

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

INTRODUCTION

Consider St. Patrick's Day which is mistakenly identified with luck. Too often, we think of shamrocks, leprechauns and pots of gold. I believe there is much more to St. Patrick than luck. St. Patrick was a man of trust in God. He was born in Roman Britannia in a town in what is now Scotland in 385 A.D. His father and grandfather were active in the church. Patrick was kidnaped by Irish pirates when he was 16 and held captive until he escaped Ireland and returned home after 6 years. His faith in Christ grew while he was a captive. He became a priest and had a tremendous burden to reach the people of Ireland with the Gospel. He eventually led the pagan king to Christ and evangelized Ireland. He died on March 17, 461 A.D.

Let's look at trouble and how to deal with it from the perspective of St. Patrick.

CONCERNING TROUBLE

A. A consideration of trouble

1. Take a moment to picture your troubles through the lens of Scripture.
 - a. Job 14:1, *Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble.*
 - b. Job 5:7, *Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.*
 - c. Psalm 22:11, *Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.*
 - d. 1 Peter 4:12, *Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.*
2. Consider current media.
 - a. Coronavirus epidemic which is creating widespread panic with negative impact on the economy.
 - b. Coming elections with talk of reduction in Social Security and Medicare payments.
 - c. Rise in crime with acts of violence in our own neighborhoods.
 - d. Illnesses with reports of cancer, falls with broken bones.
 - d. The obituary column with death of the famous and infamous, family and friends.
3. Consider your spiritual condition.
 - a. St. Augustine said about God, *You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You.*
 - b. C. S. Lewis, *Our longing is for intimacy with God...What we want is what we were created to have. To be who we were created to be. To live and laugh and love with the One who created us to do all of that - and more!*

B. How can one deal with seemingly overwhelming trouble?

1. Some would say luck.
 - a. I need to get a break.
 - b. I have to play the lottery and hope for a big payoff.
 - c. I must find one of St. Patrick's 4-leaf clovers.
2. St. Patrick would say trust.
 - a. He did not focus on 4-leaf clovers but on the ordinary 3-leaf clover.
 - 1) For St. Patrick the clover illustrates the Trinity.
 - 2) He would take up a three-leaf clover and ask, *Does it have one leaf or three?* Those responding would respond, *Both.* Patrick then explained, *And so it is with the Trinity - Father, Son and Spirit are one God. Three persons in one.*

- b. His trust was in God Who could and did deliver him from physical and spiritual bondage.
- c. His was a trust based on the Word of God.
 - 1) Psalm 9:9, *The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.*
 - 2) Psalm 86:7, *In the day of my trouble I call upon you, for you answer me.*
 - 3) Nahum 1:7, *The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.*
 - 4) The Bible pictures a day when trouble will be no more, Revelation 21:1-6, *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.*
- d. St. Patrick's trust was in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - 1) He did not hope in luck but hope in Christ.
 - 2) It was trust evidenced by faith.
 - a) Acts 16:31, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.*
 - b) John 3:16, *For God so loved the world, that whoever believes on Him will not perish but have everlasting life.*
 - c) John 5:24, *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*
- e. St. Patrick had a singular focus, not on his troubles but on his Deliverer.
- f. The following is called St. Patrick's Breastplate and is attributed to St. Patrick.

*Christ be with me, Christ before me,
 Christ behind me, Christ in me,
 Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
 Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
 Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit up,
 Christ when I arise,
 Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
 Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
 Christ in every eye that sees me,
 Christ in every ear that hears me.*

Conclusion

- A. St. Patrick is a wonderful role model for trust not luck.
- B. Scott Savage lists several principles of St. Patrick worth following today.

*Love God and love your enemies.
 Follow your calling.
 Look for ways to draw out the best in others.
 Choose wisely when it comes to who you offend.
 Integrate your faith into your whole life.*