

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

Rev. Daniel L. Busch

TROUBLED. Jesus says, “Do not let your hearts be *TROUBLED*. Believe in God, believe also in me.” The great African-American spiritual song, “*Nobody knows the TROUBLE I’ve had/seen/been through*” originated during the time of slavery and first was published in 1867. Sorrow, *TROUBLE*, trials, ups and downs express the pain and grief they encountered. But in spite of all that seems to demean their lives, there was a faith in God that they were in God’s care. The slaves could sing “*Glory hallelujah*” in times of joys and sorrow with deep conviction that God had not abandoned them, even in the worst of situations.

Many people are facing *TROUBLED* times today: financially, unhealthy physical conditions, societal separation, hunger, and crisis of faith. Anger and just plain meanness dominate many situations. There are *TROUBLES* maintaining sanity, caring for our bodies, and growing in spiritual endeavors. Love is missing. The passage from John 14 points us to the last days of Jesus’ life and the confusion of the disciples to face His death. Jesus informs the betrayer to do what he has to do. The disciples are instructed that they would be entrusted with carrying on Jesus’ mission and they were *TROUBLED*. Jesus is telling them that He will be coming back to get them after He leaves them first. Jesus reminds them that they should know the way that is before them, because He showed them “*the way, the truth and the life*” by His actions. Yet fear, doubt, and uncertainty blinded them to accept their calling at that moment to be the messengers of Jesus’ “*way, truth, and the life.*”

Like the disciples, there are so many *TROUBLES* that distract us from focusing on that which brings grace and hope to living life with abundant blessings. *TROUBLES* inhibit us from singing the “*Glory Hallelujah*” of being a beloved child of God. The good news is found in Jesus who knows our *TROUBLES* because He faced them Himself, and *TROUBLES* could not destroy Him. We are resurrection people because God is “*Making All Things New*” (*Annual Meeting theme*) in us and through us. *TROUBLES* do not and cannot have the last word, for Jesus shows us the way, the truth and the life that invites us and calls us to be God’s messengers to bless one another. “*Glory Hallelujah.*” **BLESSINGS ALWAYS.**