

The third tip for these trouble times is that we must ...

3. Persistently pray

a. In troubled times, we must pray regularly.

- 1) How much do you pray? Do your prayers include more than your daily wish list? How thankful and appreciative are you in your prayers? Do you talk to the Lord about all your burdens? Do you spend time just talking to the Lord or discussing a Scripture you are having difficulty understanding?
- 2) I ask these questions because I know that prayer can easily become mechanical and ritual. God wants us to fellowship with Him as we do with an intimate friend.
- 3) In these troubled times, you and I need to know how to pray. **You and I must set aside quality time each day to talk and fellowship with the Lord.** It is fine to pray as you drive to work or as you take your shower, but that will never substitute for quality, quiet, time alone on your knees with the Lord. If this is new to you, try it!

b. We must not give up on praying.

- 1) When prayer begins to seem like a waste of time, we must renew our faith with a more intense time in the Word, getting to know God better. **Here is something that may help.** As you read your Bible each day, make a list of God's qualities. For example, have a section that answers the statement, "God is..." another "the Lord is..." The better you know God, the greater you will trust Him.
- 2) We cannot give up on prayer. Note Jesus' words in (Luke 18:1) **"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;"** Similarly we are told in (Colossians 4:2) **"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;"**

Conclusion: Read again God's tips for troubled times, Romans 12:12. If you are a Christian, you have GREAT hope. Rejoice in it. When affliction or persecution comes, endure it for Christ. Persist in prayer. Do not neglect this wonderful privilege. Talk to our Sovereign instead of fretting. **If you do not know Christ, He invites you to Him today.**

Song: Sooner or Later 146

Tips for Troubled Times

28 August 2022 AM – Romans 12:12 – Rom2022 – Scott Childs

Introduction: We live in troubled times. The war in Ukraine is disturbing. China's escalating threats to Taiwan are troubling. Some Australians fear that China may attack us. Political battles, corruption, and extreme political weakness in the USA is a great concern. Moral corruption in our society is at a peak. Addictions from drugs to porn are rapidly increasing. We live in a world that is very troubling, yet God does not want us to worry and fret. What then ARE we to do? Read **Romans 12:12.**

Transition: In this helpful verse, the Lord gives us three tips for troubled times. We need these tips for comfort in these dark days.

The first tip for these trouble times is that we must ...

1. Rejoice in our Hope

a. As Christians, we have hope.

- 1) When Paul wrote about **hope**, he was not speaking of wishful thinking, like, "I hope it will be a nice day tomorrow." Hope in the Bible is a confident expectation that something WILL happen.
- 2) Many in our world today have no hope. They fret and worry about what may happen because they live entirely in the present (Eph 2:12; 1Th 4:13).
- 3) The Lord gives Christians hope for the future. The Christian's hope transcends this life and looks to eternity. The Bible clearly tells us that in the last days, things will be terrible on this earth. God's judgment is nearing. However, no matter how bad things get on this earth, Christians have a peaceful and eternal home awaiting them with the Lord.
- 4) To strengthen our hope, we need to know how God uses this word in Scripture.
 - a) The believer's hope is in the resurrection (Ac 23:6; 24:15; 1Pe 1:3).
 - b) We have a hope of righteousness by faith (Gal 5:5).
 - c) We have a hope of glory (Col 1:27).

- d) We have a hope of salvation (1Th 5:8).
 - e) We have a hope of eternal life (Tit 1:2; 3:7).
 - f) Our hope is laid up for us in heaven (Col 1:5).
 - g) Christ is our hope (1Ti 1:1).
 - h) It is a blessed hope (Tit 2:13).
 - i) It is a better hope (Heb 7:19).
 - j) Our hope motivates us to purify ourselves (1Jn 3:3).
- 5) Jesus' promise to his disciples just before he went to the cross is the basis of our hope. He said, **"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."** (John 14:3). *With this understanding of our blessed hope, the Lord admonishes Christians to ...*

b. Rejoice in our hope and do not worry.

- 1) Our hope of resurrection and eternal life with God is comforting. Spending eternity with God is not a fairy tale; it is the promise of God to every sinner who has repented of his sin and trusted Christ alone to save his soul.
- 2) **Rejoice** in that awesome hope. The worst thing that could happen to you is that you could die and enter the presence of God.
- 3) **Rejoice** when you sing songs about heaven.
- 4) **Rejoice** as you lie on your pillow preparing to sleep.
- 5) Do not worry about the future; **rejoice** in your hope.

The second tip for these trouble times is that we must ...

2. Endure Afflictions that Come

a. As Christians, we are not exempt from affliction.

- 1) Our text calls these **tribulations**. It literally refers to something that causes pressure. The KJV translates it as tribulation (21x), affliction (17x), trouble (3x), anguish (1x), persecution (1x), burdened (1x), to be afflicted (1x). As you can see, it depicts pressures from an outside source.
- 2) The believers in the 1st century Thessalonian church faced many such afflictions and tribulations. Paul wrote...
 - a) (1 Thessalonians 1:6) **"And ye became followers of**

us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:"

- b) (1 Thessalonians 3:3) **"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."**
- c) (2 Thessalonians 1:4) **"So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:"**

- 3) On another occasion, Paul told preacher Timothy, (2 Timothy 3:12) **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."** Here he used a different word, but the meaning is the same.

- 4) In these troubled times, we **must expect** afflictions.

b. We must endure our afflictions with patience.

- 1) We think of being patient as waiting calmly, but the Webster 1828 dictionary defines **"patient"** as **"Having the quality of enduring evils without murmuring or fretfulness; sustaining afflictions of body or mind with fortitude, calmness or Christian submission to the divine will."**
- 2) We must endure afflictions with a good attitude. We are to remain unmoved by these trials. Our goal must be as that of the apostles when they were beaten. (Acts 5:41) **"And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."**
- 3) We will not endure afflictions with that attitude unless we are walking in close fellowship with the Lord. In these troubling times, we need, more than ever, to heed Peter's words in 2 Peter 3:18, **"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."** *Are you growing in your knowledge of the Lord through daily Bible study, meditation on what you read, and prayer?*