



(Now in our 14th Year!)



STILL PRICELESS
September 2014

God's In Trouble



When I was a child, there were few things that would make me shudder more than to hear one of my siblings or one of my friends ominously declare “You’re in trouble!” There was a ghastly delight to how they said it, too, stretching out the word “trouble” almost as if they were singing a song. Upon hearing these foreboding words my mind would race back and forth trying to determine what I might have done. On those occasions when I knew precisely what I did, my focus would be on how my parents would likely punish me and how I could escape it. I hated the idea of being in trouble.

As I grew older, avoiding trouble became a priority. Not that I thought I could live a trouble-free life, but there was no sense in doing things that I *knew* would lead to it. However, a few years ago, that all changed. Now, I did not suddenly go about looking for trouble, but I was no longer filled with dread at the thought of trouble. That’s because I realized that I was not the only one in trouble – God’s in trouble, too!

In Psalm 91:15, God makes a promise to those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High and abide under the shadow of the Almighty: “I will be with him in trouble.” On that day when the Holy Spirit caused me to focus on those words that I had read many times before, my heart was filled with joy and relief! No longer would trouble trouble me! With God by my side, I would trouble my trouble!!!

This revelation led me to more Scriptures, like Isaiah 43:2, “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.” Wow!! Trouble may come my way, God said, but it would not prevail!!

Then Jesus spoke up and said, “*In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*” (John 16:33). Then the Holy Spirit brought to my remembrance, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).

Suddenly, the thought of being in a tight spot was no longer daunting. Even if everyone else ran out on me, God would be right there. After all, He said, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5), and “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20 ASV). This led me to say, like David, “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up” (Psalm 27:10).

Once I realized that God would be right there with me, no matter what trouble I might find myself in, the idea of trouble lost its grip on me. Why fear problems when the Great Problem-Solver is by my side!!

Here’s the great news: as a born-again believer, you are a child of God, and God’s promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus to all of His children (2 Corinthians 1:20). This means whenever you find yourself in a fix, God is right there with you, ready to bring you out! No matter what type of problem you may be facing, there is nothing too hard for God. He is with you in the middle of your situation right now, and He is about to turn it around in your favor. How do I know?

Well, let’s go back to Psalm 91:15-16 and the promises God makes there: “He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.” Read that again and rejoice! Not only is God with you in your trouble, but He promises to deliver you from it and shower you with honor. He also says that trouble will not take you out, because He will give you length of days, and bestow upon you all the gifts of His great salvation – health, well-being, protection and provision.

So, there is absolutely no reason to allow the thought of trouble to trouble you. On those occasions when you find yourself in trouble, fear not, for you’re not alone. Just remember, God’s in trouble, too!



GODLY MEN IN SCRIPTURE. True men of God are alive and well in the Body of Christ, in spite of what the media would have you to believe. Just as they have always been. This quiz is based on Men of God in Scripture. See if you know who the question is referring to and as an extra challenge, where is it found in the Bible? Don't worry about not getting them all correct, it just means you're open to learn. God loves teachable spirits! ☺

- Who refused to take the spoils of war from a king, lest the king think he, rather than God, had made him rich?
a. Joshua b. Abram c. Ishmael d. Jacob
- Who willingly offered his only son as a living sacrifice out of obedience to God's command?
a. Isaac b. Abraham c. Abram d. Moses
- Who confronted a king who had an affair with a married woman and had her husband killed?
a. Nathan b. David c. Samuel d. John the Baptist
- Who defended the daughters of a priest whom shepherds tried to drive away from a well in the desert?
a. Jesus b. Job c. Moses d. Saul
- Who took care of a widow and her two sons by giving her the means to pay off her debt?
a. Elijah b. Elisha c. Samuel d. Sampson
- Who refused to sleep with his master's wife, with the result that he was thrown in prison?
a. Joshua b. Uriah c. Joseph d. Jeremiah
- Who returned ill-gotten gain and gave half his wealth to the poor when he met Jesus?
a. Peter b. Nicodemus c. Matthew d. Zaccheus
- Who refused to worship a king, with the result that he was thrown into a den of lions?
a. Darius b. Daniel c. David d. Solomon
- Who preached the gospel, even when it was forbidden, with the result that he was the first Christian martyr?
a. Stephen b. Paul c. Simon d. Barnabus
- Who refused to curse God and die even when everything was taken from him, including his children, his servants and his wealth?
a. Hosea b. Ananias c. Job d. Luke

(Answers on next page)



If we worry about failure, we will never put ourselves in a position to succeed.

Light is only beneficial in darkness.

We need to accept the Jesus of the Bible and not the one in the pictures.

Not everybody who stays with you is faithful, or loyal. Just ask Jesus.

Storms are a great reminder of what your house is built upon.

God has an order, we can keep trying to dissemble it if we want, He still has it and it yet must be carried out.

If God did not want men to cry, He would not have given them tear ducts.

GRACE AND PEACE, READERS!

Has this newsletter been passed on to you? If so, would you like to receive your own copy? Or maybe you know someone who might want a copy? How about a friend, a member of your church or a neighbor? What about someone you've been witnessing to, perhaps a client or a customer? Are you interested in being a distributor? Whatever the case, let us know. We'd love to include you in our mailing. And it's FREE! Visit the website or email us at newsletter@ongoodground.org. You'll be glad you did, and so will we!



"... trust your lives to the God who created you, for he will never fail you."

- 1 Peter 4:19b NLT



Joy for the Spirit

"A merry heart does good, like medicine" - Proverbs 17:22

A Thought on Forgiveness

My niece, Darcy, is an incredibly sweet child, always eager to please. She is three years old and she absolutely adores her slightly older cousin. Recently the two were playing and had gone into a bedroom together. Suddenly, Darcy came down the hall in a state of indignation, saying, "Jo-Jo slapped my face." She had a slightly reddened place on her very pale cheek. Jo-Jo followed her saying, "I didn't do anything. Darcy banged me with her head and I know she did it on purpose." Now I love both little girls, but I knew Darcy did not do it on purpose. Bouncing around in her excitement, she had banged her head into Jo-Jo's nose. The sudden pain made Jo-Jo fly off the handle and I knew she had slapped her without thinking. We had a little talk about it and she finally allowed that she had put up her hand and it had hit Darcy's cheek. I asked her to apologize to Darcy because her hand had hit her cheek. She refused, saying, "No. I didn't do anything." Whereupon Darcy said, "Jo-Jo, I'm sorry my cheek hit your hand." Now that is forgiveness, I thought. I've never seen anybody do it any better.

Me either. But it is certainly something worth striving to do. As someone has said, true forgiveness is having the ability to receive an apology that no one ever gave. After all, isn't that what God did with each and every one of us, when He sent Jesus to die for our sins and pardoned (forgave) us of them before we even thought to ask. Oh, to be there. Selah.

The Prayer of Salvation

God, I come to You in the name of Jesus. You said that all have fallen short of the glory of God. You sent Your Son that I would be saved. Forgive me of my sins, Lord. I confess with my mouth and believe in my heart that Jesus died for me and You raised Him from the dead. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and believe that I have been born again. Thank You for loving me, for forgiving me and coming into my heart. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.



Intercessory prayer at the church is held **Mondays at 7pm**. We believe, as we have been taught, that prayers can do what God can do. We want you to know that we are praying for you. If you have any specific prayer requests for yourself or a loved one, feel free to email us at prayer@ongoodground.org, visit the web at www.ongoodground.org or call us at (609) 723-3425.



A MOMENT WITH GOD

What you have said, Lord, help me to boldly say!



Make Room for God

In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus contrasted four different types of soil upon which the seed was sown: wayside ground; stony ground; thorny ground and good ground. The seed in this parable, we're told, is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). While it may be tempting to say that each type of soil represents four different types of people, in truth the different soil represents our varying responses to the Word. In other words, depending on the time, day and occasion we may be one type of soil or another. Catch us on a good day with a Word we have no problem accepting or believing (like God wants to overflow our cup) and we're good ground. Give us a Word that we struggle with or don't want to hear (like forgive that friend who viciously betrayed you), well, we might just be wayside ground on that one. Our goal, of course, is to allow the Holy Spirit to work on us and transform us into good ground on every point. It is the mark of the prize for which we press.

In this day and age, however, one of our biggest challenges is to avoid becoming thorny ground. The wayside ground represents a heart that hears the Word and doesn't respond to it. That lack of response allows the devil to swoop in and snatch away the Word that was sown (Mark 4:15). The stony ground represents the heart that, after hearing the Word, responds to it with joy, but the Word never really takes root, so when the problems of life arise the plant of promise withers away (Matthew 13:5-6). The thorny ground represents the heart that hears the Word, *"but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced"* (Mark 4:19 NLT).

None of these three outcomes are good for us and we don't want to become the type of soil described in any of these examples. However, in today's fast paced, go-go world of ours, we need to be especially on guard to avoid becoming thorny ground. We allow our hearts to become thorny ground when we become preoccupied with "the cares of this life" (Matthew 13:22). Those things that concern us may be legitimate – like providing for our families or sending our kids to college – but as soon as we become focused on doing all that we can to make it happen (like, for instance, working so hard and so much that we no longer read the Word or attend service), then the thorns are sure to spring up.

Jesus also said the "deceitfulness of riches" or the "lure of wealth" would also produce thorns. In our society today, especially in America, far too much focus is placed on making money and buying nice things. Again, nothing is wrong with money or possessions. The trouble arises when we become preoccupied with such things to the exclusion of time and devotion to God and His Word.

In the end, if we allow ourselves to be overcome by the cares of this life or the drive to succeed and have material things, the Word of God gets "crowded out." The Word that was sown in the center of our hearts keeps getting pushed aside by the pursuit of happiness, until one day it is no longer present. When that happens, Mark says, "no fruit is produced." How could it be any other way? Remember what Jesus said, *"The seed is the Word of God"* (Luke 8:11). We can't produce fruit without seed. Oh, we may acquire the things of this life, but we will not have produced anything of eternal significance.

We must reject the call of this world to do and get "more, more, more," and instead give heed to the Word that says, *"Be still, and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10). In the stillness we will hear His voice leading and guiding us to a life of success that we could never obtain through our own efforts. To get to this place, we have to be dedicated each day to make sure that we make room for God and His Word.





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Have you shared the Good News yet?

"But the ones that fell on good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." - Luke 8:15



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By inspiration of The Holy Ghost.

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May the Lord God bless you in astonishing ways!

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YOUR PART

Sometimes there are clues. Whenever we have difficulty seeing eye-to-eye with others, it can be difficult at times to determine who is in the wrong and who is in the right. However, when he knows what she should do to be a better wife, and she knows what he should do to be a better husband; or when the parent focuses on how the child could be a better kid; or Mary zeroes in on what her pal should do to be a better friend, then chances are the person "in the know" is likely the culprit. Each of us has a role to play in our relationships. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25), and the wife is to submit to her own husband as unto the Lord (Ephesians 5:21). Children are to obey their parents (Colossians 3:20) and parents are not to provoke their kids to the point of discouragement (Colossians 3:21). Friends are supposed to love at all times (Proverbs 17:17) and neighbors are supposed to love each other as they love themselves (James 2:8). So when we find ourselves at odds with someone, the first thing we should do is perform an "I exam." Ask: "Am I doing all that *I can* in this situation according to the Word of God?" Be honest, and remember, even when we have done all that is required, Jesus still commands us to go the extra mile (Matthew 5:41). In short, in all of your dealings with others, before looking at the other guy or gal and letting them know what they should do, take a good look inward and make sure that *you* are doing *your* part.