

CHAPTER 1

God and My Problems

Problems Here, There and Everywhere!

A problem is something that must be solved. For example, in school we are given arithmetic or math problems. Some of them are easy and may be solved without much difficulty, such as this one: $13 + 7 = \underline{\quad}$. Other arithmetic problems are quite difficult to solve, and we might not even know where to begin. Sometimes we do not know the answer, and we do not even know how to find the answer!

Life is filled with problems – both easy ones and difficult ones. You might miss the school bus one day. How can you get to school? This problem is an easy one to solve. You could get there on foot, you could ride your bicycle, or you could get a ride from your mom or dad. There are many problems like this one that are easily solved. Other problems are much more difficult. There may be a person in school who is hard to get along with. How do you solve that problem? You might be sick with the flu and fall far behind in school work. How do you solve that problem? Your brother might run away from home someday. How do you solve that problem?

Some problems are difficult! We might wish that we could live in a problem-free world where nothing ever goes wrong and everything always happens as we want it to happen, but such a world would be a dream world and not the real world. What did the Lord Jesus Christ tell us to expect in the real world? (Read John 16:33 and circle the correct answer.)

- a. **Jesus said, "In the world you shall have no problems. Everything will go smoothly with no disappointments and no difficulties."**
- b. **Jesus said, "In the world you shall have tribulation (trouble, pressures, problems, difficulties)."**

On the planet Jupiter there are no problems. Why do you think this is so? Suppose we could put 100 people in a huge spaceship and transport them to Jupiter so that they could live there. Would there then be problems on the planet Jupiter? Where there are people there are problems!

Recognize That There Are Problems

The first thing we need to do is to realize that there are very real problems that each person faces. Can you think of problems with your teachers, your classmates, your studies that you are facing right now in school? Can you think of problems you are facing right now with your family members, such as your parents, brothers, sisters, relatives? Are there problems that you are now facing because of friends? (Perhaps someone who was once your friend is no longer your friend.) These are real problems that people face every day, and in addition to these, there are other problems such as...

-sickness
-loneliness
-disappointments
-unhappiness
-failure ("I didn't make the team.")
-inability to do certain things that others can do (play sports, play musical instruments, cook, sew, knit, etc.)
-discouragement
-habits which I know are not right
-guilt (being bothered by things I have done wrong)

These are very real problems and things that all people face. Should the believer expect problems and troubles and difficulties to be part of his life? Let's see what the Bible says:

1. "We are _____ on every side" (2 Corinthians 4:8). Just as you can take a balloon and squeeze it on every side, so the believer is squeezed by the pressures and problems of life.
2. "We are P _____" (2 Corinthians 4:8). We do not know how to solve our problems!
3. "M _____ are the _____ of the righteous" (Psalm 34:19). Should the believer expect many problems or few?

Can you think of any problems David had? Paul? Daniel? Moses? Joseph? Esther? The Lord Jesus Christ?

Realize That You Need Help

There are four verses in the Psalms that all say the same thing. We need to learn to say this same thing too! These verses are Psalm 40:17, Psalm 70:5, Psalm 86:1, and Psalm 109:22. The Psalmist cried out and said, "I AM _____ AND _____!" We need to realize the same thing. We have many real problems and we do not have the solutions to these problems. We are needy! We need help!

Suppose you were told that there were some packages for you at the post office. You get on your bicycle and off you go. When you arrive at the post office, you are surprised to find five large boxes that each weigh 100 pounds! The boxes are much more than you can handle! YOU NEED HELP! This is the way it is with us. Our problems are too much to handle by ourselves. WE NEED HELP!

Where Should You Go for Help?

If you cannot solve a math problem, then you must get help from someone. You must go to your teacher for help or to one of your parents or to a friend who is a good math student. You must go to someone who is able and willing to help you solve the problem.

Whom do we go to who is able and willing to help you solve life's greatest problems? "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my _____. My _____ cometh from the _____, which made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2). According to this verse, who is the One who is able to be your HELPER? _____ If God could make the heavens and the earth, do you think He has the power to help you solve the problems that you are facing right now? _____

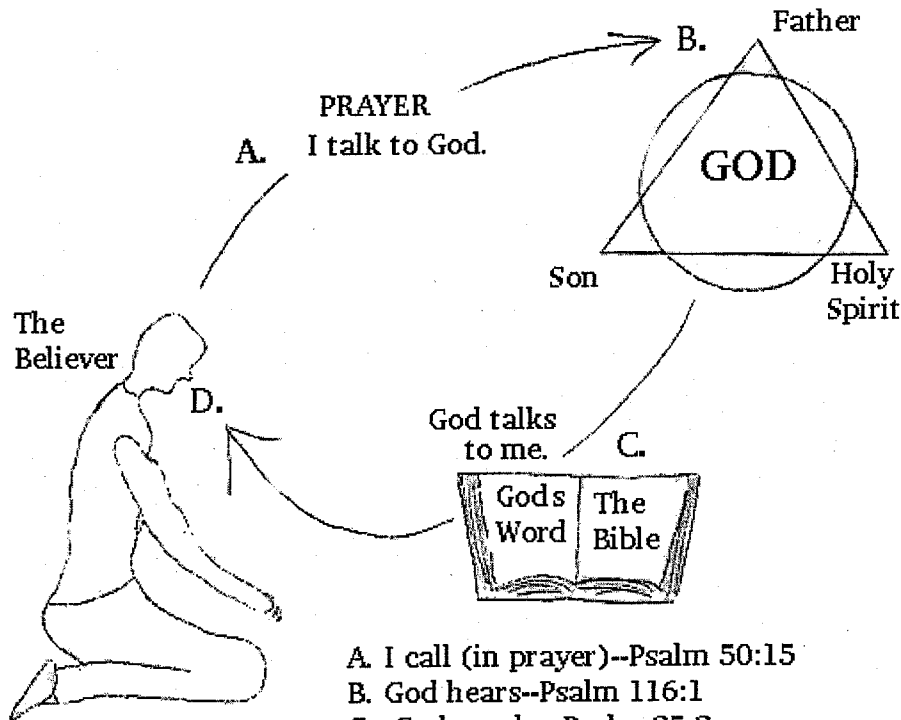
In 2 Chronicles 20:12 the children of Israel were facing a great problem which they could not solve themselves. They were being invaded by the enemy. They said, "We have no might, and we do not know what to do!" Did they look in the right direction for help? _____

Consider Psalm 25:15. The net represents one of your problems. Can you get your feet out of the net yourself, or do you need help? _____ Should our eyes be on the problem (the net), or should our eyes be on the One who can solve the problem?

WHEN should I go to God for help? Here's the answer:

1. in time of _____ (Psalm 37:39)
2. *what time* (when) I am a _____ (Psalm 56:3)
3. in time of _____ (Hebrews 4:16)

To Find Help, Start With God and His Word



- A. I call (in prayer)--Psalm 50:15
- B. God hears--Psalm 116:1
- C. God speaks--Psalm 85:8
- D. I hear--Psalm 85:8

Why Must You Go to God and His Word?

Does God have anything to say about my problems and how to solve them? Does God really know about me and the things that I face? Does God really care?

Sometimes I fail to realize how much God knows about me and about my problems. God is very familiar with me, my life, and my world. In fact, God knows me better than I know myself!

God knew all about me before I was ever born. Listen to what God said about Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:5): "Before I _____ thee in the belly I _____ thee; and before thou camest forth out of the _____ I sanctified thee." God knew all about Jeremiah even before he was in the womb of his mother!

God knows all about me even after I die. God already knows where I will spend eternity. God already knows where I will be one billion years from now! God even knows all about my death. In John 21:18-19, Jesus told Peter that he would die, and he told Peter when he would die (when thou shalt be _____) and *how* he would die (see the end of verse 18). Jesus said these things many years before they ever happened.

God already knows all about my death. He knows the exact day that I will die, and He knows how I will die. God knows me better than I know myself! Now, if God knew me before I was born and if God knows all about my death, then certainly He also knows everything that will come between my birth and my death!

Read Psalm 139:1-6. What are some of the things about me that God knows all about? Is God very familiar with my life? Does God know me quite well?

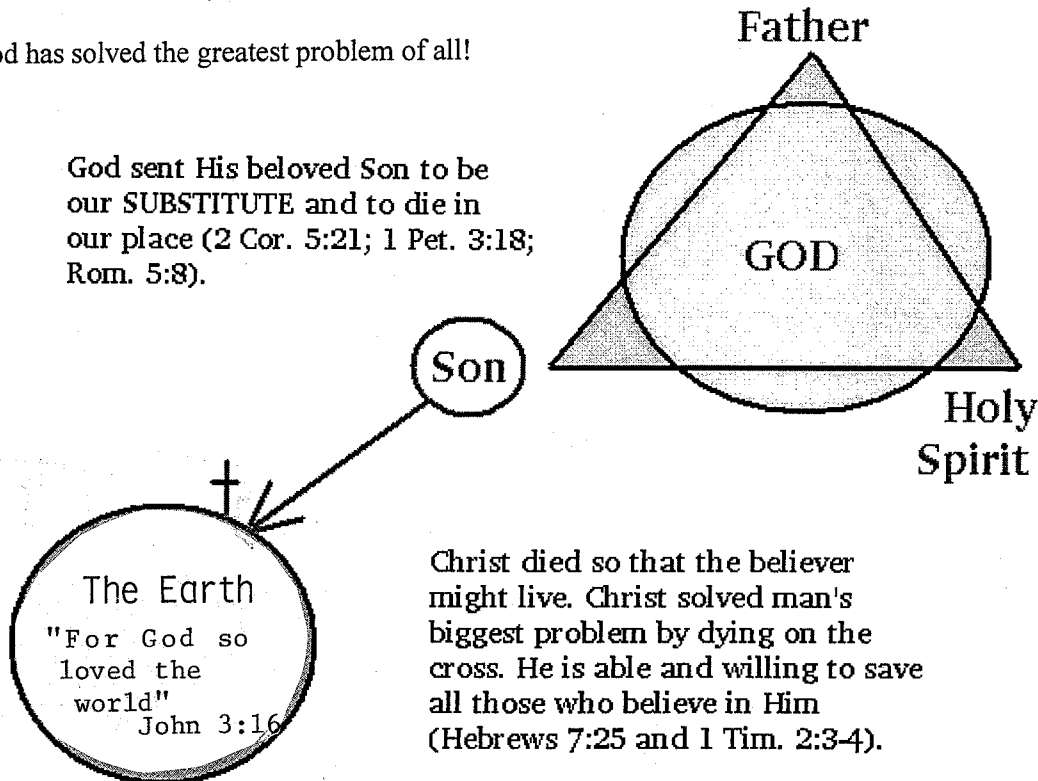
Suppose you had a broken clock. Who is the best person to fix this clock? Obviously the clock cannot fix itself; it needs help! The person who can fix it is the clockmaker, because he is the one who is the most familiar with the clock. If anyone can fix it, he can! Who is your Maker? _____ Who is the most familiar, with you? _____ Who is the One who can best fix the problems in your life? _____

God Solved the Greatest Problem of All

Man's greatest problem is this: How can a sinful person appear before the presence of a holy God? How can a holy God save an unholy sinner? How can a sinful person go to a holy heaven?

God has solved the greatest problem of all!

God sent His beloved Son to be our **SUBSTITUTE** and to die in our place (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 5:8).



Now consider Romans 8:32: "He that spared not His own _____, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us _____."

In other words, if God has solved my greatest problem (the salvation of my soul), then certainly He is able to solve all of the other problems (lesser problems) that I have as I go through life! If God can save my soul, then certainly He can also save me from the problems that I face every day!

Have you let God solve your biggest problem? Have you let God save you and forgive all your sins? Have you received Christ as your personal Saviour and Lord? See John 1:12; 3:16-18; Romans 6:23; and Romans 10:9-13.

The clockmaker cannot fix a clock that is separated from him by 100 miles. Sin separates a person from his Maker. When a person is saved, he is brought into close fellowship with God, and then God can help him solve his problems and help him in times of need.

GOD MUST BE YOUR SAVIOUR BEFORE HE CAN BE YOUR PROBLEM-SOLVER!