

HANDLING PROBLEMS

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Introduction: Below are some of the problems and difficulties that you will encounter as you walk with the Lord. We have already discussed the importance of faith and praise in being an overcomer. Coupled with other information shared here, you should be better equipped to handle these situations.

- I. The Problem With Temptation - the definition of the word "tempt" is "to try or prove for a beneficial purpose." (You may be wondering how there could be a "beneficial purpose" - Satan intends to use temptation to destroy you but God allows you to be tempted to "temper" you as one tempers steel by subjecting it to fire).
  - A. Sources of temptation:
    1. Satan (Matthew 4:3).
    2. Others (Mark 8:11).
    3. The lust of our own flesh (James 1:13-15).
  - B. Progressive steps of falling into temptation (as seen in the failure of King David in II Samuel 11):
    1. The thought of evil (in David's case, this thought came as a result of looking protractedly).
    2. Lust develops (usually a result of allowing our imagination to run where the flesh desires: David probably began fantasizing).
    3. Lust conceives as the thought of sin is embraced.
    4. The act (David took her and committed adultery).

C. Overcoming temptation

1. Putting on the "**Whole Armor of God**" in prayer can be a means of heading off temptation in the early stages (Ephesians 6:10-18).
2. Pray for **grace** to overcome when temptation presses (Matthew 26:41; 6:13).
3. **Study** the Word and pray for discernment so you will not be ignorant of Satan's tactics (II Corinthians 2:11).
4. Learn to walk in the **Spirit** (tune in to what the Spirit of God prompts in your spirit, often called conscious, rather than listening to your flesh) (Galatians 5:16).
5. Learn to **Resist** the devil (James 4:7 - "flee" literally means to "run in terror"). How?:
  - a. **Refuse** to converse with Satan (as Eve did) - remember: he is a master of deceit.
  - b. Learn to cast down any thought that is **contrary** to the Word of God (II Corinthians 10:5).
  - c. Get your attention **off** the thing that tempts you by looking to God, who promised to be faithful in not allowing us to be tempted above what we can handle by His strength (I Corinthians 10:13).
  - d. Learn the **Word** of God so as to use it as a sword in spiritual battle with the tempter (Matthew 4:4,7,10).

- e. **Watch** and **pray** (Matthew 26:41) - Paul teaches "having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13). We must keep the "upward look" of prayer until the temptation subsides.

## II. The Problem of a Painful Memory.

- A. What is memory? - it is the amazing faculty that enables us to relive yesterday.
  1. It can be good - "Forget not all **His benefits...**" (Psalm 103:2).
  2. It can be bad - when the "**files**" of the painful past are reviewed day after day.
- B. How to deal with the painful memories:
  1. If you have failed, **repent** (Psalm 51).
  2. If need be, make **restitution** (when we have done someone else wrong) (Luke 19:8).
  3. If wronged by another, make the **decision** to completely forgive (Luke 18:21-35) (Note: this is based on the fact that you were forgiven a debt you could not pay).
  4. If it deals with your own failure, **refuse** the devil's verdict of "guilty" based on the work of Jesus at Calvary and I John 1:9.
  5. **Forgive** yourself - you have not the right to look at that which is under the blood (I John 1:7).
  6. Confess the **victory** Jesus has purchased and rejoice in your deliverance (Psalm 130; Psalm 103:1-3).

III. The Problem of Life's Everyday Hassles.

A. Some facts to remember:

1. They are **common** to all (I Corinthians 10:13; I Peter 4:12).
2. God won't allow **more** than you can bear, so there's no need to panic (I Corinthians 10:13).
3. This, too, **will pass** (I Peter 6 - note: "for a season").
4. There is a **divine** purpose in everything that happens to the believer (Romans 8:28).

B. Illegal ways of handling hassles:

1. **Giving up** (I Kings 19:1-4).
2. **Grumbling** (Job 2:9-10).
3. Having a "**pity party**" - Satan will attend and help you "celebrate" being pitiful.
4. Pouring your troubles on those who aren't in a **position** to help (Example: A man sharing with a lady co-worker what should only be discussed with his wife or a qualified counselor).

C. Ways to handle your hassles:

1. If your problem is a result of your own failure or disobedience, **repent** (Psalm 51).
2. Find strength through proper **relationships** - your pastor is your "shepherd" and can lend valuable insight. Draw closer to your spouse rather than pulling away. Look to your church elders - they are recognized mature spiritual leaders.
3. **Practice** relinquishment (I Peter 4:19) - learn to leave things in His capable hands.

IV. How To Handle the Problem of Worry.

- A. Learn to take God at **His Word**(Luke 12:11; Matthew 6:25,26) - confess the Word even when you don't feel like it.
- B. Tell God **every detail** of your life (Philippians 4:6).
- C. Displace "**worry thought**" with "**faith thought**" (Philippians 4:8).