

Pioneering is hard work, but it is rewarding work. We are going to continue our series Pioneer Persistence, in this study Paul *highlights* his setbacks in ministry, but stays persistent by staying focused even in the face various adversities.

2 Corinthians 6:4–7 (NKJV) But in all *things* we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, ⁵ in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; ⁶ by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, ⁷ by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left

I TRIBULATION TRUTH:

A- Tribulation here in our passage means trouble, affliction, crushed, pressed, squeezed

1. This is not describing the Great Tribulation, God's future judgement and wrath on sin & the treatment of Israel

2. Life will have trouble, but trouble looks & feels different when it comes to ministry-

a. **2 Cor 11:24-28 (V28)** And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches... Paul highlights the troubles he's faced for the ministry, and this constant concern for the churches-

i. People's lives, people's eternity-

3. As the shepherd, hell wants to bring tribulation against you-

B- So, we need to have room for trouble, even though you are in and doing the will of God.

1. Jesus had trouble, Apostles had trouble, Paul had trouble... I can confidently prophesy that you will have trouble!

2. The issue is some disciples & pastors haven't allowed room for the possibility of trouble

a. Trouble shocks some men! They are surprised by it... *Why, if I am in and doing what God wants me to do?*

b. Trouble can cause some men to question God... *Why aren't you helping me? Why did you allow this?*

c. Trouble can cause some men to quit... *It isn't worth the trouble, I'm done*

3. Tribulation will be part of the package **John 16:33** I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." ... You'll have it, but you can also have peace through it-

II TRIBULATION PATHS:

A- There are a number of ways we can experience tribulation; this trouble, affliction, crushed, pressed, squeezed

1. People: People can be the source of tribulation... sometimes the ones you help the most!

a. But that is working with people, they won't always make good decisions or the best decisions... *did you?*

i. Not everyone will do right 100% of the time, you need room in your dealing with people for this-

b. Some of this happens through sin decisions, rebellion, offenses, words, soulish prayers, witchcraft, foolish, etc.

2. Demonic Assault: Hell can be a source of your tribulation.

a. Fiery darts, weapons formed, temptations, fears, sickness... Hell works against you, fights against you!

3. Deadlines: Time constraints can bring a sense of tribulation; due dates, leases, responsibilities... There's only so many hours in a day and your only one person!

a. What's worse is when you have tribulation in all 3 arenas!

4. There's an aim in it: **Matthew 26:31** Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

a. The enemy knows the potential damage tribulation can cause, so he works against you in this way!

III TRIBULATION VICTORY

A- The hope is we can have victory over tribulation! **John 16:33** I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

1. Jesus has already OVERCOME! God supplies us with what we need to have victory!

a. **2 Corinthians 6:6-7 (NKJV)** by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, ⁷ by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness

i. 9 divine enablements that equip us for victory over tribulation, that help us to stand! With these at work in you, you can navigate tribulations.

2. You can carry more than you realize, God can enable you to carry more than you realize!

a. You can stay the course through tribulation! You can do what God has called you to do!

i. **Psalms 34:19** Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him from them all.

3. God can USE trouble to HELP you! Help know more about God, help you get to where you need to be, help you in miracles, help your future faith.