

Why Do Christians Have Problems?

Matthew 13:19-22

INTRODUCTION:

- A. **Matthew 13:19-22** – (Jesus is explaining the Parable of the Sower) “When anyone hears the word about the kingdom and doesn’t understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the one sown along the path. ²⁰ And the one sown on rocky ground—this is one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy. ²¹ Yet he has no root in himself, but is short-lived. When pressure or persecution comes because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² Now the one sown among the thorns—this is one who hears the word, but the worries of this age and the seduction of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”
- B. The problem of falling away is not new to Christianity. In fact, it’s an age-old problem. Sadly many who started with Christ have left him . . . backslidden . . . returned to the world. Often leading the way are life’s problems. God never promised us that we would be problem-free in this life.

PROBLEMS AND TRIALS COME IN THREE WAYS

- A. **WE cause the problems.** 2 Timothy 4:10 – “Make every effort to come to me soon. For Demas has deserted me, because he loved this present world, and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.”
- B. **PEOPLE cause problems.** **James 1:12** – “Blessed is a man who endures trials, because when he passes the test he will receive the crown of life that He has promised to those who love Him.”
- C. **CIRCUMSTANCES cause problems.** Acts 19 – Riot in Ephesus threatened Paul’s life.

PEOPLE REACT TO PROBLEMS IN THREE WAYS

- A. **We COVER up.** **1 John 1:8** – “If we say, ‘We have no sin,’ we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”
- B. **We SHUT up.** **1 John 1:9** – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
- C. **We GIVE up.** **Philippians 3:14** – “I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God’s heavenly call in Christ Jesus.”

VICTORY OVER PROBLEMS IS ACHIEVED IN THREE WAYS

- A. **Instead of covering up . . . GROW UP.** **Proverbs 9:10** – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

B. **Instead of shutting up . . . SPEAK UP**, Galatians 6:2 – “Carry one another’s burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

C. **Instead of giving up . . . STAND UP**.

1. **2 Corinthians 4:16-18** – “Therefore we do not give up; even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. ¹⁸ So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen; for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”
2. Stan Toler - “Many of life’s failures occur when we are close to success.”
3. When you stand up for what is right, you do not stand alone.
4. Never close your eye of faith to all the help God has surrounded you with.
 - a. **1 John 4:4** – “You are from God, little children, and you have conquered them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”
 - b. **2 Kings 6:8-17** King of Syria is making war against Israel and surrounds Dothan to capture Elisha. **16-17** – “Elisha said, ‘Don’t be afraid, for those who are with us outnumber those who are with them.’ ¹⁷ Then Elisha prayed, ‘LORD, please open his eyes and let him see.’”
 - c. May we open our eyes of faith and see the resources God has made available to us.
 - d. **1 Corinthians 10:13** – “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to humanity. God is faithful and He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation He will also provide a way of escape, so that you are able to bear it.”
 - e. **Romans 8:28** – “We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose.”

CONCLUSION:

A. **2 Peter 1:4** – “By these He has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires.

1. Perhaps God is ready and willing to help in ways we have never dared to hope.
2. Rejections, defeats, and failures that all of us have experienced can create enough negative feelings to destroy us. Be careful! Often the most painful wounds are not the scars that are outwardly seen, but the hidden wounds deep in the heart. Being hidden, they are often the most dangerous. Setbacks in our lives can take the joy out of living. Our faith is weakened, and if we collect enough hurts it will stop us from wanting to press forward. Even success can make one the target of criticism. Do not let hurts hurt you.

3. Instead of constantly telling God how big our problems are . . . Perhaps it is time to tell our problems how big our God is!
 4. God doesn't always give His children what they ask for, but He never fails to supply their needs.
 5. **John 16:33** – “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”
 6. **1 Kings 20:28** – “Then a man of God came and spoke to the king of Israel, and said, Thus says the LORD: ‘Because the Syrians have said, ‘**The LORD is God of the hills, but He is not God of the valleys,**’ therefore I will deliver all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD”
- B. When all is said and done in life, you can say along with the Psalmist in **Psalm 119:65** – “LORD, You have treated Your servant well, just as You promised.”
- C. **God's Plan for Man's Salvation**