

July 11, 2004
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“God and Your Problems” (Part 3)
1 Cor 10:13 NLT

But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.

I once saw a cartoon of a huge convention hall full of empty seats except for one kind of wimpy guy sitting on the front row all by himself. Over him was a banner: “Welcome to the First Annual Children of Non-Dysfunctional Families Conference.” It's somewhat comforting to know that most of us have problems and belong to this “dysfunctional family” of problems. Everyone has problems, some more severe than others. Everyone has something that is a major temptation and struggle for him or her. There are thoughts or even actions that you want to keep hidden. They bring guilt and shame and you don't want others to know about it. You want to change, you've tried to change, but you need help. If you are a Christian God can help you with your problems. Now, I've heard people say, “I've tried God's way, and it didn't work.” The question is have they really tried trusting completely in God and in His Word (Bible)? Have they really tried to do things His way, in His strength? I know God can help you with your problems. If “it didn't work” I can't believe it was God's fault. Of course, many times people give up too soon. Sometimes when they are on the very verge of seeing some change. Keep on practicing God's way and don't give up until you start to see progress. Here is what we learn from 1 Cor. 10:13:

1. (Your Problem) It Is Not Unique

Don't make excuses rather than take responsibility because you think a problem like yours has never been seen before on the face of the earth. “Hey you don't know what I face, if you did you would understand why things can't change in my situation.” In other words “I shouldn't be responsible for my actions because *my* problem is unique.” Not according to Paul: “But remember that the temptations that come into your life are *no different* from what others experience.”

2. You Are Not Alone

If “the temptations that come into your life are no different from what *others experience*” then others have faced the same problems you face and many have been victorious over them. And if others have been victorious over the same problem you face than you can be victorious over it as well. Not only that but Jesus Himself was tempted with the same problems you face yet never sinned. Therefore all the resources He had are also available to you and they are found in the Bible. And because of Jesus God is always with us to be our help in times of trouble.

3. *God Is Faithful*

Your real hope in trouble, your only certain hope in despair, is in God – in the God who has kept His promises. Your certain hope for help is embedded in the middle of this verse, and those words are, “God is faithful.” That is something you can count on. Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit tied this promise firmly to the faithfulness of God. Now, if God’s faithfulness can fail, so can this promise. But if “God is faithful” – as we know He is – then you have no choice but to believe this promise: “the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.”

God gives a guarantee. He says, “Based on my own faithfulness, based on my integrity I declare that there is no problem that my child, redeemed by their faith in Jesus, will ever face that is unique or beyond their ability to handle if they meet the problem in My way, using My resources.” Which brings me to the next point ...

4. *You Can't Say Can't*

When I talk to people who are struggling with certain temptations or trials or problems and I share with them what I have been sharing with you over the last few weeks, their response many times is, “I can’t do it!” Or they may first paint me a picture of how bleak things are in their life then say, “So now you see why I can’t take it any longer.” Their explanation is meant to convince me that they were designed in such a way, or there is some other reason, that they really *can't* do what God requires. They are helpless. But there’s another explanation; they are refusing to live responsibly, they are refusing to accomplish their tasks, they refusing to do what God wants, and the Bible refers to that as sin. When I tell people what they ought to do and they say, “I can’t!” I usually respond with, “you can’t or you won’t? Be honest it isn’t that you *can't* it is that you *won't*!” You can, God says with His help you can. The Bible doesn’t allow anyone to escape responsibility for doing what it says. Paul will not allow you to use the word “can’t” when he writes: “And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it.”

If the Bible is true and indeed God never sends a trial or temptation heavier than a Christian can bear, then a Christian has no right to say, “I can’t!” God never allows the devil to temp a Christian beyond their ability to withstand, provided that they stand in God’s way, by means of God’s resources not their own.

“But,” you might say, “I don’t know what may come my way, maybe something will happen that I wouldn’t be able to handle.” Impossible! Anyway, the promise is not for strength for what might come. Don’t worry about tomorrow; don’t worry about the “what ifs.” God will provide the wisdom and courage when the time comes. Do what God says, for often the strength comes in the doing.

Given the grace of God, given your knowledge of His Word, given your present relationship with God, given the resources of the Holy Spirit and His power within, there is no trial or temptation that is beyond your ability to withstand. Instead of saying, "I can't," you should say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Gen 1:26-28

26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

27 So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and *subdue it*. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

But after the Fall we read:

Gen 3:17-19

17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat of it
all the days of your life.

18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return."

When People were created God commanded them to subdue the earth. But sin brought the reversal of our control over the earth, so that it was possible for the earth to gain dominion over us. The earth would fight back with thorns and weeds. Our task would be difficult, not impossible, but difficult. Only with much sweat and toil would we overcome the obstacles in order to eke out an existence. It would be through painful toil and struggle that we would keep control of the earth subduing us until the day we die, then the struggle would finally be over.

Whenever we give up on the task of overcoming the world this reversal becomes evident. Contrary to God's will to subdue or control the earth, we sin when we give up and let it

control us. Don't whine, "I can't; I'm helpless." Reflect Christ, use His resources, I know it is not easy, He knows it is not easy, it's a struggle, but you must subdue and rule the world. To fail to use God's gracious resources as found in the Bible is to misrepresent God. You can overcome, the assurance of that is as certain as the faithfulness of God. As Paul said, "And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it."

Husbands and wives your home can be different, your marriage can be different. Singles, you can help your behavior when you're out with someone of the opposite sex. Businessperson you can be honest. Driver you can deal with the person who cuts you off. Fathers and mothers you can control your anger. Whatever the problem, through Jesus Christ, you *can*.

5. God Will Show You a Way Out

"When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it." Did you get that part of the verse? You are not in a hole you can never get out of. God will provide you a way out from *every* trial. He can reach down and pull you out. He can send a ladder for you to climb out. He can bring down walls. Don't give up, don't let down on your responsibilities, don't numb yourself by sinful measures, it will only complicate the problem. No matter what the problem, trial or temptation God says He "will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it." There is a way out; every problem has a solution; every trial will come to an end for God's children.

These promises, of course, are not true for non-believers or anyone not willing to trust and obey God. But the Christian, who knows that Jesus Christ came and suffered the same temptations and trials and faced death for our eternal good so that eternal damnation and condemnation could be removed, we don't fear life or death. If you have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, you may be certain that the way out will come - you must look for it, accept it and use it, but it will come - just as surely as the problem itself came. (like the old joke of the man caught in the flood and refused help, because, "God will take care of me." When he finally drowned and asked God why He didn't help God said, "What do you mean, I sent you a rope, boat and helicopter). God promises along with the problem will be "a way out." Your situation is not impossible - not to God.

(Your Problem) It Is Not Unique and You Are Not Alone

God Is Faithful so You Can't Say Can't - God Will Show You a Way Out