

Pt 2: Getting a Grip on our Problems

"When we have the right perspective on our problems we can begin to handle them."

If we're serious about changing something in our life, we have to start by changing the way we think.

The Bible says in **Romans 12:2** (nlt) *...let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think...*

Our biggest problem is our perspective.

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (nlt) *We are pressed on every side by troubles but we're not crushed and broken. We are perplexed but we don't give up and quit. We get knocked down but we get up again and we keep going.*

So...how can we keep from being beat up by our problems?

2 Corinthians 4:18 (niv)

Paul says the secret of endurance is not to focus on the problem but to focus on God who can solve the problem!

Today, we will see from David's example three important keys to handling the difficult days of life.

1. When our situation looks depressing, we need to think about the _____ of God.

Depression is a warning light that we've forgotten how good God is to us.

Studies have shown one of the healthiest emotion known to man is the attitude of gratitude.

Focusing on the goodness of God means more than just being grateful for all the good things God has done for us.

It also means seriously thinking about how good God really is. God has our best interest at heart. God can always bring good out of bad if we'll trust in Him.

God is bigger than the problems we're going through.
It's all in the way we think about the experiences of life.

We can't control our experiences but we can control how we choose to think about them.

God can use the disappointments in our life for good if we can learn to focus on the goodness of God during those times.

Psalm 31 (niv)

Nothing happens in the life of a Christ follower without the heavenly Father's permission. Even the bad things!

Romans 8:28 (nkjv) that *...all things work together for good for those who love God...*

When life doesn't make sense and when we can't figure it all out.
That's when we most of all need to trust that God is a good God.

He knows what's best for us and what we need most.
He sees what we don't see and He knows what we don't know so let's trust Him!

2. When our situation is _____ us, we need to think about the _____ of God.

The fact is we will fail at many things in life. Failure is a part of all of our lives. Things don't always go as we expect it or as we planned.

What do you do with this sense of failure when it comes into our lives?

God's hands are there to catch you no matter what the failure in life.
That's the greatness of God. And knowing this gives us a sense of safety.

Psalm 147:5 (tlb) *How great God is. His power is absolute. His understanding is unlimited.*

We need to stop focusing on our problem and start focusing on God's power.
To stop focusing on what we can't do and start focusing on what God can do!

God is greater than any obstacle that's in our way.
The incredible thing is God's power is not only visible, it's available to us.

Psalm 69:13-15 (ncv) *God, because of Your great love answer me. You are truly able to save. Pull me from the mud. Don't let me sink.... Do not let the flood drown me..."*

There are some situations of life that we cannot overcome by ourselves. We need God's hand to reach in and lift us out of.

Jeremiah 32:27 (niv)

God specializes in the impossible.

Decide right now instead of focusing on the failures in our life, we'll focus on the power of an almighty God.

3. When our situation is _____ we need to think about how _____ God is.

God is always with us. He's present at the very moment we need Him most!

What do we do when we face dark days?

Psalm 112:108 (tlb) *Praise the Lord. For all who fear God and trust Him are blessed beyond expression. When darkness overtakes him, light will come bursting in. Such a man will not be overthrown by evil circumstances. God's constant care of him will make a deep impression on all who see it. He doesn't fear bad news nor live in dread of what may happen. For he has settled in his mind that God will take care of him.*

You know what the antidote is to dark days?

To settle in our mind that God is going to take care of us!

We don't have to have all the answers when we know that God does.

When we're going through dark days we need to remember we're not going through them alone.

We are to focus on the closeness of God.

Psalm 34:18 (niv) *The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and He saves those who are crushed in spirit.*

Psalm 3:34 (tlb) *Don't be impatient for the Lord to act. Keep traveling steadily along His pathway and in due season He will honor you with every blessing.*

The problem that we've got ourselves into probably didn't happen overnight. We're not likely going to get out of it overnight either. Because there are some lessons that are to be learnt.

Conclusion

God is more interested in our character than He is in our comfort. He's not going to immediately remove all the problems in our life the moment they occur.

God's goal is not to make life easy for us.
There are some things we only learn in the dark.

We need to trust God. He is a good God and He sees what we don't see and He knows what we don't know. He will help us but it's on His timetable.

Psalm 3:34 (tlb) *Keep traveling steadily along His pathway and in due season*
[That's God's timetable.] *He will honor you with every blessing.*

Be confident that God is with you every step of the way.
Be patient and keep traveling and wait for God's timing.

Ephesians 2:4-8 (ncv) *But God's mercy is great, and He loved us very much. Though we were spiritually dead because of the things we did against God, He gave us new life with Christ. You have been saved by God's grace... He did this for those in Christ Jesus so that for all future time He could show the very great riches of His grace by being kind to us in Christ Jesus. You have been saved by grace through believing. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God."*

The ultimate expression of the greatness, the goodness, and the closeness of God is seen in what Jesus did for us on the cross when He gave His life for us.

The problem is we often forget what Jesus did on the cross. We don't think about it much. But will we respond to what Jesus did on the cross?