

OVERCOMING PROBLEMS (Part 1)

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Problems come to men every now and then. It is never in short supply. As long as we are in this world, we will continue to experience one problem or the other. Today, problems seem to have increased both in number and intensity. We often feel that nobody suffers the difficulties that throng about us and harass us. We feel we are all alone, but the scripture says,

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not COMMON TO MAN. God is faithful and He will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” (1 Cor. 10:13)

We all face problems, but how we handle the problems that face us is what determines our victory. Many people do not want to have problems in life. But, I want to say that the only people who don't have problems are those in the cemetery. The dead do not have anything to do in this world; they are resting from all the toils and difficulties of life. If you don't want to have problems in life, all you are saying is that you don't wish to live anymore; and that in itself is a defeatist confession. You don't need to die; all you need to do is to learn how to deal with problems.

A man's attitude to a problem is more important than the problem itself. Attitude is the way a man thinks. How a man sees a problem determines how he approaches it. It is important that we see problems from God's angle; this will enable us to face it and handle it in such a way that we are not destroyed by it but blessed and built by it. No problem is meant to destroy the one it confronts; and every problem has a terminal date. Every night season must pass away. After night comes daylight. God will always make a way of escape. So you don't need to despair or go into depression, rather, God wants you to face every problem like a man with understanding.

Mind management is the first priority in the school of success. Anyone who wishes to manage and overcome any and every problem must give attention to what he thinks about the problem that confronts him as he faces and battles it daily. Your mindset is very important. What you permit into your mind during this period is very important to your success or failure in handling the crisis.

HOW YOU CAN OVERCOME ANY PROBLEM

1. **THINK POSITIVELY:**

a. **Take a positive mental attitude towards any problem.**

You must understand that your attitude to the problem is more important than the problem. I agree that the facts are there, so you don't deny there is a problem; what is important and most important is your attitude to those facts. You must recognize that your attitude towards the fact will determine whether you will come out of that problem or not, and how soon.

The negativist is likely to be defeated by the facts, while the positivist will probably handle it creatively. It is not how the fact is, but your attitude towards the fact that determines the outcome.

How you think about a problem is the issue of paramount importance. You can think yourself to failure, and you can as well think yourself to success. It is your mental attitude towards the problem that determines whether you will have victory over the problem or not, and how quick the victory will come. The kind and manner of your thoughts will determine the eventual results you will experience. It is our negative thoughts that produce anxiety and fear we treated in the last chapter. Take a positive mental attitude towards any problem.

Remember that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he (Proverbs 23:7 KJV). If you think positively, you will see positive results. For your positive thoughts will trigger faith in you and make your faith strong, which will give you victory. A different thing happens when you think negatively. Negativism brings negative results – it brings failure. Your thoughts determine your experience and the end result. If you think positively, it will make your faith to rise, thereby moving God to come to your aid. If you think negatively, it destroys and hinders your faith from manifesting, thereby hindering God from moving, and setting the ground for the devil to make the problem destructive.

b. Stop all negative thoughts and negative talks.

Negative thoughts give birth to negative talks, while positive thoughts give birth to positive talks. And the Bible reveals that we cannot rise above our confession.

“From the fruit of his mouth a man’s stomach is filled; with the harvest from his lips he is satisfied. The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.” (Prov. 18:20-21)

From the above passage it is very clear that positive confession will produce positive results because a man is satisfied by the fruit of his mouth and his lips. The same way, negative confession produces negative results. Your thoughts determine what you confess with your mouth. Your thoughts influence and control you; and your confession affects you. Stop all negativism. Do not think or talk negatively about any problem.

“I tell you, on the day of judgement, men will render account for every careless word they utter; for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” (Matt. 12:36)

c. Attract positive results by your positive thinking.

Do not go emotional, but think your way through. Do not panic or become afraid, for it will only worsen the situation. Do not worry or be anxious. Discipline yourself to keep calm.

“Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God,

which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:6-7).

Relax, and refuse to be moved by the problem. In 1991, a friend's wife lost her pregnancy for the second time, when I was told, I was not happy, and I wondered why. To my amazement, I found out that he was not ruffled by what has been happening. He started to encourage me; I looked at him and I marveled at his faith and positive mind. He had already encouraged the wife not to worry but to trust God. The wife was at peace because her husband did not worry. God has blessed them now. The last time I saw them in 1993, they have two children. Be calm and relaxed in time of problem, and allow God to act on your behalf, it will help you.

2. ENCOURAGE YOURSELF IN THE LORD

To help you think positively and maintain a state of calmness, you need to encourage yourself in the Lord. You need to go through the Bible and read some portions that assure you of the faithfulness of the Lord and his ability and readiness to deliver his people from afflictions. David encouraged himself in the Lord and it helped him to wait patiently for the Lord to act.

Encouraging one-self with the words of God helps one to relax. Wait upon God and think positively. It helps one not to complain and murmur against God. It helps one to focus his attention on God rather than the problem. Passages like these will help:

"The eyes of the LORD are towards the righteous, and his ears toward their cry. The face of the LORD is against evil doers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD is near to the broken hearted, and saves the crushed in the spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the LORD delivers him out of them all." (Ps. 34:15-19)

"All my bones shall say, "O LORD, who is like thee, thou who deliverest the weak from him who is too strong for him, the weak and needy from him who despoils him." (Ps. 35:10)

"Thy steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, thy faithfulness to the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God. Thy judgement is like the great deep; man and beast thou savest, O LORD. How precious is thy steadfast love, O God. The children of men take refuge in the shadow of thy wings. They feast on the abundance of thy house, and thou givest them drink from the river of thy delights for with thee is the fountain of Life; in thy light do we see light. O continue thy steadfast love to those who know thee, and thy salvation to the upright of heart! Let not the foot of arrogance come upon me, nor the hand of the wicked drive me away. There the evil doers lie prostrate, they are thrust down, unable to rise." (Ps. 36:5-12)

"I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging bread. He is ever giving liberally and lending, and his children become a blessing." (Ps. 37:25,26)

3. SEE THE BIGNESS OF GOD, AND THE SMALLNESS OF YOUR PROBLEM

a. Always remember that there is nothing too difficult for God to do.

"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too hard for me?" (Jer. 32:27)

Nothing is impossible with God. There is no problem too big, or too hard for him to solve. There is no mountain too hard, too high, too big or too rough for him to move. Only see the bigness of God and the smallness of your problem. If you think this way, fear and anxiety will be far from you and victory through faith will become yours.

Most of the time when we are faced with a problem, we focus more on the problem. We see the problems as being too big and difficult, and we look at God as being too small. You might say, "No, I have never thought of God as being too small." But, I say, you do each time you magnify your problem and become afraid and worried, that is what you are saying. Trust God. Think on the bigness of God and the smallness of your problem and the problem will be subdued.

b. Focus your attention on Jesus and not your problem.

If your focus is on the problem, fear and anxiety will begin to come in. In Matt. 14:25-33 we see the story of Jesus and Peter walking on the water. Peter said to Jesus,

"...If it is you, bid me to come to you on the water."

And Jesus asked him to come. While his eyes were fixed on Jesus and his word, he walked on the water. When he removed his eyes from Jesus, and started looking at the wind and the water, he started to fear. When fear came, faith died, and he started sinking. When he looked up to Jesus again, he started to walk on the water this time, Jesus holding him. Fix your eyes on Jesus. If you remove your eyes from him and start looking at your problem, fear will come and faith will cease to operate, and you will start sinking. Be conscious of the Bigness of God and the smallness of your problem.

4. PRAISE THE LORD FOR THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

Paul in 1Thessalonians 5:18 says we should,

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

And David said,

“I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the LORD; Let the afflicted hear and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together! I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Look to him and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them. O taste and see that the LORD is good; happy is the man who takes refuge in him! Oh fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him have no want! The young lions suffer want and hunger; but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.” (Ps. 34:1-10)

Give thanks to God for allowing the problem to come to you. Thank God for giving you the opportunity to prove your faith during the crisis. Thank God for the solution to the problem, and as you do that, you will be releasing the power of God into your situation.

Your attitude determines your altitude. If you are not grateful you will be sorrowful. Your praise guarantees the defeat of your enemies. Thanksgiving not only honours God but prepares the way for God’s salvation. Praise is an instrument of warfare. Praise is God’s instrument for the defeat of the enemy. Praise invokes the presence of God. God is always where his name is always praised. When he is praised, more favours flow.

Praise is an expression of inner feelings towards God. It is an expression of faith. Praise connects us to the source of life, power and all good things. God will always respond to faith expressed through praise. Your attitude of praise will conquer worries, sorrow and depression.

5. BELIEVE YOUR WAY THROUGH.

“And Jesus said to him, “If you can! All things are possible to him who believes.” (MK. 9:23)

It will be possible for you to overcome the problem if only you will believe. Think on this promise of the scripture and believe it. Believe all things are possible to you.

a. Running away from your problems will not get you anywhere.

Never run, but stand to face it. I know somebody who complained of being oppressed by witches and wizards. He decided to leave town and go to another place. I told him that running away is not the solution; moreover, if you go to another town, they will contact their colleagues there, and they will continue their wicked work. I let him know that the only solution is to give his life to Christ. After series of discussions, he gave his life to Christ and I ministered to him deliverance. He later moved to another town, and became unserious with his Christian life, the oppression began again, and his condition became worse than the former. You can’t run away from problems, all you need do is to face the problem and deal with it.

b. Believe in God with all your heart, and doubt not his ability and readiness to help you solve the problem.

On your own, you cannot handle it; you need the help of God to have victory. Depend on God. Trust and believe in God

c. Believe in yourself.

Believe in yourself as being able to face and overcome the problem because you are a child of God. All things are possible to them that believe. Do not have a poor image of yourself. Think of yourself as being able to face and defeat the problem, and you will.

d. Grow strong on your problems.

Let the problem toughen your faith in God. Let the problem build you up.

e. Believe you can, and you can.

This dynamic principle has been demonstrated in the lives of too many believers to leave any doubt concerning its validity. It's very important that you believe you can with the help of God meet and overcome all problems. The word "believe" and "can" are linked together in a creative action unity. If you believe you can, you can.

f. Saturate your mind with faith from the Bible.

"Don't be an "If" thinker, but a "How" thinker. The "If" thinker broods over a difficulty or a setback, saying bitterly to himself, "If only I had done thus and so If only this or that circumstance had been differentIf others had not treated me so unfairly" So it goes from explanation, round and round, getting nowhere. The world is full of "If" thinkers. The "How" thinker wastes no time on post-mortems when troubles or even disasters hits him, but immediately starts looking for how to overcome the problem. He begins to look for the best solution; for he knows there is always a solution to every problem. He asks himself, "How can I use this creatively? How can I work something good out of it?" (Norman Vincent Peale)

Get into the word of God to find out how to solve your problem. Let the words of God build faith within you and help you focus on the solution rather on the negative impact of the problem in your life. You need a peaceful mind to find the pathway out of your situation. Focusing on God and his word will enable you achieve that state of peacefulness.

"Thou will keep him in perfect peace he whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." (Isaiah 26:3)

Search out promises from the Bible that assures you of God's support and help in time of difficulties. Put your faith in the promises of God to give us victory over the crisis of life, and you will discover that courage will come into your heart to fight on to victory. God is committed to his word and will not fail to prove his word when someone believes and calls upon him with a sincere heart filled with faith. Have faith in God.

(To be continued in the January 2004 edition)

SUCCESS TIT-BITS

1. Feedback enhances participation in pursuit of set goals.
2. Disorder means everything is there, but not properly arranged.
3. A vision from God must outlive you. If it does not outlive you, then it is not from God but you.
4. You must raise people to continue from where you stop when you are out of the way.
5. There is a time to lead and there is a time to consult.
6. Don't give an assignment that you will not follow through.
7. Set time limits of tasks given.
8. There are lessons from each failure. Evaluate goals to know why it didn't work out.
9. Be open to change. Don't fight change.
10. If you can't appreciate Him, you will depreciate in Him.
11. Your praise to God in the midst of a challenge guarantees the defeat of your enemy.
12. When He is praised, more favours flow.
13. Praise is an instrument of warfare. Praise is God's instrument for the defeat of your enemy.
14. Gratitude guarantees rejoicing. And rejoicing makes the bones fat.
15. Your future is tied to what you say with your mouth from time to time.
16. Maturity is the ability to keep your-self together under pressure.
17. Maturity is the ability to say your mind without breaking the order.
18. Spiritual maturity is standing where Christ is standing on any and every subject, seeing what He is seeing, saying what He is saying and doing what He is doing.

WISDOM FOR ASSOCIATION

1. Every body does not qualify for your presence.
2. The antidote for pride is to recognize that the difference between you and the other person is the grace of God. Always remember that what you have and what you are comes from God. Give Him glory.
3. A self-centered person does not make a good friend.
4. Do to others what you will have them do to you (Luke 6:31)
5. If you are not a solution to the one you are in relationship with, then you are a problem to that person.
6. Your heart is felt in your words and actions.

7. **A good relationship is characterized by a giving spirit and not a taking spirit.**
8. **Focusing on your hurt will kill love in your heart towards the one who hurt you and produce bitterness and hate. Always think love as a child of God.**
9. **Know who you are and what you want to know who to relate with and how to relate.**
10. **There are levels of relationships. Define each relationship to know what level of relationship to have with each person.**

RENEWING THE MIND

1. **Gladness of heart makes the face to shine.**
2. **A weighed down mind dries up the bones. (Proverbs 17:22)**
3. **If you are not grateful, you will be sorrowful.**
4. **The way you think determines the way you see. The way you see determines the way you act. The way you act determines your habit. And your habit determines your experience.**
5. **What you think in your mind can hinder the life of God in your spirit from manifesting and it can help it manifest.**
6. **What you think is what you will manifest for that is what you are.**
7. **Your life is a sum total of your thought life.**
8. **We talk the way we think. We feel the way we think. We act the way we think. We are products of our thoughts.**
9. **Mind management is the first priority for any one who wants to be successful in any and every area of life.**
10. **Your mind is the target of all satanic attacks. If he can control your thoughts, then he can control your words, feelings and actions, and ultimately your experience.**