

NOBODY KNOWS THE TROUBLE I'VE SEEN

Revelation 2:8-10

March 29, 2009 Sunday am

INTRODUCTION

- A. Motivational speaker and super salesman, Zig Ziglar, often says about “TV Soap Operas”... **“I never watch those things because everyone on them is either in trouble, or they just got out of trouble, or they’re headed for trouble!”**. While this may be true about “TV Soap Operas”, it can also be true about life.
- B. The Bible tells us there are three sources for the trouble in our lives.
 - 1. First, we live in a fallen place among a fallen race that does bad things to each other i.e. drive by shootings.
 - 2. Second, we inflict some trouble on ourselves.
 - 3. Third, Satan and the Unbelieving World we live in causes us trouble.
 - 4. Regardless of the source of our trouble, we often wonder where Jesus is.
- C. Our passage tells us where he is when trouble comes.
 - 1. Smyrna was one of the seven churches who received a direct message from the Lord in the book of Revelation.
 - 2. Let’s see what Jesus tells them, and us, about their troubles.

I. FIRST, JESUS SAYS HE KNOWS OUR TROUBLE.

- A. He knew the trouble Smyrna experienced—8-9a..
- B. This is a huge revelation. Why?
 - 1. Because it means Jesus knows our trouble and problems too.
 - 2. Jesus is saying we aren’t alone.
 - 3. Nothing escapes God’s attention, not even your trouble.

II. SECOND, JESUS SAYS HE KNOWS OUR POVERTY.

- A. He knew the poverty Smyrna experienced—9b.
 - 1. First century Christians often lost their jobs, family, friends, etc. This was especially true for Jewish Christians.
 - 2. They were impoverished not because of a downturn in the economy , but because they were Christians.
 - 3. There are places in the world today where this still happens.
- B. This means that Jesus knows our poverty too.
 - 1. But read on in verse 9.
 - 2. We are also rich. How so?
 - 3. Not always monetarily rich, but anyone who has Jesus is rich!
 - 4. We need to change our definition of “rich” today. If you have Jesus you are rich!

III. THIRD, JESUS SAYS HE KNOWS OUR ENEMIES.

- A. He knew the enemies Smyrna had—9c “Synagogue of Satan”.
- B. He knows our enemies too.
 - 1. Isn’t it sobering to know where trouble sometimes comes from? It wasn’t Rome but religious people who caused Smyrna’s problems.
 - 2. This is a reminder that sometimes our trouble comes from the people closet to us.

IV. FOURTH, JESUS SAYS “DO NOT FEAR”

- A. This is what he said to Smyrna—10a.
- B. He also is saying this to us today.

V. FIFTH, JESUS SAYS BE FAITHFUL.

- A. This is his message to Smyrna—10b.
- B. The pastor in Smyrna when these words were written to them was a disciple of the Apostle John named Polycarp. Church history tells us he was arrested by the Romans because he would not say that Caesar was Lord or God as all citizens were required to do. When he was given one final chance to do this he refused and was burned at the stake in Smyrna.
- C. We will never be asked to die for Jesus, but he does ask us to remain faithful in our commitment to him.

CONCLUSION

- A. Where is Jesus when trouble comes? Does he know what we're going through?
- B. An old African Spiritual song answers these questions....