godly life. But this teaching is false. Jesus never taught this to his followers. You may experience these blessings in your life, but they are not a reward for godly living. At times we experience tragedy, pain and loss in life. This is not always a result of sin, as some would claim, but rather,

for a greater purpose that we may not understand immediately. We may never understand, but we can trust God in these difficult times, and know he has a purpose. Rick Warren says in his popular book, "The Purpose Driven Life" says *"Jesus did not die on the cross just so we could live comfortable, well-adjusted lives. His purpose is far deeper: He wants to make us like himself before he takes us to heaven."* 1 Peter 1:6-7 says it like this, *"So be truly glad! There is wonderful joy ahead, even though it is necessary for you to endure many trials for a while. These trials are only to test your faith, to show that it is strong and pure. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold--and your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold. So if your faith remains strong after being tried by fiery trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world."* (NLT)

- (5) **Christian ministers and missionaries are more spiritual than other believers (1 Timothy 1:15-16)** – David was God chosen and anointed one to lead Israel, used by God to defeat Goliath and defeat the Philistines, chosen to be king of Israel, surely he was more spiritual and less likely to fall than the other Israelites and common man... surely he would be somehow protected and insulated from trouble and falling into sin. Like so many after him, David was not the first spiritual leader to be put on a pedestal. This is a major "problem" in churches and with many Christian. The problems associated with this misconception are varied, but deadly. It is a subtle but persistent misconception that we carry in our minds as believers sometimes. Because of this false notion, we end up putting ministers and other Christian leader on "spiritual pedestals" accompanied by unrealistic expectations. When one of these heroes falls from our self-constructed perch, it tends to make us fall too -- away from God. Don't let this happen in your life. You may have to continually guard yourself against this subtle deception. Paul, Timothy's spiritual father, taught him this truth - we are all sinners on an equal playing field with God and each other. 1 Timothy 1:15-16, *"This is a true saying, and everyone should believe it: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--and I was the worst of them all. But that is why God had mercy on me, so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life."* (NLT) \*As a side note, it is not without mentioning that Christian leaders should be held to a higher standard... and will be according to Scripture. The fact that they are human and fall just like everyone else by means is meant to excuse a minister or Christian leader from accountability and the high calling and standard that God has placed on their lives.

**QUESTION:** *We stated that these misconceptions really contribute to our inability to deal with the troubles that come in life and sometimes the same misconceptions are themselves a catalyst for trouble. How do these misconception contribute to our inability to deal with trouble and sometimes serve as catalyst for trouble themselves?*

## II. A BIBLICAL LOOK AND APPRAISAL OF TROUBLE

The words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 reveal four levels of the reality of the trouble that we "will" face. Paul doesn't imply that these things might happen, he assumes they will. He is the way he expresses it, *"<sup>8</sup> We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not*

destroyed.” The King James says it like this, “<sup>8</sup> *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;* <sup>9</sup> *Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.*” The levels of problems in this life are indicated by four terms.

#### **4 Levels of Problems:**

- (1) **Troubles – “daily problems”** The NIV calls these being “hard pressed.” Other translations use the word “afflictions.” This is the actually the slightest level of troubles we may face. It is mild or moderate, none the less troubling. The Greek word Paul uses is the one from which we get our word “pressure.” This type of trouble is closely related to stress that comes from people, deadlines, interruptions, and delays. It is easily forgotten, but it attacks us on a daily basis. Daily troubles and struggles! It is the troubles we face in day to day living... again sometimes these are from our own making and sometimes they are just daily grind problems we face.
- (2) **Perplexities – “without a way”** This indicates a level of troubles that is more intense than the former daily troubles we may face. It is also less often experienced, therefore perhaps a little harder to deal with. The Greek term translated here means “without a way” and conveys the idea of not knowing where to go or to whom we can turn. This kind of trouble would include not knowing how to handle the situation that may include unfair treatment from unfair people or circumstances, it could be trouble that we have caused ourselves that leaves us wringing our hands and feeling like there is no way out... I imagine David felt this way.
- (3) **Persecutions – “tormenting problems”** This is an extreme level of trouble we can experience. It can be either emotional or physical. This form of trouble carries with it intense irritation and stress that has affected us on the deepest painful levels and it does not pass quickly, but is tormenting. This is a level of problem that extremely difficult to handle and sometimes cause one to lose hope or abandon all hope. I believe full that David experienced this kind of trouble in his spirit as reflected in Psalm 32, verses 3-4, “*When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. <sup>4</sup> For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.*” David’s sin and failure was “tormenting” him, it was a constant persecution of his soul.
- (4) **Destructions – “loss”** This is the ultimate in the troubles, maximum stress is felt and experienced. It can include the loss of someone or something near and dear to us; a spouse to divorce, a mate, child or friend to death; something you consider valuable; a dream. This is a problem that we experience that is very final and there is really not way out of it except to accept it! David, of course experienced this trouble with the loss of the child conceived in his sin, but it didn’t stop there. Remember Nathan warned him that the “sword”... the trouble would never leave his house. David would bury other children... some who tried to steal the throne from him, he would experience the death of many close friends, and even the rape of his daughter. And on and on the list goes of the loss and destruction he would experience as the sword of trouble never left him.

Now notice, once again that Paul in his passage in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 does not deny the reality of trouble in our lives. Nor does he indicate that Christian will not face these troubles. As a matter of fact he is affirming that we will face trouble most certainly at

every level. He does however tell us that as Christians... the believer finds something beyond himself or herself to give victory, hope, and help in the midst of these troubles. Notice his words again in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, *"<sup>8</sup> We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup> Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."*

#### **4 Biblical Promises in the Midst Trouble:**

- (1) Daily troubles don't have to crush us**
- (2) Troubles that make us feeling perplexed with no way out don't have to leave us despairing**
- (3) Trouble that makes us feeling persecuted and tormented doesn't have to leave us feeling abandoned.**
- (4) Trouble that hands us life's greatest losses and disasters, and has catastrophic effects on our lives doesn't have to destroy us**

Okay, How can that be, you ask? *How is it that I can experience trouble of all kinds, on different levels and at different intensities... everything from daily grind troubles to tormenting troubles to actual intense trouble that hands me the death of a loved one I care most about and not be crushed, despairing, feeling abandoned or destroyed by it?* That is a multi-million dollar question isn't it? But is Scripture tell us it's true, it must be. If it is a promise, and it is, and God never goes back on His promises, and every word of this book (the Bible) is His inspired and inerrant word (and it is), then there must be a way that this can be true.

I think that the key may be in God title for David, "a man after God's own heart." Here is how Paul said it one verse before our passage in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9... let's get it a little more in context listen to verse 7, 2 Corinthians 4:7-9. *"<sup>7</sup>But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. <sup>8</sup> We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—."* The words translated as "earthen vessels" is the Greek word that literally means "baked clay," ... literally we have this treasure in baked clay... or clay pots. The reference here is to cheap, breakable, and wares subjected to every day wear and tear... in other words abuse and trouble... they get dirty, scratched, nicked, broken, tossed about, dropped, glued back together and reused over and over again. But notice that they very troubled clay pots are held together not by themselves, but by the power of God... the excellence of the power of God. The key is He hold all things together. When we are troubled He is the key... we must be a people after His own heart.

*\*The promise is that our troubles won't destroy us or overtake us because we have something beyond ourselves to see us through and give us victory. What is that? As Paul said in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things (even troubles) through Christ who strengthens me."*

### **III. A CLOSER LOOK AT DAVID'S TROUBLES**

Nathan the prophet, under God's direction, previewed the tone of David's future in eight words in **2 Samuel 12:10**, "...the sword shall never depart from your house..." The consequences of David's sin were to be this sword of trouble that would follow David the remainder of his life. God didn't forget about David, or count him out. He didn't stop loving David or claiming him as His own. God's grace was not hidden from David, evidenced not in a removal of the troubling consequences, but in the sparing of his life and God's forgiveness. Nathans also said in **2 Samuel 12:13**, "...The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die." And we have David's great prayer of confession and repentance in Psalm 51 as a monument to the great forgiveness of God when we sin and mess up, but the consequences of David's sin were set in motion. **Observation: Always remember that sin always has consequences and that whatever a man sows he will reap, but God does not abandon us. Rather, he forgives and restores us if we come to him in genuine confession and repentance of our sin.**

God led David down a path of trouble so that he would never forget the consequences of his acts. As Nathan said in **2 Samuel 12:11-12**, "<sup>11</sup> Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.' <sup>12</sup> For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'" Thus, the sword of trouble comes to David's life. A brief summary of 2 Samuel 12-18 will help us reconstruct the downward trend of David's trouble through grief and misery. David reaped precisely what he had sown... and trouble became his constant companion through the remainder of his life.

### **8 Point Summary of The Sword of Trouble in David's Life:**

-  (1) **Marital infidelity (2 Samuel 12:11-12, 16:20-22)** – Again the prediction of trouble for David included this statement from God in **2 Samuel 12:11-12**, "<sup>11</sup> Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.' <sup>12</sup> For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'" In the Hebrew, the term "companion" could include reference to one's own child. Tracking this prediction into chapter 16, we find that David's son Absalom cohabited with David's wives "in the sight of all Israel," right on the king's roof, where a tent was constructed... this was the very same roof where David had begun his sin with Bathsheba by spying on her innocence. **\*Remember back this was Ahithophel's idea, Bathsheba's grandfather, and former advisor to David and now Absalom.**
-  (2) **Loss of Bathsheba's baby (2 Samuel 12:15-19)** – Soon after the birth of the child which was the result of David's adulterous union, the infant was stricken with an illness that claimed his life seven days later.
-  (3) **Son disgraced a sister (2 Samuel 13:1-16)** – Amnon, David's son by Ahinoam, raped his half-sister Tamar (Absalom's full-sister by David's wife Maacha). Amnon loved her, but she was unavailable to him. He made himself emotionally ill to the point that he suffered severe depression. Accpeting the counsel of a foolish friend (Jonadab), Amnon arranged a plot to get her into his bed. He pretended to be physically ill and summoned her to care for him. When he finally made his moves and invited her to lay

with him, she refused. 2 Samuel 13:14, says, <sup>14</sup> *“However, he (Amnon) would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her.”* He raped her! Then the Bible tells us that the “love” he had for her turned to a hatred of greater degree (2 Sam. 13:16).

- ✠ (4) **Absalom hated Amnon (2 Samuel 13:20-22)** – Tamar ran to her brother Absalom and told her what Amnon had done to her. And 2 Samuel 13:22 says, <sup>22</sup> *“And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.”*
- ✠ (5) **Absalom murdered Amnon (2 Samuel 13:23-29a)** – Nowhere in Scripture can we find another response of David to the rape of his daughter by his own son – other than mere anger in 2 Samuel 13:12. He neither confronted nor corrected Amnon his son. He was passive. Absalom waited two years for David to act, but to no avail, and his hatred turned into feeling of murder. He designed a conspiracy against Amnon, got him drunk, and had him killed... interestingly much like what his father, David, had done to Uriah. The sword is never very far from your home.
- ✠ (6) **Absalom rebelled and ran from home (2 Samuel 13:34-38)** – When David learned the truth of Amnon’s death, Absalom fled to his grandfather’s home (Talmai, king of Geshur). There he licked his wounds and carved out a plan to move again his father, David – Israel’s king.
- ✠ (7) **Absalom led a conspiracy (2 Samuel 14:28-15:16)** – Absalom returned to Jerusalem and lived there two years before seeing David’s face. Through a series of events that followed, Absalom won the hearts of the people (2 Samuel 15:6). In private counsel he turned the plaintiffs, who approached his father, against the him... King David (2 Samuel 15:2-6). His campaign was far-reaching, to the extent that according to 2 Samuel 15:12, *“And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number.”* When word reached David, fear seized him and he ordered his servants in 2 Samuel 15:14, *“Arise, and let us flee, or we shall not escape from Absalom. Make haste to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly and bring disaster upon us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword.”* So once again, David is running for his life this time from his own son.
- ✠ (8) **Joab murdered Absalom (2 Samuel 18:9-15, 32-33)** – Riding on a mule, Absalom passed under an oak tree and his head was caught in the thick branches. Joab, one of David’s captains, upon learning of the accident, took the opportunity to go to Absalom and drive three spears through his heart. David grieved deeply over Absalom’s death, to the extent that he wished that he would have died rather than his son.

**Observation:** *Though the sword of trouble never left David’s house, and he endured terrible tragedy and disaster within his own family, God remained faithful to David throughout his life. Trouble was never far away, but neither was the Lord God who was David’s constants source of comfort and help as reflected in his psalms.*

#### PSALM 46

<sup>1</sup> *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

<sup>2</sup> *Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed,  
And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;*

<sup>3</sup> *Though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling.”*

#### IV. THE ULTIMATE HELP FOR YOUR TROUBLES

Trouble is a reality and you and I will never escape that reality. Troubles will come and sometimes they will be intense and beyond our ability to handle them. As Job said it, *"...man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward (Job 5:7)."* The Apostle Paul tells us that he found a way to not be crushed, despaired, abandoned or destroyed by trouble. He found victory and ultimately that comes only through Jesus Christ... God in the flesh. So he closes out his words at the end of 2 Corinthians 4 in speaking of the reality of the troubles he knew were certain with these words in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, *"<sup>16</sup> Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. <sup>18</sup> So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."*

##### 5 Sources of Help for Your Troubles:

- (1) **Don't lose heart** – Verse 16 says, *"<sup>16</sup> Therefore we do not lose heart..."* Literally "don't allow yourself to be disheartened by your troubles." Don't lose all hope! No matter how bad it gets in this life, for a Christian all hope is never... never lost! Realize that everyone has troubles. It is a part of this life. It rains on the just and the unjust. Everyone has problems. Troubles can be disheartening especially when like David they are from our own making, but there is One who will guard your heart... One who is on your side.
- (2) **Be Renewed day by day** – Paul says in verse 16, *"...Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day."* Christians are to be renewed and be being renewed daily, even when the troubles are the fiercest. That is one of the ways we are able to handle and do life with all of its associated challenges and struggles... troubles. How are we "renewed" day by day? By being in a growing and increasingly intimate relationship with Him. That only comes about by spending time with Him and getting to know Him on an ever deepening level through the study of His word (Bible study), by spending time with him in conversation (prayer), but sitting under the teaching and proclaiming of His words, by fellowshiping with others who know Him (church), by loving and expressing that love to Him (worship), by serving and giving of our self to Him (giving), etc.
- (3) **Remember your troubles are momentary** – Paul speak of *"...our light and momentary troubles..."* in verse 17. He is giving us a right perspective for the troubles we face in this life, namely that they are momentary... temporary. Sometimes we get "tunnel vision" in the midst of our troubles and can focus on nothing else, but for a Christian we would always remember that this life with all of its ups and downs, joys as well as sorrows, is only a temporary. His intention is not to sound callused by the real troubles we face, but to remind us that they really are only momentary blips on the screen of the bigger picture of all that God has in store for you. And that really leads us to the next one
- (4) **Keep in mind a better day is ahead** – Verse 17 says, *"For our light and momentary troubles (problems) are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."* For the believers, the weight of our light and momentary troubles in this life will soon

give way to a new day where all problems, heartaches, and struggles of this life will be over forever and there will be no more crying, no more suffering and no more pain. There is a better day coming when all our wrestling with the problems of this world will be over for good! Yeah!

- (5) **Focus on Him who is unseen and holds our lives in the palm of His hand** - *So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.* One of my favorite verses is Hebrews 12:2-3, <sup>2</sup> *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.* <sup>3</sup> *Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*” You get it! We must focus on Him and not our troubles. He holds the key and is the “ultimate” source for victory over the troubles of this life. Focus on Him.