

Problems – Study 3

In our last lessons, we've been looking at the subject of problems. Now, I realize that you may say, "Well, I don't need to have people tell me I have problems. I know I have problems." Well, that's why we're studying this, is so that we can recognize the problems in our lives and in your life.

You need to realize that there are ways and there is a way that seems right unto a man but the ends thereof are the way of death. We need to listen to the Word of God. We need to listen to God in order to solve the problems of our lives.

And I realize that, as we go through this series of lessons that we're covering here, we've talked about problems; we've talked about one of the symptoms of a problem, and that symptom is worry; and today we want to look at the symptom of fear. Now, fear is not the problem. Fear is a symptom of an underlying problem that we might face in our life.

There are many multiple phobias to be found in people's lives. People fear many things, and we can easily become fearful and afraid. And some of these fears have been classified into various kinds of phobias.

Now, the word "phobia" comes from a Greek word that means, you guessed it, fear. For example, some of the phobias that people have... acrophobia; this is the fear of high places. I simply say don't climb the ladder. Claustrophobia, this is the fear of enclosed places. Well, don't shut the door. Kynophobia, this is the fear of dogs. Get rid of the dog. Hydrophobia, a few of water. Well, get out of the water. Necrophobia, a fear of death. Stay alive. And nyctaphobia, a few of night. And I simply say, well, move to Alaska. Of course,

there's six months of light there and then after the darkness comes in Alaska, you have to move again.

Well, consider the following: Fear is not always wrong or sinful. God has equipped man with certain capacities, and He's equipped man with the capacity to fear for his own protection, for his own safety, for his own benefit. It's not always wrong to fear. And though we often think of fear as a dreadful foe, it can also be man's best friend. Fear is that friend which keeps our hands away from the tiger's cage at the zoo. Fear is that friend that helps us to drive safely in the midst of heavy traffic. Fear is that friend that helps us to respect and obey the police officer and helps us to stay out of trouble. You can probably think of other ways that fear serves as a friend.

Franklin Roosevelt said in his first inaugural address, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Well, that sounds good, but in reality, there are things that people, places, and things that we fear. We call those people, places, and things in our lives problems. Many times a problem produces fear.

Well, fear... friend or foe? We need to look back to the origin of fear. Fear can protect us or fear can destroy us. The right kind of fear will eliminate every wrong kind of fear. The first place in the Bible where fear is mentioned is found in Genesis 3:10. I'm going to read verse 9, as well: *⁹And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? ¹⁰And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

This is a good kind of fear eventually, because Adam realized that he had eaten of the

forbidden tree. He was told not to eat of that tree because he was told that the day that he ate thereof that he would die. And, of course, we know that Adam died spiritually the day he ate of that tree and later on he would die physically. And that's what happens to every person in this world. You die physically one day. You're born into this world spiritually dead. In other words, death has already really taken place. We're alive in this body, but the spiritual death is there. The only way to get rid of that spiritual death is to receive Christ as Savior. He promises eternal life, not eternal death but eternal life when we trust Him.

Adam was afraid and he hid himself. And you may be afraid of something today and you're hiding from it, but you need to realize that you need to face that fear. Remember, there's a problem that's causing that fear in your life, and as we go through these studies about problems, I often tell people I'm not going to solve your problems. I can't solve your problems. That's up to you. You must recognize that you have a problem and you must get to the root of that. You must solve that problem. We must find out what the problem is that's causing a certain symptom in our lives.

Well, understanding who God is helps us not to fear. There's a right fear and a wrong fear. But understanding who God is helps us not to fear. I will not fear because God is my God. Isaiah 41:10 says, *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*

First, you must realize that God is your God. How do you do that? By receiving Jesus as your Savior. To as many as received him to them gave He power to become the sons of God. You are the children of God. You must

receive Jesus Christ as your Savior before you can say that "God is my God."

God is my God, and once I received Him, I also realized that He's my shield. He's my protector. Genesis 15:1 says, *After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.* We can claim that same promise today as Abraham did when he realized that God was his shield.

God is also my confidence. Proverbs 3:25-26: *²⁵Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. ²⁶For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.* Trust in the Lord, the Bible tells us in that verse. Those verses remind us that we're not to fear because the Lord is our confidence. Don't place your trust in yourself. Place your trust in the Lord.

Well, the Lord is also my light, salvation, and strength, according to Psalm 27:1. *The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*

On and on the verses go, and another verse tells us that God is my helper. Hebrews 13:6: *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.* God is my refuge and my fortress, according to Psalm 91:2-5.

Let me add one more here. I will not fear because he is my refuge, strength, and he is my present help. Psalm 46:1-2 says this: *¹God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ²Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.*

God is our strength. God is whom we need to look to in order to be our protector. He is the one who can take our fears and take care of them for us.

Well, what about the king of fears? The king of fear, of course, is spelled with a capital "D," and that fear is death, Hebrews 2:14-15, and I believe that as we face life we also face death. Death is man's greatest fear. Hebrews 2:14-15: *-¹⁴Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death... this is Jesus, now... he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; ¹⁵And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

Death is a legitimate fear for the unsaved, according to Hebrews 9:27, and it says, *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.* The unbeliever should have a terrible fear of physical death but an even greater fear of the second death. Revelation 2:11: *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

He that overcometh is the one who has trusted Jesus. He that overcomes is the one who lets Jesus Christ forgive him or her of sin. He that overcomes is the one who lets Jesus Christ save him or her of sin, and he that overcomes is the one who lets Jesus Christ give him or her eternal life.

Revelation 21:8 talks about this and James 1:15 says, *Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Well, death is a legitimate fear for the unsaved, but did you realize that death is not a legitimate fear for the child of God? First Corinthians 15:54-55

say this: *⁵⁴So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption... when this body changes, when this old corruptible body is gone... and it goes on to say... and this mortal... this body... shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*

In I Corinthians 15:57 says, *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* This is for the believer. For the believer there is no need to fear the king of fears, and that's death. The believer can face his hour of death bravely and joyfully, knowing that his real life is just beginning.

Philippians 1:21 says, *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* And II Corinthians 5:8: *For we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.* Don't fear death. Death is really a friend to the believer because when it comes, we go to be with the Lord. Now, I'm looking forward to the Rapture of the church when all believers will be caught up together in the clouds with the Lord to be forever with Him. But if He doesn't come back for me in the Rapture and the breath of life leaves this body, then I will go out of this world praising God because I know I'm going to be with Him.

Well, the conclusion is this. Ecclesiastes 12:13 says, *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

And I have a question for you as an unsaved person. Have you trusted Jesus as your Savior? If you have not, you need to receive Him today. Let him take the fear of dying from you. Let him take that upon Himself, because He already has. He died for you. He

was crucified, buried, and resurrected, and He lives for you today.

And for the saved, we need to hear Him say, "Well done." Are you serving Him? Serve Jesus Christ today as a saved person. Let Him lead you and guide you and take your life. Live for Him.

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