

119

MINISTRIES

“The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below.”

The Bigger Picture

Sometimes, problems in our lives can become overwhelming. The issues that we face can become all-consuming, so that it’s difficult for us to think about anything else. When this happens, it’s often helpful for us to recognize that there is more to life than the difficulties we are facing right now; there is a “bigger picture.” So, what do the Scriptures say about this bigger picture? Are today’s troubles really as dire and dreadful as they seem? And, how can seeing the bigger picture help us overcome the difficulties we are facing?

Sometimes, we go through difficulties as a result of sin, and those difficulties teach us a lesson about obeying God. The Scriptures are full of instructions that, if we follow them, will help us to avoid a lot of disasters. The Scriptures instruct us how to handle many areas of life, from how to handle property (Exodus 21:37-22:12; Leviticus 19:11-13), to how we should speak (Leviticus 19:16; Proverbs 16:13; James 3:2-10), to how we should relate to our families (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 27:16), to how we should handle our intimate relationships (Leviticus 18; 1 Corinthians 7:2-5). Obeying God in these areas helps us to avoid a lot of personal and interpersonal problems, and sometimes we go through difficult times to teach us that we should change our behavior. It’s always valuable to examine ourselves when we are going through difficult times, and to evaluate whether obeying God would have resulted in a better outcome.

While it is true that our own sins can and will lead to problems, we should also recognize that problems don’t have to come from our own sin. Problems are also a part of life. The Bible says that we will face trials and tribulations—in fact, it guarantees that we will have troubles if we are followers of Christ!

John 16:33b

[In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.](#)

John 15:18-19

[If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of](#)

the world, therefore the world hates you.

1 John 3:13

Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.

So, while sin does lead to trouble, the simple fact is that we will have trouble whether we sin or not. Job had unimaginable troubles even though he was a righteous man (Job 1:1). In fact, all of the Bible's righteous men—from Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, to David, to the prophets and apostles, had to endure great hardship and suffering. The ultimate righteous man, Jesus—his Hebrew name being Yeshua—also went through horrible suffering. It's simply a part of life. We are all going to face loss, rejection, betrayal, abandonment, humiliation, pain, and death. As the author of Ecclesiastes noted:

Ecclesiastes 9:2a

It is the same for all, since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice.

This fact, that life's troubles are inescapable, can make life itself seem meaningless. As the prophet Jeremiah lamented:

Jeremiah 20:18

Why did I come out from the womb to see toil and sorrow, and spend my days in shame?

Well, then, so much for the big picture! If we're going to suffer whether we obey God or not, doesn't that make suffering itself the ultimate reality? Isn't death, which comes for us all, the ultimate truth?

The answer is no, because there is a bigger picture. You see, even though suffering is an unavoidable part of our lives now, it's not always going to be that way. God has prepared a place for his people, in which

Revelation 21:4

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore.

Not only that, but he has provided us with a way to reach that destination:

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Now, as we already mentioned, following God's way comes with its own set of troubles. It is not easy, and it is not always pleasant. Yeshua said that "the gate is narrow, and the way is hard that leads to life." (Matthew 7:14). However, this is the only way to truly overcome the troubles of this world. God offers us a new life free from the toils and tribulations that we are experiencing now. If we follow him, enduring the harsh wilderness of this life, then he will lead us to a land "flowing with milk and honey." That's part of the bigger picture. Our troubles may be nagging and suffocating and cruel, but they are temporary. God's kingdom is permanent. When we see our lives from the perspective of eternity, we realize that our problems aren't so big and frightening after all.

“Now,” you might say, “I’m glad to know that there will come a time when I will not have to endure these trials. But right now, I am enduring them, so what use is that knowledge to me? I may not have these problems tomorrow, but they are still dominating my life today.” Again, this is where the bigger picture comes into play. You see, the reason that God has provided a future free from death and sorrow is because he loves us. That same loving God also provides us with help in the present. Even though our problems are basically insignificant in the light of eternity, God knows that they do not seem insignificant to us, and he does not expect us to face them unassisted. As he said through the Psalmist:

Psalm 91:14-16

Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

God has not left us to fend for ourselves. That’s not to say that we won’t have to work and struggle to get through the difficult times in our lives; we certainly will. We cannot just ignore our problems and expect God to come and take them away. But God can provide us with a powerful tool to help us overcome our struggles. He can provide us with *himself*. This is what he did for Isaac (Genesis 26:3), Jacob (Genesis 31:3), Moses (Exodus 3:12), Joshua (Joshua 1:5), Gideon (Judges 6:16), and many others, and he will do it for us also. As Paul wrote:

Philippians 4:9

What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Yeshua promised the same thing:

John 14:15-17

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

So, if we are faithful to God, then God will be faithful to us. Even though we will face many trials, God will be with us, and will help us to overcome those trials. He will not leave us to face our struggles alone.

So, then, what is the bigger picture? The bigger picture is God himself, and the love that God has for his people. God has a place prepared for us, where we will not have to endure life’s hardships anymore. The problems we are facing now are nothing compared to the eternity we will face without them. Not only that, but God loves us so much that he, himself, will be with us and will help us to overcome our trials, *even though* they are so small in the grand scheme of things. The bigger picture is that we have a God who loves us, and if we will be his people, then he will be our God. He will help us through the hardships of this life until we finally reach his heavenly city (Hebrews 11:16; Revelation 21:2). So, don’t let life’s struggles fill your view, and consume your every waking moment. Look at the bigger picture.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

EMAIL: Info@119ministries.com

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/119Ministries

WEBSITE: www.TestEverything.net & www.ExaminaloTodo.net

TWITTER: www.twitter.com/119Ministries#