

## Applying Scripture to Life Important Truths in Addressing Difficult Life Issues and Sin

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1. The very first thing if you are going to help yourself or others is to ensure that you or the one you are seeking to help has surrendered their life to Christ by grace through saving faith. Only Christ can set you free from the penalty and power of sin (Eph 2:1-10; John 3:16; Rom 1:16-17; 2 Cor 5:17; Rom 6:15-23; Phil 1:6). And only then do you have the resources including freedom from sin, the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the Word of God to address difficult life issues and sin in a way that glorifies God.

<sup>4</sup>For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, yet we will live with Him because of the power of God *directed* toward you. <sup>5</sup>**Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!** Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you— unless indeed you fail the test? (2 Cor 13:4-6)

2. Regardless of the circumstances, the believer must make a decision of the will that their highest purpose is to glorify God. For the believer, the commitment to glorify God must be your greatest desire, your highest purpose, more important than anything.

To glorify God is to show His character in your motives, thoughts, words, and deeds. You glorify God when you live in a way that those around you can see God's character in you (Ex 33:17-23); when you display the life of Christ living through you (Gal 2:20).

<sup>31</sup>Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever **you do, do all to the glory of God.** (1 Cor 10:31)

<sup>20</sup>I have been crucified with Christ; and **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;** and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. (Gal 2:20)

Without this highest purpose, the one struggling will give up because they are committed to a lower, unempowering purpose.

### ❖ What is your most important and over-riding purpose?

3. The believer must walk in the Spirit.

<sup>16</sup>But I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.** <sup>17</sup>For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. . . . <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Gal 5:16-17, 22-23)

Living a consistently God glorifying life is possible only through Spirit-filling. The Christian life is not lived in the believer's own strength. It is a life lived filled with the Spirit as the life of Christ flows through you (Gal 2:20).

When a believer is submitted to God (Eph 5:18-6:9) and His Word (Col 3:16-4:1), the indwelling Holy Spirit fills (or controls) them and produces Christ-like character, heart motives, attitudes, words, and reactions. The believer in a right relationship with God will be filled with the Spirit. This is the usual, expected state of a believer.

#### ❖ **Are you consistently walking in the Spirit?**

4. The Believer must cultivate a deep understanding of God, His character, and His will through a study of His Word.

Your understanding of God and what you think about Him affects you deeply. Therefore, you must cultivate a deep understanding of who God is and what He has done for you in Christ.

God is infinitely glorious, beautiful, and great. He is unchanging, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, and sovereign. He is faithful, righteous, just, holy, loving, compassionate, forgiving, and longsuffering.

When you understand God for who He has revealed Himself to be in His Word, all other affections fall away, and you are driven to your knees in worship. Having a proper God-consciousness is critical to living a life pleasing to God. The more your thoughts are set on the things above, the more it will cultivate a heart motive to obey, please, honor, and glorify Him.

<sup>1</sup>Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, Who greatly delights in His commandments. (Psa 112:1)

<sup>11</sup>Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. (Psa 86:11)

#### ❖ **From where do you get your view of God?**

5. The believer must be actively involved in a local body.

<sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; <sup>24</sup>and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. Heb 10:23-25

Believers are united in Christ and connected to one another. The body figure illustrates the diverse-unity and interdependence that is present in the church. The body is made up of unique individuals who are united by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:27).

God has designed the church in such a way so that care can be brought to believers. The church is the major way that God brings love, edification, encouragement, admonition, comfort, etc. to believers.

In the midst of difficult life issues, believers should continue to use their spiritual gifts to serve others in the body (1 Pet 4:10). This takes the focus off their difficulty and onto others, seeing others as more important than themselves (Phil 2:3-4). The exception would be those that are walking in sin. In which case, repentance is needed first.

❖ **Are you actively involved in your local body?**

6. The believer must cultivate a biblical view of trials and suffering.

Believers with a God-centered perspective exult in tribulations knowing that God is working all things for His glory and your sanctifying good (Rom 8:28-2). The result of tribulation is perseverance, proven character, and hope – a demonstration that you are a true child of God. His perfect plan is to use hardship to display the genuineness of your faith and mature you in your relationship with Christ.

God's purposes in difficulty include testing the strength of your faith (Ex 16:4; 1 Pet 1:6-8); humbling you (2 Cor 12:7); teaching you to trust God and not in yourself (2 Cor 1:8-9); reminding you of your future glory (Rom 8:18); developing godly character and strength (Rom 5:3-5; James 1:2-4; 2 Cor 12:10); enabling you to better help others in their trials (2 Cor 1:3-4); allowing you to receive help in time of need (Heb 4:16); causing you to learn more of God's Word (Psa 119:71); and giving you opportunities for service (Phil 1:12-19).

❖ **Do you rejoice in the midst of difficult knowing God has a purpose?**

7. The believer must follow biblical methods of turning from sin.

Biblical methods of turning from sin always involve yielding to the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18; submission to the Word of God (Col 3:16), putting off sin, renewing the mind through a vibrant relationship with Christ, and putting on righteousness (Eph 4:20-24).

❖ **Are you cultivating a deep relationship with Christ through prayer and the Word?**