

Overcoming Life's Problems – Part 2

The reality of problems

1. Many believers have the mistaken idea that the Christian life is to be a problem-free life.
 - They feel it should be one continual, mountaintop experience - one plush, fluffy cloud ride through this world.
2. Why do believers have this type of faulty thinking?
 - False expectations when they are first saved.
 - Watching too much “Christian” television.
 - Other pious Christians. (They think that outward, physical blessing is a “sign” of God’s approval.)
3. Of course, this is not reality. Trouble and problems are woven into the very fabric of life on planet earth. Job 14:1
4. The apostle Paul warned believers of this type of faulty reasoning and instructed believers to expect problems. 1 Thessalonians 3:3-4; Philippians 1:29; 2 Timothy 3:12
5. The twelve, who ministered to the believing flock of Israel, warned them of the reality of problems also. 1 Peter 4:12, 16; James 1:2, 12
6. Biblical characters knew about the reality of problems:
 - Moses experienced problems with people he was leading. Numbers 16
 - Job experienced problems with Satan. Job 1:6-12
 - David experienced problems with sin. 2 Samuel 11
 - The apostles experienced problems with non-believers. Acts 5:17-18, 40
 - Paul experienced problems with other believers. Acts 15:36-40
7. If we are encountering problems in our lives, it does not mean:
 - We are lacking faith.
 - We are “out of the will of God.”
 - God is angry with us and is “getting even” with us.
8. Problems are simply a reality of life for the child of God. Problems are something that every believer must face and deal with.
9. The title of this lesson is “Overcoming Life’s Problems.” We can face our problems, overcome them, and refuse to allow them to destroy us. But we will never **eliminate** problems (until we die and go to heaven).
10. We will never overcome our problems until we realize where our problems come from. This brings us to our next point.

The source of problems

- Why do believers go through problems? Where do these problems come from?
- You cannot over-simplify and pinpoint one thing as the source of all problems. There are actually several avenues by which problems can enter our lives:

1. **Some problems come through satanic assault. 2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:11-13, 16; 1 Thessalonians 2:18, 3:5; 1 Peter 5:8**
 - While it is true that Satan is our enemy and desires our destruction, do not fall into the mentality that every problem in life is satanically induced.
 - Some believers tend to see demons around every corner. This is an improper balance. Many times, Satan will use problems that are already in our lives and simply try to exploit them.
2. **Some problems come through a violation of God's principles (bad choices). Galatians 6:7-8**
 - Many of our problems are brought on by our own disobedience to God's Word and God's principles. We can blame Satan, but he simply laughs because, when we blame him, it keeps us from facing the reality of our own sin.
 - We must take the blame and responsibility for our own actions. When we violate God's Word we can expect problems.
 - Sometimes problems come into our lives because those around us violate God's Word, and it ill-affects us.
3. **Some problems come simply because we live in a fallen creation. Romans 8:22-23**
 - This is the source of most of our problems. This earth is cursed with sin. It is an earth full of people with a sin-nature, and a creation that is cursed by sin.
 - When you take sinful, imperfect, fallen people and put them on an earth that is under the curse of sin, what is the result? Natural disasters, accidents, disease, pain, sickness, human atrocities, wickedness, violence, etc. Genesis 6:5, 12-13
 - Christ died to redeem back all that was lost in Adam. One day, the earth and the heavens will be reconciled and restored under the direction and authority of Jesus Christ. Colossians 1:20
 - What is God waiting for? Why doesn't He do it? Why does He allow the earth's suffering to continue? There is one reason: God's desire to reconcile lost sinners to Himself. 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9
 - The prophetic program called for God to unleash His wrath on a sin-cursed earth, and then Christ would return and restore it all under His dominion. But instead of doing this, God extended a grace period to the people of the earth through Christ's finished work.
 - Each day that God extends the dispensation of grace, it increases the possibility of hurt, pain, sickness, and death for all of us.
 - People say, "Why is God allowing this?" He only allows it in the sense that allowing the suffering of this present time allows Him to continue to extend His grace. He isn't up in heaven sanctioning it every time you stub your toe, or hit your finger with a hammer, or get sick, etc.

- God also isn't up in heaven making sure that His children don't have to go through any problems or difficulties (read 2 Corinthians 11:23-27). That simply is not what God is doing today. God's main business today is extending His grace and peace, and saving souls. We are ministers of reconciliation.
 - We desire so much to place the blame for our problems on God, Satan, or someone else. But the reality is this: as long as we live on a sin-cursed earth, there will be problems, pain, and suffering. Paul was dedicated to and sold out to Jesus, but he knew this. Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18
- 4. Some problems come because of persecution due to our godly lives.
2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 2:19-20, 4:12-16**
- If you are going to suffer, this is the best reason.
 - But the truth is, most of our suffering in America doesn't come from this area.

The benefits of problems

- The benefit of God's grace – 1 Peter 5:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9
- The benefit of God's comfort – 2 Corinthians 1:3-6
- The benefit of God's understanding – 1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 4:14-16