

I. Introduction

- A. We are wrapping up a mini-series today. The series is called Troubles. In part one, we looked at Trouble and Faith. In part two, Trouble and God's Plan. And today, to wrap it up, our topic is:
 - 1. Trouble and the Devil's Lies.
- B. Here's what happens.
- C. This nasty beast called Trouble comes into your life. There he is... Mr. Trouble, knocking at your door.
- D. And right beside him is Mr. Devil.
- E. Trouble comes to mess with you.
- F. The devil comes to lie to you. How do we know? Jesus said so.
 - 1. *"The devil... was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. (John 8:44, NKJV).*
- G. A lie only works if it seems true, right? If it's obvious, you throw it away. The devil's lies are rarely obvious. That's why we have to be prepared. We need a way to get ahead of the devil's lies. We need to be able to spot them right away, and not get sucked in and defeated by them.
- H. Today, I want to talk about the Top Ten Lies the Devil will start whispering into your brain when Trouble comes knocking at your door.

II. Top Six Lies

- A. I am unlucky.
 - 1. If there is any voice inside your head whispering, I am unlucky, that voice does not come from God. It comes from the devil, and he is a liar.
 - 2. You are not unlucky. There is no such thing.
 - 3. When you say you're unlucky, you're implying a few things.
 - 4. One is that the forces that control your life are impersonal. They are random, like the roll of the dice. No thought. No personhood behind them. It's a chemical universe, that is just random.
 - 5. The truth is just the opposite. This universe sits in the hand of an all loving, all powerful, all knowing God. He cares for you. And luck has nothing at all to do with anything.
 - 6. We are Christians. We believe in God, not in luck.
 - 7. Another lie here is really important and really simple. If you are a Christian, then it is doubly impossible for you to be unlucky. The reason is because something amazing happened the moment you were saved.
 - 8. God joined you to Christ. God placed you into union with Christ. You didn't see this or feel this, but God promised it, so it happened. You became so joined to Christ that everything that is true about Jesus is now true of you.
 - 9. If you could get in a space ship, and fly to heaven right now, and see Jesus seated on his glorious throne... if you could see the mighty angels serving him and the incredible happiness and joy in his presence for five minutes, you would never look at Jesus and say — wow, that guy's really unlucky.
 - 10. If you are one with Jesus, and it isn't true of him, then it can't be true of you either.
 - 11. If you saw Jesus, the main thing you would say is, "That guy has it good!" Or, to use Bible-speak, you would say, Jesus is blessed, and since I am one with him, so am I.
 - 12. I want you to never again let the words cross your lips that say, I am unlucky. Never. It's a script from the devil. It's a brain freeze from the dark side. Don't be fooled.
 - 13. No matter what your troubles may be, look at yourself in the mirror and say, "I am blessed beyond words, because all the blessings of Jesus are mine."
- B. God is punishing me.
 - 1. One of the devil's favorite tricks is to connect the dots between your troubles and your sins.
 - 2. You did something bad, so God does something bad. You crossed this moral line, so God has to kick you around for a while.
 - 3. Lies, lies, and more lies.
 - 4. Listen, it's absolutely true that your choices have consequences. If you make bad choices and don't study, you'll get bad grades, and bad test scores, and go to a lousy college, and the world will explode. You know, if you give a mouse a cookie. Choices have consequences.
 - 5. But that's not punishment, it's just consequences.
 - 6. Here's the truth.
 - 7. If you are a Christian, God can't punish you. He has already punished Christ. He's not into double jeopardy.
 - 8. When Jesus hung on the cross, all of your sins, one hundred percent of them, were transferred to him. He was your willing sacrifice.
 - 9. And once all your sins were placed on Christ, God punished him. God punished Christ for your sins instead of punishing you. The punishment was horrible. All the condemnation, all the wrath of God, all the damnation, all the penalties of sin and death and hell were wrapped up into one blistering, sizzling ball of divine wrath, and smashing into Jesus Christ hanging on the cross.
 - 10. So complete was his payment for sin, he cried out *IT IS FINISHED (John 19:30).*
 - 11. What was finished? All the punishments for all your guilt, all your shame, and all your sins, past, present and future.
 - 12. Tell me, if Christ died for all your sins two thousand years ago, how can God be punishing you for them today?
 - 13. It's impossible.
 - a) *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)*
 - 14. How much condemnation? No condemnation.
 - 15. The devil is a liar, and God is punishing you. Instead of saying that, say this...
 - a) God loves me, and always calls my heart home to him.
- C. I have lost my salvation.
 - 1. If you are a Christian, there are four words I want you to remember:
 - a) Once Saved, Always Saved.

2. As soon as I say that, a lot of people get upset. This is the one teaching that over and over makes people spit some hate for me on social media.
 3. I just want to say, "Just what part of No Condemnation" do you not understand?
 - a) God has forgiven you. He he'll never unforgive you.
 - b) God has adopted you. He'll never kick you out of his family.
 - c) God has declared you righteous. He'll never see your sins again.
 4. You are secure forever in God's embrace, not matter what the devil screams at you.
 - a) He beats you up with guilt and shame.
 - (1) Tell him Jesus already paid for that.
 - b) The devil wears you down with tough times. Bullies. Mean girls. Stoned out parents. Unfair teachers. Ridiculous demands. Fires, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes. The devil throws everything he possibly can at you to convince you you've lost your salvation.
 - (1) Tell him I'm okay, God's got my back. Besides for me to lose my salvation, God would have to break his word, and this whole cosmos will fold itself up in a moment of uncreation if God could ever break his word.
 - (2) *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38, 39)*
 5. And when the old serpent, the master of lies, whispers that you might have been saved, but now you're not, just tell that old liar to shut up and go away, because nothing can ever separate you from the love of God.
- D. It's all my fault.
1. This is one of the devil's favorite lies. Why do bad things happen to me? It's all my fault.
 2. Even if you can't say what you did wrong, the devil tries to make you say, It's all my fault.
 3. If that script is running through your brain, it is not from God. It's a lie.
 4. Why do bad things happen sometimes?
 - a) This fallen world is a morally broken pain machine.
 5. Bad things happen because the world is messed up. Good people have troubles. Bad people have troubles. Christians have troubles. Non-Christians have troubles. It is the common lot of us all.
 6. And it's not your fault.
 7. Somebody hurt you? Don't blame yourself. Somebody exploited you, used you, took advantage of you? It's the devil that wants you to blame yourself, hate yourself, discourage yourself, cut yourself, hurt yourself, disrespect yourself.
 8. All of that is from the devil. Not one bit of it is from God.
 9. I already said that choices have consequences, so let's just agree to that. Some of the troubles in our lives, come from our own dumb choices. Granted.
 10. But that's not what I'm talking about. I am talking about those times when you are a victim of forces beyond your control. That's when the devil wants to suck you into a vortex of self-blame and self-loathing.
 11. It's a lie. It's an illusion. It's unreality.
 12. There is nothing wrong with you. You're awesome to God just as you are. You're beautiful. Amazing. And the only reason people around you don't see it is because they're idiots.
 13. God created you for honor. If somebody messes with you, that's their sin. God designed you to be honored. He created you for dignity and respect.
 14. And you have to start with yourself. The things you say to yourself about yourself form the foundation for your own sense of honor and dignity and respect.
 15. So the all the ugly little demons are trying to get you to disrespect yourself. Because they know if they can do that, then you'll never believe the respect for you that's coming from God and others.
 16. God doesn't want you running around blaming yourself for the unchosen evils in your life.
 - a) Blame the devil and blame the fallen world, but quit blaming yourself and don't blame God.
 17. The minute you blame yourself, you start contriving ways to punish yourself. And the minute you blame God, you begin cutting him out of your life.
 18. And the devil does a little dance, because he's sucked your brain into the dark-side, even if your eternal soul still sits in the hands of God.
- E. God doesn't care.
1. I was talking with a friend who I've known for many years. He's never been able to get over the abuse of his past. He's from the inner city and life was rough for him growing up. No dad. Dealing with gangs all the time. Bad stuff.
 2. He was an on fire Christian.
 3. Today he calls himself an atheist.
 4. I can't see anybody's heart. If you tell me you're a Christian, I will believe you. And I will also believe that once you're saved, you're always saved, even if years later you tell me you're an atheist. Because your salvation doesn't depend on the strength of your faith, it depends on the power of the shed blood of Christ on the Cross.
 5. But this friend was saying that the reason he had troubles, and the reason he was now doing drugs, and living pretty much in an altered state of consciousness, was that God doesn't care about him.
 6. The devil is a liar.
 7. Back in Bible days, two missionaries went out to tell people about Jesus. The leaders of the city hated that message. They arrested the two men — whose names are Paul and Silas — and beat them many times, the Bible says, with sticks. They locked them in chains, and threw them into the lowest, most disgusting part of the prison.
 8. I am sure the devil showed up to say, "See, what troubles you have? God doesn't care."
 9. Do you know what Paul and Silas did?

- a) *But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. (Acts 16:25, 26, NKJV).*
- (1) They could sing because they knew that no amount of trouble would mean that God stopped his care.
10. Three men were told to bow to an idol or face a horrible death by burning.
11. They refused to bow.
12. The king said, you will bow or you will burn.
13. The devil whispered, "Look at this mess you're in. God doesn't care about you. See? Just bow and save your necks."
14. King Nebuchadnezzar repeated, Bow or burn!
- a) *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. "If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. "But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up." (Daniel 3:16-18)*
15. There was no amount of trouble, and no amount of fire that could ever mean that God stopped caring for them.
- a) *"Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands... (Isaiah 49:15)*
- b) TRUTH: Calvary is eternal proof of God's unending care.
- (1) He won't abandon you.
- (2) He won't forsake you.
- (3) He won't forget you.
- (4) He won't ignore you.
- (5) He's not a bully.
- (6) He's not a player.
- (7) He's not a user.
- (8) He's not a taker.
- (a) And the moment you hear the devil's lies coming out of your lips, is the moment you need to wake up, and tell God you believe him no matter what your troubles are telling you.
- c) I will never let my troubles drive a wedge between me and my God. He cares for me.
- F. Things will never change for me.
1. The good news of God is that you can change yourself, you can change your life, you can change your direction, you can change your world, you can change your attitude, you can change your destiny.
2. The bad news of the Devil is you're stuck.
3. Life stinks, then you die.
4. It's a lie from the pit of hell.
5. You are a child of God, and you possess way more power than you could ever imagine.
6. This is a verse that I took hold of when I was late in high school. I had to decode it, but once I did, it made a huge difference in my life.
- a) *For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17, NKJV).*
7. Let's take it apart.
- a) *For if by the one man's offense...* the one man he is talking about here is Adam. Adam, you had ONE JOB, and you blew it. There was only one commandment, and you broke it. That's the one man, and that's the offense. Here is the consequence:
- b) *Death reigned ...* That means that death reigned. Complicated, isn't it. It's saying that one man's sin had so much power that death has become the dark overlord of the human race. Now, he switches to the flip side.
- c) *Much more...* if this depressing conclusion follows logically for Adam and his descendants, how much more will the next happy conclusion follow for Jesus Christ and his descendants!
- d) *Those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness...* do you know who that is? It's you, if you are a Christian. Adam just had Eve and the Garden of Eden. That was nice, but you have something nicer. You have the abundance of grace. Do you know what that is? It's all the good stuff that belongs to Jesus now belongs to you. Planets. Gold. Powers. Angelic armies. Honors. Glory. Palaces. Riches more than tongue can tell. His stuff is your stuff. His powers are your powers. You have received the abundance of grace, AND the gift of righteousness... which means total approval of God forever... if you are a spiritual descendant of Jesus, which is to say, if you are saved, then this next amazing line is true of you:
- e) *Will reign in life...* YOU reign in your life. YOU rule. You reign. You wear the crown. You are the captain of your fate. You hold the keys. You have the power. You can change direction. You can change attitude. You can change your life. God has handed you the right to rule your life. You have dominion. You're in charge.
- (1) Not the bullies.
- (2) Not your troubles.
- (3) Not your losses.
- (4) Not your heartbreaks.
- (5) Not your worries.
- (6) Not your enemies.
- (7) Not your failures.
- (8) Not your rap sheet.
- (9) Not your guilt.
- (10) Not your shame.

- (11) Not your addictions.
- (12) Not your depressions.
- (13) Not your loneliness.
- (14) Not your disabilities.
- (15) Not your broken dreams.

(a) No matter what the devil tells you, you are still in control of your life, and you can turn the wheel wherever you want it to go.

8. God has given you the right to rule your life. You are the mini-sovereign over your life and your dominion.
 9. God has given you the power.
 10. That is a lesson I learned when I was in my late teens, studying Romans 5:17. It's my life. Under Jesus, I am the sovereign over my own life in this world.
 11. And when the devil tells me, I'm stuck. I tell him, I have the power over all these things.
 - a) Listen you nicely dressed, hip, cool, very popular Liar, tuck your tail between your legs and slink back to hell, because you can't play these games with me. I have the Word of God, which tells me I have the power to chart my course under the mighty lordship of Christ, and I'm telling you, Mr. Devil, right now, in Jesus' name, shut up and get lost. Because I'm just not buying what you're selling today.
- G. My troubles define me.
1. No they don't. That's a lie.
 2. The fact that bad people have done bad things to you says nothing about you or who you are. It says everything about who they are.
 3. The world labels you. It calls you names. The labels worm down deep inside. If they stick, they create horrible self-fulfilling prophecies. You have to stay on top of this. You have to reject the world's labels, and run them through the cosmic shredder of Calvary's love.
 - a) The bullies do not define you.
 - b) The mean girls do not define you.
 - c) The Carr Fire does not define you.
 - d) Your boss does not define you.
 - e) Your loss does not define you.
 - (1) Here is the truth to shoot down the devil's lie:
 4. I am who God says I am, and I am permanently joined to the best person who ever walked on planet earth.
 - a) He is beautiful, in him you are beautiful too.
 - b) He has authority, and his authority is your authority. All authority in heaven and earth is given to me... what would it look like if we rose up to our true authority, and declared with our lips what God has already said is true in our hearts.
 5. The devil tells you you're a loser. God says you're more than a conqueror. Who will you believe?
 6. The devil whispers you're a victim. God says you're a victor, and you can rise above.
 7. The devil hisses that you're dirty, and God shouts to the heaven you've been washed as white as snow. God or the devil, who will you believe?
 8. The devil labels you stupid, ugly, worthless, damaged goods, failure, unwanted and unloved.
 9. And Jesus Christ peels those labels away and puts on new labels. Competent. Brilliant. Beautiful. Valued. Treasured. Desirable. Beloved. Destined to win.
 10. In the great plan of God, problems don't define you, your potential does.
 11. And when God looks down on you, he sees a potential to change the world in your generation. He sees a glory that makes the angels snap to attention. And he sees all that you can be if you will only walk in his ways.
 12. Don't believe the devil's lies, especially about who you are.

III. Conclusion

- A. There is a battle for your soul going on. It's battle between God's truth and the devil's lies. The devil wears camo, so he isn't easy to spot. But you can do this.
- B. I want to finish with this promise, and then lead you in a prayer.
 1. *Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7, NKJV).*
- C. He will flee from you. He's a roaring lion, but he has been declawed and defanged by the Lord Jesus Christ. All he can do is roar.
- D. But he does roar, and it's all designed for one thing:
 1. The devil uses trouble to create distance between you and your God.
- E. Don't let him.
- F. Call out his lies.
- G. Stand firm.
- H. Kick the devil in the teeth.
- I. And believe with all your heart that God is faithful, even when life gets hard.

IV. Prayer

- A. From I am unlucky to I am blessed.
- B. From God is punishing me to God has forgiven me and always calls me home.
- C. From I have lost my salvation to once saved always saved.
- D. From It's all my fault, to this fallen world is a morally broken pain machine.
- E. From God doesn't care to Calvary is eternal proof of God's unending care.
- F. From Things will never change for me to I have power over all these things.
- G. From my troubles define me to I am who God says I am and he says I am awesome.