

## THE WORD “PROBLEM” IN THE BIBLE

Deuteronomy 1:12 ... “How can I alone bear your problems and your burdens and your complaints?”

What have you spent the most time in your life talking about? Seriously. Think about it. I have to confess that I have probably spent more time speaking (or thinking) about my problems, than any other subject. And, I have been a follower of Christ all of my fairly long life. I fully trust him. I have total faith in God. Yet, I spend too much time thinking and speaking about problems, either in my own life or the lives of others.

In the original English translation of the Bible, the King James Version, you will not find the word “problem.” Today’s verse (Deut. 1:12) is from the New King James Version. It uses the word “problems” just once, in the context of Moses complaining to Israelite tribal leaders. The New International Version, which many readers of these devotionals use, includes the word “problem” just twice (Deut. 1:12 and 5:16). Other modern versions might take liberties and use the word more often; I have not checked.

The point I’m trying to make, is that if God and the Bible’s authors thought it so unimportant to think of life in terms of problems, why do we? I am not holier than thou. I must ask myself the same question. Why do I choose to spend more time thinking and speaking about problems than I do about blessings and the good things God gives to me? Problems, burdens, and challenges are part of all of our lives. They are very real. However, God apparently thinks of them a lot less than we do. Why is that?

Perhaps because his goals for us are so much more important than the negative thoughts we allow to pull us down and cripple us. God has our problems already under his control, so why should we work ourselves into a sweat worrying about them? And, we must acknowledge, that something in our life that looks like a problem to us, does not even make God sneeze.

There is a verse in the Bible that helps us understand the under-whelming importance of the problems we face. Philippians 4:6 ... “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

I do not wish to diminish the struggles, challenges and – yes problems – that you face, perhaps every single day. But God can reduce your anxiety and give you peace through those challenges. The knowledge that God knows your needs even before you ask, and that He has a perfect solution to everything you encounter, should begin to secure your confidence in him and lower the mountains you think you must climb. All you need for God to begin chipping away at your anxiety, is trust. The more you trust God, the more he can do to quiet the storms and settle the dust in your life.

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