



INSPIRED
walk

TESTS & TRIALS

VOLUME 1

ENDURING LIFE'S PROBLEMS



TOPIC SERIES

www.inspiredwalk.com

INSPIRED WALK - TOPIC SERIES

**TESTS
&
TRIALS**

VOLUME ONE

**ENDURING
LIFE'S PROBLEMS**

**Written & Compiled By
Stewart Kabatebate**

TESTS and TRIALS – Volume 1

Copyright © 2019 InspiredWalk.com

Unless otherwise indicated, all scriptural quotations are from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

Scriptures marked NKJV are taken from the NEW KING JAMES VERSION (NKJV):
Scripture taken from the NEW KING JAMES VERSION®. Copyright© 1982 by
Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scriptures marked ESV are taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, ENGLISH STANDARD
VERSION (ESV): Scriptures taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, ENGLISH STANDARD
VERSION ® Copyright© 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News
Publishers. Used by permission.

Scriptures marked NIV are taken from the NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV):
Scripture taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION ®.
Copyright© 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.TM. Used by permission of
Zondervan

Scriptures marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation ®,
copyright © 1996, 2004 by Tyndale Charitable Trust. Used by permission of Tyndale
House Publishers. All rights reserved.

CONTENTS

Why Is Life Unfair?.....	6
Why Does God Allow Evil?	12
Why Does God Allow Problems in My Life?	16
5 Ways to Overcome Worry & Anxiety.....	22
5 Signs You're Under Spiritual Attack.....	28
How Should A Christian Respond To Suffering?.....	35

INTRODUCTION

Life is full of problems and challenges. Nobody is immune to tests and trials in life.

It is a fact of life that as long as we live in a sinful world we will continue to face all kinds of problems and issues in life.

Therefore it is important for us to learn how to handle pain, suffering, temptation, anxieties as well as the spiritual, physical, economic and emotional challenges of life.

ENDURING LIFE'S PROBLEMS is Volume One of the Inspired Walk TEST & TRIALS – TOPIC SERIES which seeks to equip and encourage the reader on how to cope and respond to life's problems and challenges.

Why Is Life Unfair?

We've all at some point in our life have asked ourselves this question: Why is life so unfair???

We look at the situation in our world and we wonder if there will ever be any justice, fairness or equality in the world.

We may also ask ourselves these questions: Why do the wicked and corrupt prosper, while the righteous or innocent seem to struggle? Why isn't God quick to bring justice to those who are abusive and wicked?

Where is God during my time of pain and suffering?

To understand the above question it is important to understand 2 very important issues which are:

1. The condition of man
2. The condition of the world

Life Is Unfair Because Sin Exists - The Condition of Man

The Bible reveals that man was once perfect. In the beginning God created the universe and He created man in His own image (**Genesis 1:27-28**) and He saw that all that He had created was good (**Genesis 1:31**).

However the perfect condition of mankind tragically changed when Adam & Eve sinned by disobeying God in the garden of Eden (**Genesis 3:1-24**).

As a result of sin, the condition of man was no longer perfect. Instead the following occurred:

- Man's view of himself changed (Genesis 3:7)
- Man's view of God changed (Genesis 3:8-11)
- Man's view of one another changed (Genesis 3:12-13)
- Man's relationship with the earth changed (Genesis 3:17-19)

Therefore the sin in man brought in imbalance to life. The unfairness that exists in life is because mankind is the primary reason for why life is unfair.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 describes the worsening condition of mankind in the last days.

It says: But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

Such a wicked condition of man's heart explains why life is unfair. We live in a world where the love of man is growing cold; we seek only to satisfy our own fleshly desires instead of pleasing God; people do not love God and they do not love each other; we love darkness instead of light.

John 3:19-20 says: *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.*

Therefore life is unfair because evil exists and so both evil and the unfair circumstances we experience in the world entered because of the sin of Adam in the garden of Eden.

Romans 5:12 says: *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned*

Life Is Unfair Because Satan is the god of this World - The Condition of the World

The world as we currently know it has systems and values that are controlled by satan. Therefore life is unfair because the Scriptures refer to satan as being the “god of this world”

The devil has introduced philosophies, values, methods, religions and even economic systems that are contrary to God or the kingdom of God.

In Matthew 4:8-10 the devil showed Jesus all the “kingdoms of the world and their glory” and promised to give them to Jesus in exchange for His worship.

Romans 12:2 tells us “not to be conformed to this world” but that we should renew our mind and discern the will of God.

In Genesis 1:28-30 we learn that mankind was initially given dominion over the earth and that as a creation who was made in God’s image, man was given a special role to be a steward over the earth.

However, Adam & Eve submitted to the devil’s temptation thereby allowing satan to establish his own demonic systems and authority in the world.

Therefore as satan’s kingdom wars against the kingdom of God, there are many circumstances and situations that will occur in our lives that reflect the injustice and unfairness of life in general.

What Should We Do When Life Is Unfair?

- Proverbs 3:5-6 encourages us to trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not on our own understanding. It also says that in all our ways we are to acknowledge God and He will direct our paths. It’s therefore important to live our life by faith and trust in God – and not according to our feelings. We are to trust God that despite our situation or circumstances, God is in control and He will direct our path in life.

- Romans 8:28 says *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose”*.

So even though there are situations or circumstances that are happening around us, we must take comfort in the fact that God is sovereign and He is in full control of everything that happens in the universe.

There is nothing that surprises God. For every Christian believer, God is working all things for good. Therefore God can use bad situations for the good of the Christian believer.

- Even though we live in a corrupt world, there will come a time when God will ultimately perfect all things once again. The devil is living on borrowed time. Satan was already defeated by Jesus at the Cross. Therefore the devil will soon meet his demise.

God is a just God. God is a fair God. God will bring justice and all the world will know that God is indeed good. Psalms 37 says that we should not fret or be envious of wrongdoers for they will soon fade like the grass. God will one day bring balance and justice in a corrupt and unfair world.

- Remember that no matter how tough life can be, God is with you and He will never leave you nor forsake you. There is nothing physical or spiritual that can separate you from God’s love and He can lead you and guide you through every situation

because in Christ you are more than a conqueror
(Romans 8:31-39).

We must take comfort in the knowledge that God is in control and a perfect place called Heaven awaits those who believe and receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Therefore our current struggles are temporary.

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. In what areas or aspects of life do you find life to be unfair? Why?
2. Do you believe that our current world system is more likely to reward the wicked more than the righteous? Why?
3. How will God deal with the issue of injustice and evil in the world?

Why Does God Allow Evil?

We've all witnessed and experienced evil in its various forms. There is no shortage of wickedness in the world. People experience pain; people experience abuse; people experience injustice and all kinds of wrongdoing. When bad things happen we all at some point ask the most obvious question: WHY!?!

WHY does God allow bad things to happen? Why does God allow evil? Why does it seem as if evil is winning the battle?

Even the atheist or agnostic person will ask the above questions. If God exists, why evil?

IF GOD EXISTS WHY DOES HE ALLOW EVIL?

It's important to note that God is always good. God never created evil. God is not the author of evil but God does allow evil for these 3 basic reasons:

1. We Live in a Fallen World

God originally created a perfect world. The world that God created was without evil; He created a world without pain; He created a world without suffering. The Bible says that God saw that all that He made was good (Genesis 1:31). Therefore the world was perfectly made.

However the status of the perfection ended because of the sin of Adam & Eve who chose to disobey God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-24). It's from that time – because of sin – that the world was affected to the point that we experience pain, suffering, evil and even death.

Now someone might ask – Why did God allow Adam & Eve to sin? Why didn't God prevent Adam & Eve from disobeying Him?

These questions bring us to the second reason why God allows evil – FREEWILL.

2. We All Have Freewill

It's not in our human nature to be controlled like robots or machines. When God created us, He created us with the ability to make our own decisions. We all have the ability to make good decisions and we have the ability to make bad decisions.

Freewill is the ability to make your own choices.

The important thing to note is that God does not interfere with our freewill. God of course persuades us to always make the right choices but God does not force us into making a particular choice. God allows us to use our freewill.

In Deuteronomy 30:15-19 God tells us that we have the freewill to make our own choices but He does urge us to make the right choices.

Therefore when evil happens – when bad things happen – it's because people make bad & evil choices.

When we have a society or culture where people cheat, murder, lie or are selfish, there are consequences to such behavior. Therefore people abuse their freewill and make evil choices.

3. God Can Use Evil To Fulfill His Plan & Purpose

The story of Joseph is an example of God using evil to fulfill His own divine purpose and plan. Joseph experienced injustice and evil and rejection by members of his own family. Yet because of his trials Joseph grew spiritually and God used Joseph's experiences to mold him into the type of man that God wanted him to be.

Joseph eventually says to his brothers who had once tried to kill him by saying "... You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good..." (Genesis 50:19-20).

GOD IS IN CONTROL

So even though God allows evil, let us remember that God is in total control of every situation. There is nothing that happens in our lives or in the world that God is not aware of. Nothing surprises God no matter how bad.

Also it's important to note that even though evil exists – evil itself is temporary. God will one day put an end to every form of evil and wickedness.

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. How does God use evil for His own plans and purposes according to Genesis 50:19-20?
2. In your personal life, list some ways in which God has used an evil circumstance for your benefit and for ultimately for His glory.
3. If God has given mankind freewill, does this mean that man should not be held accountable for evil choices? Why / Why not?

Why Does God Allow Problems in My Life?

Why would a loving God, allow you to face problems in your life? Why can't He just instantly give you a perfect life? Do you ever wonder if He is really interested in helping you to win and achieve in life?

Sometimes life's challenges just seem impossible to overcome: Financial challenges are ever at your doorstep; just when you think you're about to have a breakthrough – then something goes wrong; you have to contend with jealous workmates at your job; it's taking forever to buy that car; you have family issues – and you just don't seem to appear to be winning in all these areas.

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

When we are facing problems in life, it can be difficult to believe that God has a plan through every challenge that we face. We can be tempted to believe that God is more interested in punishing us than in helping us. We can be tempted to believe that God would rather see us struggle than conquer.

However it is important to learn from Jeremiah 29:11 that God does not purpose in His mind to harm you. God loves His creation and you are created in His image. God is not sadistic. God will therefore never create you so that He can spend His time ensuring that only bad things happen in your life.

God has great plans for you. God's plan is to "prosper you" and "to give you hope and a future".

Therefore if you are facing problems and challenges in your life, God may allow them for the following reasons:

1. **God Wants to Build Your Character** – God is more interested in you developing your character and becoming mature so that in Christ, you can cope with anything that life may throw at you. When you face problems, it might be that God wants to teach you specific values and virtues through your problems such as patience, perseverance, love, faith and the like. (*My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* - James 1:2-5NKJV)

2. **God Wants to Teach You About Himself** – Ultimately God also wants you to know Him and to know His character. God can use problems to

change your perspective about life and about Him. For example, some people who have had sickness or near-death experiences have been known to radically and positively change their outlook on life. Therefore God can use problems to help you refocus your perspective and to view Him and His plans for your life more correctly. (*"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. - Isaiah 55:8-9NKJV*)

3. **God Wants You to Help Other People After You Have Conquered Your Problem** – People who have overcome abuse, a tragedy or any type of problems are more effectively able to comfort, empathize and counsel a person who is going through similar circumstances. (*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.- Galatians 6:1-2NKJV*)
4. **God Wants to Prepare You For A Future Position or Mission in Your Life** – God is able to use your current challenges in life in order to build your character and resilience for a future mission or

role in life. You may not understand the purpose of your challenges in the present, but they will make sense in the future when you have arrived at the place that God wants you to be in life.

(Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. - Genesis 50:19-21NKJV)

5. A Life of Sin Is the Reason for Your Problem –

Living a sinful life or making sinful choices can cause problems in your life. Neither God nor even the devil can be blamed for the problems in your life. Sometimes we can make wrong choices on our own that land us into problems. Therefore when we live a sinful life, we then separate ourselves from God and because of sin our perspective and our approach to life's problems become ungodly. *(But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear. - Isaiah 59:2NKJV)*

6. God Allows Problems in Order to Test Our

Hearts – God may allow problems so that He may test your heart and your motives. God is not

merely interested in giving you the things that you want in life – but God is more interested in you having a genuine and growing relationship with Him. For example, do you follow God just for what He can give you, or do you follow God simply because He is your loving Creator? (*"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings". - Jeremiah 17:9-10NKJV*)

It is therefore important to understand that challenges and problems are not always present so that they may destroy us. But in certain situations, God may use our problems so that He may achieve His will and His purpose in our life. And for every trial you face, God is faithful and He will provide a way for you to escape and be victorious.

Romans 8:37-39 NKJV

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. When faced with a problem or challenge in life, what have been your initial reactions and feelings concerning your problem?
2. In your past or in the present – whenever you face a problem or trial in life, how often have you believed that God is using the problem / trial to “punish” you or “curse” you? Why?
3. In what ways has God used specific problems & challenges in your own life to build your character and make you more mature?

5 WAYS TO OVERCOME WORRY & ANXIETY

In life we all worry about many different things. We worry about how to pay our bills; we worry about what is happening in our country or economy; we worry about our loved ones; we worry about food and clothing and generally we worry about our individual life.

Whilst worry and anxiety have always been a part of our human nature since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, the Bible however discourages people from worrying or from having anxious thoughts (**Philippians 4:6-7**).

It has been proven that worrying can affect your daily life so much that it can interfere with your sleeping patterns, your appetite, your job performance and even your interpersonal relationships.

Worrying can turn into depression and cause panic attacks. Worrying can also cause people to make harmful decisions or to look for ungodly solutions in order to find relief from their problems. For example people may think of suicide, overeating, alcohol and even drugs in order to supposedly get rid of their anxiety.

The search for peace however is not found in drugs, alcohol or even in suicide. The search for peace is found

in God alone. Therefore the Bible instructs us regarding how we should overcome worry and anxiety in our life.

HOW TO OVERCOME WORRY & ANXIETY

Philippians 4:6-8 - *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Philippians 4:6-8 gives us instruction pertaining to what we ought to do in the face of anxiety.

1. We Must Learn to Pray

We must have a daily habit of communicating to God about every issue in our life. There is no issue or problem that is too big or too small for God to hear about when we pray to Him.

After all – God already knows everything and He knows us more than we know ourselves.

Philippians 4:6 says that we should not be anxious about anything – but instead we must pray about everything.

So we must come boldly to God in prayer with our worries, requests and supplications and we must trust that God will respond according to His divine will and plan for our life.

Therefore God is prepared to hear every issue that comes out of our mouth if we come to Him with a sincere heart.

2. We Must Always Be Thankful To God

1 Thessalonians 5:18 says we must *“give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”*

We must therefore consistently have an attitude of gratitude in our heart. Being thankful helps us to focus on the goodness of God rather than our negative circumstance.

Being thankful helps us to remember that God is able to help us and save us from the issues that trouble us. Being thankful brings supernatural peace in our hearts and minds even in the midst of a chaotic situation.

Therefore an attitude of prayer and thankfulness brings the peace of God which surpasses all understanding.

3. Replace Anxious Thoughts With The Correct Thoughts

Philippians 4:8 says: *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure,*

whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

So immediately after saying that we should not be anxious about anything but pray about everything – Paul then writes about having the correct thoughts. In order for us to stop our anxious thoughts, we must ultimately remove them by replacing them with godly thoughts and godly meditation. We must meditate on the word of God and on the promises of God in our life. We must remember the goodness and grace of God in our lives. We must think thoughts that always bring us back to Christ. Thinking the right thoughts will help you combat the temptation to worry or be anxious.

4. Trust In The Lord

Proverbs 3:5-6 says: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.*

Whenever we are anxious, we are communicating that we do not trust in God. Consistent anxiety demonstrates that we do not trust that God is in control. This is the very reason why God tells us not to worry or not to be anxious about anything. We must therefore trust in the sovereignty of God and believe that He will direct our path.

Anxiety also demonstrates that we are relying on our own understanding of our problem or situation.

However, trusting in God will reflect that we believe that God not only understands our situation – but He is able to deliver us out of it.

As Christians we are called to walk by faith and not by sight (**2 Corinthians 5:7**). Therefore the life of the Christian is a life of faith in God.

5. Seek First The Kingdom of God & His Righteousness

Matthew 6:33-34 - *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. 34 Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

From **Matthew 6:25-34**, Jesus addresses the issue of worrying about the details of life. Jesus tells us not to worry. Instead we must set our sights on God and His righteousness. God will provide our needs as we first seek His kingdom and His righteousness.

Anxiety has a tendency of taking our focus off God and the things of God. However we must always trust that all that is in the world belongs to God. The earth and everything in it already belongs to God (**Psalms 24:1**).

Therefore God will supply all our needs according to His riches (**Philippians 4:19**). We therefore should not worry or become anxious.

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. What are the issues in your life that make you worry the most? Why?
2. What are some of the detrimental effects of worry and anxiety in one's life?
3. How does the peace of Christ differ from the peace of the world?

5 SIGNS YOU'RE UNDER SPIRITUAL ATTACK

Concerning spiritual attacks, first it is important to understand that the devil cannot be blamed for every problem or bad decision that we make in our own lives. As mankind we have our own freewill to choose between right and wrong and good and evil.

In Romans 7:15 Paul wrote: *"I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate."*

Therefore our own flesh or sinful nature play a huge part in working against us or against our desire to please God.

The Christian has 3 enemies: the devil, the world and his/her own sin nature. All these 3 things fight against us to prevent us from pleasing God.

The Bible says that the devil came to kill, steal and destroy (John 10:10). It also says that the devil prowls like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8).

We must therefore understand that the enemy will always seek to spiritually attack God's people because

the devil is a hater of everything that God loves and everything that God has created.

The devil will therefore use different methods and techniques in order to attempt to destroy our relationship with God and with others.

Ephesians 6:12 says that we do not fight against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces of darkness.

It's therefore important for Christians to understand how the devil spiritually attacks believers.

We must also remember that when the devil attacks us, it can either be subtle or it can be sudden and so we must always be alert, vigilant and sober minded.

Here Are 5 Probable Signs That You're Under Spiritual Attack

1. No Desire To Pray or Read The Bible

The last thing the devil wants is a praying Christian or a believer who studies the word of God. It is through prayer and personal study God's word that we draw close to God and we understand the nature of God.

It's therefore imperative as Christians that we exercise self-discipline and that we prevent ourselves from allowing the distractions of life from hindering us from spending time with God through prayer and meditation of His word (**Psalms 1:1-3**).

When we are Biblically illiterate we open ourselves to all sorts of issues such as false teachings, anxieties and different kinds of sinful behavior. We therefore become ill-equipped to deal with specific issues or challenges in life.

We must therefore study God's word to present ourselves approved (2 Timothy 2:15) and so that we may be equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

2. Persecution for the Gospel of Christ

The devil hates the authentic gospel of Jesus Christ above all things. It is therefore no surprise that when Christians stand for the Biblical principles of God and when they preach the gospel of Christ, believers will encounter many kinds of persecution.

2 Timothy 3:12 says *"In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,"*

Throughout the world, Biblical Christians are humiliated, excluded, provoked, physically harmed and killed because they boldly stand for the truth and for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

These sort of persecutions are sourced from the devil who will do anything to prevent people from becoming genuinely saved because of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore persecution will come from both non-Christians and from the religious hypocrites who spread false teachings.

The disciples of Christ faced the same persecution from both unbelievers and from the false religious teachers such as the Pharisees who attempted to prevent the spread of the authentic gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 5:17-42).

3. Suicidal Thoughts

Whenever you have thoughts of physically harming yourself or if you have growing thoughts of desiring to end your own life – this can be a sign of spiritual attack.

It is never the will of God that we should seek to commit suicide or to physically harm our own body. The life that God has given us is a gift which is to be lived for His purpose and glory.

Indeed life can be full of pain, struggles and tragedies. Sometimes our struggles in life may cause the devil to tempt us into thinking that suicide is an option.

1 Peter 5:7 says: *“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”*

Philippians 4:6-8 encourages us not to worry about anything, but to pray to God about everything so that we may have the peace of God. We must also furthermore train our thoughts to focus on the things that are good and not on things that may cause us to sin against God.

Philippians 4:8 - *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure,*

whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

4. Desire to Return to Sinful Habits & Lifestyles

The devil may desire for the Christian believer to backslide or return to old sinful habits and lifestyles. So where there are strong urges and temptations for you to return to your old life before you were saved – this may be a sign of spiritual attack.

Colossians 3:5-10 says: *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator*

In James 4:7-8 we are urged to resist the devil and he will flee from us. One of the ways we resist the devil is by drawing nearer to God

5. Overwhelming Feelings of Condemnation, Depression & Anxiety

Sometimes the devil may use our feelings against us. This is why the Bible frequently urges Christians to

live by faith and not by sight (or our perception of our circumstances).

We therefore should live according to what the Bible says and not according to our feelings. We are to live according to every word that proceeds from the mouth of God and not according to the desires of the flesh.

Feelings come and go – but the word of God never changes and it remains forever.

Therefore the devil may accuse us; he may condemn us; he may make us feel inadequate; he may remind us of past sins and lead us into a state of depression because of our current circumstances or problems.

However, we must learn to trust God and not to lean on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6).

We must always have an attitude of thanksgiving and gratitude (1 Thessalonians 5:18) and we must learn to talk to God about every issue that is going on in our life (Philippians 4:6-7).

Romans 8:1 says: There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

The devil is the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10) – but however, in Christ we are no longer condemned and Christ is able to give us peace and joy even in the midst of a chaotic world.

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. What other ways have you felt or believed that you were under spiritual attack in your own life?
2. Have you ever been persecuted in any form because of your belief in Christ and the gospel? How were you persecuted and how did you respond?
3. What does Ephesians 6:12 mean when it says that we do not fight against flesh and blood?

HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN RESPOND TO SUFFERING?

We undoubtedly live in a world where pain and suffering is inevitable. The Bible reminds us that this world is a fallen world in which man is a sinner who needs God's redemption.

The Bible also reminds us that the condition of the heart of man will grow from bad to worse.

2 Timothy 3:1 says that *"in the last days there will come times of difficulty"* because of the ungodly nature and attitude of man towards each other and towards God (**2 Timothy 3:2-5**).

Therefore in a world that is filled with ungodliness, there will always be pain and suffering.

However, how should a Christian respond to the issue of pain and suffering? What attitude should Christians have during times of persecution and opposition?

First of all it is important to categorize suffering into 3 types or 3 reasons for why a person suffers in life.

3 REASONS FOR SUFFERING

1. Persecution or Suffering for Righteousness Sake

1 Peter 3:13-14,17 says *"Now who is there to harm*

you if you are zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled... For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil."

Therefore there is the kind of persecution and suffering which one experiences for doing the right thing or for standing by godly and righteous principles or for exposing wrong-doing. For centuries, many Christians have been ridiculed, excluded, punished and even killed for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and for exposing wrong doctrines and lifestyles. In other words, they experienced forms of persecutions for righteousness' sake.

In our world, anyone who stands for Biblical truth is likely to be viewed as an outsider or threat to an existing and ungodly system which then leads to persecution. For example, Jesus faced persecution from the scribes and Pharisees and was eventually crucified for standing for the truth and for exposing the false religious systems of the scribes and Pharisees. All of Christ's disciples also faced persecution on account of the message of the gospel, yet the Christian values that they preached promoted godly living and character. In **2 Timothy 3:12** it says that anyone who desires *"to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."*

Therefore persecution for righteousness sake is unavoidable for the Christian believer who stands for the Biblical truth and seeks to live a godly life.

2. Suffering Because of The Culture / Systems of the World

The Bible tells us that the world is at enmity with God and at enmity with Christians. The reason is because the standards, values, philosophies and culture of the world are opposed to Biblical values. It is the very reason why **Romans 12:2** tells us not to conform to standards of this world. The philosophies and ideas of this world have created suffering, pain, injustice within the social, political, economic and even the spiritual areas of people's lives.

Therefore when the system and culture of the world is corrupt, there will be many who will suffer as a result.

In the world there are also natural occurrences that are beyond human control such as natural disasters which may cause man to suffer. These include such things as earthquakes, cyclones, floods and the like which contribute to the pain and suffering of mankind.

3. Suffering Because of Personal Sin or The Sins of Others

Our own personal sin has consequences which can lead

to pain and suffering. The sin of Adam in the garden of Eden led to the tragic consequence of every person being born a sinner and death affecting all of mankind (**Romans 5:12**).

1 Peter 4:15 says: *But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.*

The acts of a murderer for example, do not only affect the murderer, but they also affect the victim and the victim's loved ones. Therefore whether it is sin that is committed by us or by another, our sins can have consequences which affect other people in general. Ultimately sin causes suffering.

The scriptures warn us that we should not suffer because we have committed evil. Instead it is better to suffer for doing good or for the truth of God's word.

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO SUFFERING?

A) We Must Be Prayerful & Thankful

James 5:13 says *"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray..."*

Therefore we must talk to God about the issues that pain us and allow Him to take charge of every problem and challenge in our life (**1 Peter 5:7**).

Through prayer we can both seek God's direction and receive the peace of Christ through our situation. **Philippians 4:6-7** says *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with*

thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Furthermore, even in pain and suffering, we must count our blessings and have an attitude of thanksgiving because **1 Thessalonians 5:18** says that we are to give thanks in all circumstances (both good and bad).

B) We Must Endure & Persevere

The word Endurance means *the power to withstand hardship or stress; a state of surviving or remaining alive.*

The word Perseverance means *to be steadfast; persistent determination; the act of persisting; continuing or repeating behavior.*

Therefore in the midst of suffering of any kind, we are expected to endure and persevere. And both to endure and persevere during trials can be used by God as a testing of our faith which can develop our character.

James 1:2-4 says: *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

James 5:10-11 says: *As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and*

merciful.

Ephesians 6:10 says: *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.*

C) We Must Count It All Joy & Count Yourself Blessed

Every Christian who suffers or is persecuted for righteousness sake or for the Biblical truth shares in the sufferings of Christ and is therefore blessed.

In **Luke 6:22-23** Jesus said the following: *“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! 23 Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.”*

1 Peter 4:13-14 says: *But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.*

D) Remember The Sovereignty of God

Romans 8:28 says: *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

We are reminded that God uses all things and all situations in life – both good and bad – to accomplish His own purpose.

Despite the chaos in the world and the personal

challenges we may face in life, God still remains in control and God is never surprised by anything that happens in the world.

God remains all-knowing and all-powerful. Therefore even in the midst of suffering we must remember that God is in control and we must continue to live a godly life in Christ Jesus despite our circumstances.

1 Peter 4:19 says: *Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.*

E) Repent If You Have Sinned & Resist The Devil

Where sin is the cause of our personal suffering, then we must repent and walk according to God's word. We are to resist the devil and resist his temptations by seeking to be close to God and casting all our issues on Him.

1 Peter 5:7-11 says: *Casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you. 8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. 10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.*

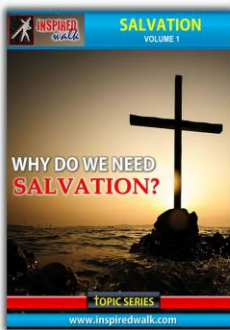
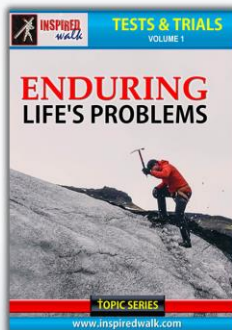
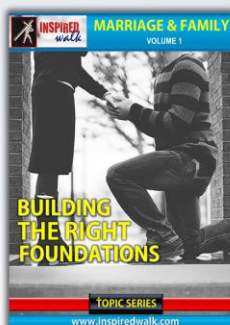
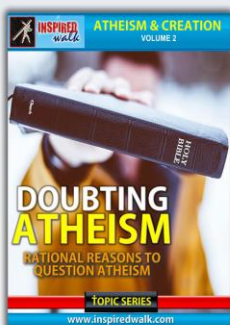
Therefore pain and suffering is part of life. However, God is always in control and all who are in Christ Jesus will only experience the discomfort of difficult times for

a short while. Ultimately the born again believer will one day experience a painless life and a life that is free from suffering when he/she receives the eternal promise of Heaven and eternity with God.

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. According to 2 Timothy 3:12 anyone who desires “to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted”. Why is experiencing persecution an integral part of the Christian believer’s life?
2. In your own personal life, are you afraid of being persecuted because you’re a Christian or are you afraid of sharing the truth of God’s word? Why / Why not?
3. In what ways have you coped or endured during a time of persecution or suffering?

Download more TOPIC SERIES booklets at
www.inspiredwalk.com



Visit www.inspiredwalk.com and get Biblical answers and perspective to life's issues and questions



Teaching, Equipping & Inspiring
You To Be More Like
Jesus Christ



Home Gospel Tracts Topic Series Videos Prayer Request About Us Contact Us



6 Ways to Avoid Spiritual Deception...

We live in a world where spiritual deception is on the increase. 2 Timothy 3:13 says that evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse.



What is a Wilderness Experience?
August 1



6 Ways to Avoid Spiritual Deception
April 3



What is Sleep Paralysis? Is It A Result
February 13



Can Satan Read Our Minds & Thoughts...
November 27

FEATURED ARTICLES



Qualities of a Good Husband

Are you looking for a good husband? What are the qualities of a good husband? Is it money, his looks, his character or more?



Why Is God A Jealous God?

© Jan Jun 2019



If God Is Real, Why Doesn't He Reveal Himself?

© J. B. Smith, 2019



How Should A Christian Respond to Suffering?

© J. B. Smith, 2019

Language Translator

Select Language

Powered by Google Translate

CUSTOM SEARCH

Google Custom Search

Society, Culture & Sinful Lifestyles



What is The Christian View of Xenophobia?

One of the interesting facts of life is that before a person is born into the world, that person does not choose which country he/she wants to...



Why Do I Keep Sinning As A Christian?

When many people become born again Christians, there are some who wonder why they...



What Does The Bible Say About Narcissism?

Narcissism is a psychological term used to describe the condition where a person...



4 Reasons Why Abortion Is Wrong

One of the most debated issues in the world is the issue pertaining to abortion...

Emotions & Thought Life



Why Should I Not Kill Myself?

Life is a precious gift from God. However there can be times when we do not view our life as being precious, nor do we perceive our life as...



How Should A Christian Respond to Suffering?

We undoubtedly live in a world where pain and suffering is inevitable. The Bible...



What Does The Bible Say About Revenge?

How should we react or retaliate in the face of persecution, harassment, betrayal...



Why Is Life Unfair?

We've all at some point in our life have asked ourselves this question: Why is...

Bible Verse of the Day

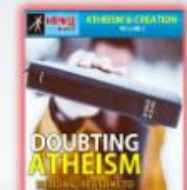
Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Hebrews 12:1

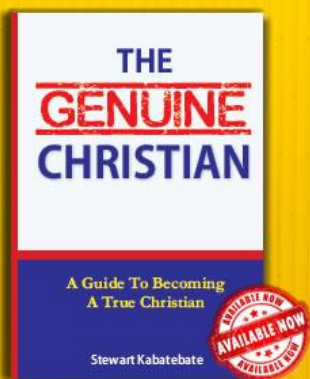
TOPIC SERIES - Free Booklets

TOPIC SERIES

Download our TOPIC Series booklets for FREE and be equipped for all areas of life



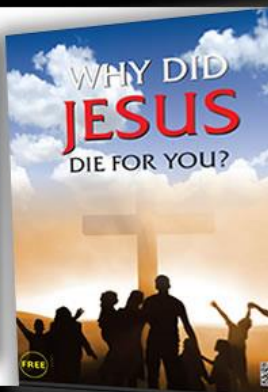
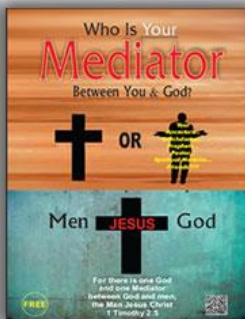
Buy Our Book Today on Amazon!



"THE GOSPEL
IS THE ONLY STORY
WHERE THE HERO
DIES FOR THE VILLAIN"



Download FREE Gospel Tracts



Download at www.inspiredwalk.com



InspiredWalk.com is an evangelical online Christian ministry founded by Stewart Kabatebate with the purpose of teaching, equipping & inspiring you to be more like Jesus Christ.

The InspiredWalk.com TOPIC SERIES aims to equip and encourage readers by providing Biblical answers to issues and questions for all areas of life.

All TOPIC SERIES EBooks are available at no cost and may be used for all purposes related to spreading the word of God from personal Bible study to small group discussions and for evangelism purposes.

Inspired Walk so far has published over 400 online answers and teachings from which most of the TOPIC SERIES articles are derived from.

For more information visit
www.inspiredwalk.com