

Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and **companion [G4791 *sugkoinonos*]** in **tribulation [G2347 *thlipsis*]**, and in the kingdom and **patience [G5281 *hupomone*]** of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

There are some things that make tribulation very difficult to endure.

- if you had no idea it was coming
- if you feel you are alone in it
- if you think it will have no end

WHAT IS TRIBULATION?

The Greek word **G2347 *thlipsis*** which most literally means “pressure”

Translated: tribulation, affliction, trouble, anguish

Essentially: something that happens to you, which you would not wish or choose to have happen; something that happens to you, which you find distressing, even painful

Joseph

Acts 7:9-10 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, 10 And delivered him out of all his **afflictions [G2347 thlipsis]**, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

- hated by his brothers, who should have loved him
- taken captive, away from his father
- made a servant
- when he was doing everything righteous, he was unjustly accused by a sinful person because he wouldn't get along with the sin she wanted him to commit
- found guilty by an unjust judge
- punished with imprisonment
- forgotten by the one who seemed his only chance at getting out of prison

Jacob and his family during a famine

Acts 7:11 Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great **affliction [G2347 thlipsis]**: and our fathers found no sustenance.

- sometimes, in God's Providence, people are very short of the basic needs of this life; people become poor in general, or poor in some important area
- this can happen on an individual basis, or to a whole region or country

A married couple

1 Corinthians 7:27-28 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. 28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have **trouble [G2347 thlipsis]** in the flesh: but I spare you.

- a man and woman who get married, and who probably then also have children, will face trouble or tribulation in the flesh

A mother

John 16:21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the **anguish [G2347 thlipsis]**, for joy that a man is born into the world.

- a natural process which God created
- made painful because of our sin

People whose family has been ruptured

James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their **affliction [G2347 thlipsis]**, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

- it will be harder than normal to get the basics of life
- there will be grief, which will manifest itself in various ways

WHAT IS TRIBULATION SPECIFICALLY IN REFERENCE TO THE KINGDOM OF JESUS CHRIST?

What Jesus said to His disciples

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have **tribulation [G2347 *thlipsis*]**: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

He was summarizing what He just had said:

John 16:2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

-those who have some kind of false religion, not truly believing in Jesus Christ, will think of Christians as enemies

-they will excommunicate them from their apostate churches

-they will kill them

-all of this goes on even when Jesus Christ has overcome the world

What Paul and Barnabas said to the new churches in Asia

Acts 14:21-23 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much **tribulation [G2347 *thlipsis*]** enter into the kingdom of God. 23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

-we who believe in Jesus Christ are, in one sense, in the kingdom of God

-but in another sense, we pass through this life to enter the kingdom of God

-it is God's perfect plan that we must enter the kingdom of God by and after passing through much tribulation

What John experienced

John's brother was the first of the apostles to be killed

Acts 12:1-2 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. 2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

John was then in exile on Patmos

-John had been preaching the word of God, and had written his gospel, giving his eye-witness testimony about Jesus Christ

-for these things he was exiled, away from all the churches

Ephesus

Revelation 2:2-3 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

- they have had to vote some people out of the church because they were doing evil
- they have had to test men who want to be thought of as faithful leaders and Bible teachers, and found they actually were false
- both of these things are hard labor

Smyrna

Revelation 2:9-10 I know thy works, and **tribulation [G2347 *thlipsis*]**, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. 10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

- they are in poverty
- they are blasphemed by the members of a rival church that is apostate
- they will be put in prison
- they will be put to death

Pergamos

Revelation 2:13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

- they live where evil is very prevalent

Knollys: that is to say, where iniquity and idolatry was practiced and established by law, which Christ here call Satan's throne, because the devil gave the Roman, pagan emperors (as he did afterwards the anti-Christian beast; Re 13:2) his power, and throne, and great authority, as appears in Re 12:1-17 and Re 13:1-18.

- one of them, Antipas, has been killed

Thyatira

Revelation 2:20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

-there is a woman, apparently in the church, who calls herself a prophet, who is teaching people in the church some doctrine that amounts to idolatry

-some in the church are following her in this doctrine and this idolatry

Revelation 2:24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

Sardis

Revelation 3:1-2 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

-most people in the church seem to be Christians in name only; they do not do the good works that the Lord Jesus has commanded; it is so bad that the church is mostly dead, and what still has life also is about to die

-there are faithful church members who are not like that, but they have to endure that dreadful situation

Philadelphia

Revelation 3:8-9 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

-the church is very small and weak, and it is a struggle to be true to the word of Christ
-as mentioned in another city, there is a rival apostate church telling lies

2 Thessalonians 1:3-10 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; 4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your **patience [G5281 hupomone]** and faith in all your persecutions and **tribulations [G2347 thlipsis]** that ye endure: 5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: 6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense **tribulation [G2347 thlipsis]** to them that trouble you; 7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

Philippians 4:10-14 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. 12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. 14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did **communicate with [G4790 sugkoinoneo]** my **affliction [G2347 thlipsis]**.

Romans 5:3-5 And not only so, but we glory in **tribulation [G2347 thlipsis]** also: knowing that **tribulation [G2347 thlipsis]** worketh **patience [G5281 hupomone]**; 4 And **patience [G5281 hupomone]**, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

tribulation G2347 *thlipsis* literally pressure

Matthew 13:20-21 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

John 16:20-22 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. 21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. 22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

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Acts 14:21-23 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. 23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Romans 8:35-39 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we

ourselves are comforted of God. 5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. 6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. 7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

1 Thessalonians 3:1-4 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; 2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: 3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. 4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

Hebrews 10:32-37 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; 33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. 34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. 35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

patience [**G5281 *hupomone***] Strong: cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy, patience

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

