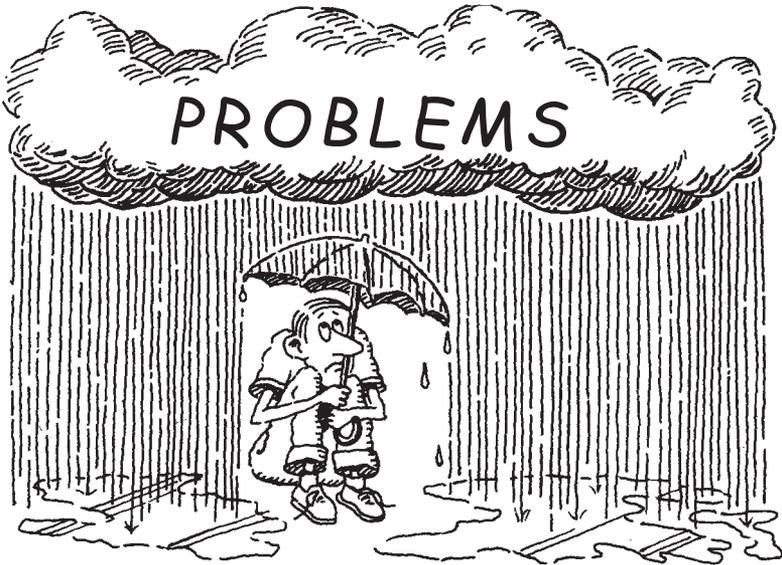


1 The Source of Problems

Just before His death on the cross, Jesus talked to His disciples about what would happen to them after He returned to heaven. One of the things He said was, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Then Jesus prayed for His disciples, “Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name . . . My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one” (John 17:11, 15).

As long as we remain in the world, we will have problems. Where do these problems come from? Is there anything we can do to prevent them from happening? Why does God allow the Christian to suffer hardships and trials?

In this lesson we will consider the source of our problems, and why we must all face problems. Understanding *why* things happen helps us to understand ways of finding solutions, or of turning our problems into opportunities to grow stronger in our Christian experience. As you study the lesson, think about problems in your own life and their source. Once you have identified the source of a problem, you are ready to consider possible solutions. Knowing the source may also help you to avoid certain problems. And that is the best solution of all.



lesson outline

- A Result of Sin
- A Result of Outside Influences
- A Result of Our Own Choices
- A Result of God's Concern for Us

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Identify the root cause of problems.
- Give an example of a problem resulting from our living in a sin-damaged world.
- State what choice men can make if they wish to avoid problems caused by personal sin.
- Identify examples of problems that result from outside influences over which you have no control.
- Explain the relationship of problems to mistakes in judgment.
- Select examples of good choices you would make even if you knew they might cause problems.

- Describe the difference between Satan's purpose in tempting us and God's purpose in testing us.
- Determine the message implied in Romans 8:17, 28-29 in relation to the problems we face.
- Explain how our trials can benefit our relationships to other people and to God.

learning activities

1. Read the introduction to this independent-study textbook and study the course objectives carefully.
2. Read the introductory section, outline, and objectives of the lesson. Look over the key words. You will find their definitions in the glossary at the end of this study guide. Be sure to find the meanings of any words that are not familiar to you.
3. As background for this lesson, read Genesis 1, 2, and 3.
4. Study the lesson development section by section, reading all Scriptures indicated and answering all study questions. Be sure you are able to fulfill the objective for each section before going on to the next section.
5. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers with those given at the end of the study guide. Review any items answered incorrectly.

key words

Understanding the key words we have listed at the beginning of each lesson will help you as you study. You will find key words listed in alphabetical order and defined in the glossary at the back of this independent-study textbook. If you are in doubt about the meaning of any of the words on the list, you may look them up now or when you come across them in your reading. Please take time to learn the definitions of any new words, since they are important to a complete understanding of this course.

benefit	immorality	priorities
capacity	interact	purified
compassion	maturing	refined
conformed	persecution	solution
disaster	perseverance	

lesson development

A RESULT OF SIN

Objective 1. *Identify the root cause of problems.*

Adam's Sin

Adam and Eve were created as perfect human beings in a perfect world (Genesis 2). They had perfect fellowship with God and they had no problems. But God gave them the power to *choose* to obey and serve Him.

There was an evil influence in the world which was Satan, whom Jesus called “the evil one” (John 17:15). He was in the garden of Eden in the form of a serpent. The Bible does not tell us how he got there, but we read in Genesis 3 how the serpent (Satan) used his evil influence to tempt Adam and Eve to disobey God. Their disobedience brought a curse upon the whole earth. The earth and all humanity were damaged by this sin. This was the beginning of pain, suffering, hardships, disasters, and hard work.

Application

- 1 Which of these statements best summarizes what we have just discussed concerning the source or root of our problems?
- a) Satan is the cause of all of our problems.
 - b) The sin of Adam and Eve is the source of all of our problems.
 - c) Satan's evil influence and man's disobedience brought a curse upon the whole earth and were the beginning of problems.
-

A Sin-Damaged World

Objective 2. *Give an example of a problem resulting from our living in a sin-damaged world.*

Genesis chapter 3, verses 16-19, records the curse which came upon the earth as a result of sin. It is as a result of this curse that we grow old and die. Because of sin, the earth is imperfect, and there are disasters such as famine, floods, and earthquakes. Because of sin, we must struggle against wind

and storm and wild beasts and insects to provide food for our nourishment. Even though we are not all farmers, our existence depends upon this provision. Because of sin, some children are born with brain damage, or crippled limbs, or disease.

Application

2 Consider the area where you live. Can you give an example of some problem you have seen or faced which was a result of the sin-damaged world?

.....
.....



Our Own Sinful Nature

Objective 3. *State what choice men can make if they wish to avoid problems caused by personal sin.*

You've probably heard the story of the little boy who was caught misbehaving. When his mother asked him why he did it, he replied, "The devil made me do it!" It's easy to blame all our problems on the devil (Satan), but the truth is that many of our problems are a result of our own sinful nature.

We are given the power to choose to obey God or not to obey Him. When we sin, it is a matter of personal choice and we are personally responsible for our sin. In Romans 5:12, we read these words: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. . . ."

Application

3 Read Isaiah 53:6, Isaiah 64:6, Proverbs 20:9, Romans 3:23, and 1 John 1:8. Which of the following statements best summarizes the message repeated in these Scriptures?

- a) Some men are more sinful than others.
- b) Adam is responsible for our own sinful nature.
- c) All men are born with a sinful nature, and all are guilty of personal sin.



These Scriptures make it clear that each of us is born with a capacity to sin, and we are all accountable for our own choices to do good or evil. Many of our problems are a result of sinful acts that we have committed, careless words we have spoken, or sinful attitudes such as willfulness, selfishness, greed, jealousy, or wrong priorities.

The Bible records one instance where Jesus healed a man who had been sick for a long time. Later, Jesus found the man in the temple, and gave him this advice: “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you” (John 5:14). Apparently in this instance it was the man’s sin which caused his illness.

People who abuse their bodies by using harmful drugs or tobacco, by excessive eating or drinking, by immorality, or by other sinful acts may have severe physical problems as a result. When we sin by disobeying God and His Word, we can bring many problems upon ourselves, such as broken homes, broken relationships, sorrow, suffering, sickness, or even death. Romans 6:23 reminds us that “the wages of sin is death.” This speaks not only of physical death, but also of spiritual death, which is eternal separation from God.

The way we respond to problems can sometimes create additional problems. A bad attitude or a complaining spirit are sinful responses to our circumstances. When this happens, our problems can defeat us and cause us to lose fellowship with God. As we will see later in this course, a positive attitude will help us to turn our problems into victories, and the result will be spiritual growth.

Application

4 What can we do to avoid problems caused by our personal sin?

.....



It would be a mistake to imply that it is possible in this life to avoid all sin-related problems by living a perfect life free from sin. Your own experience will tell you that, try as you may, you are not perfect, and even though you may be gaining victories over sin, your old sinful nature may sometimes cause you to fail. Thus,

from time to time you may have problems resulting from your own failings. But the wonderful truth is that even when we sin God still loves us, and He will help us to find solutions to all of our problems when we confess our sins and call upon Him for help.

In later lessons we will look at specific examples of how sin causes problems, and what we can do to avoid or overcome such problems.

A RESULT OF OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

Objective 4. *Identify examples of problems that result from outside influences over which you have no control.*

We have seen that human problems result from sin. Because of sin we live in a damaged world. Sin brought a curse upon the whole world, and Satan's influence in the world has brought chaos, confusion, trouble, and despair. All men are born with a sinful nature (Romans 3:23).

Does this mean, then, that our problems are always caused by our personal sin? Of course not! Many problems which we face are caused by forces completely outside our control. What are some of these forces?

Natural Disasters

When the British *Titanic* was built in 1912, it was the largest ship in the world. Experts said the ship was unsinkable. But on the night of April 14, 1912, it struck an iceberg and sank during its first voyage from England to America. About 1500 of its 2200 passengers died before they could be rescued. No one could have imagined that an iceberg would tear such a hole in the ship that it would sink within two and one-half hours.

Think of all the problems caused by this disaster! No doubt there were many Christians who lost loved ones in this accident. The resulting problems of grief, pain, suffering, and dealing with the aftereffects of this event cannot be attributed to the personal sin of any one person. They were simply the result of a natural disaster.

Possibly you have been the victim of a disaster such as a flood, an earthquake, a hurricane, or a famine. Or perhaps you have experienced problems within your family such as sickness,

death, mental disorders, financial difficulties, or other situations over which you have no control. Certainly the root cause of these problems is the curse that came upon the earth as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. But they were not the result of personal sin. The Bible makes it clear that godly Christians as well as sinful unbelievers may encounter problems simply because we live in a world cursed by sin.

Application

5 Read Matthew 24:4-9. Jesus describes in this passage what the believer can expect as Christ's second coming approaches. What disasters beyond the control of the believer are mentioned here?

.....

Actions of Other People

In a time of economic depression businesses fail and many people lose their jobs. This might happen to you through no fault of your own. Your employer may decide to transfer you to another location of work, creating problems for your entire family. Someone driving an automobile may overlook a stop sign and strike your automobile, causing damage and injury. A neighbor may misunderstand some activity of yours, and accuse you unjustly of wrongdoing. An enemy of your country may declare war and you might be required to defend your country in battle. You may be the victim of a crime. These are all examples of problems, large or small, which come our way as a result of decisions or actions of others which are entirely outside of our control.



Because it is the nature of people to interact with one another, our own happiness and welfare sometimes depend upon the choices other people make. Much attention will be given in this course to problem solving as it relates to our relationships with others, and our reactions to problems which we face as a result of choices made by others.

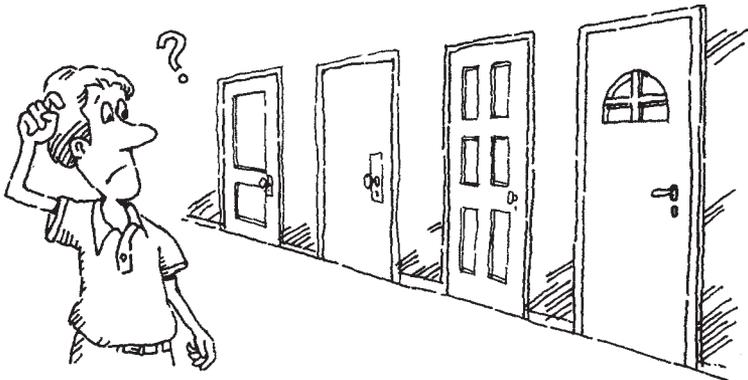
Application

- 6** Analyze the following situations, and put a circle around the letter in front of those which would be caused by forces outside your control.
- a** A loved one dies in an airplane crash.
 - b** You plant your crops late and they do not grow.
 - c** Your home is broken into by a thief and you are robbed.
 - d** You accidentally leave your wallet on the counter in the meat market, and it is stolen.
 - e** Your boss dismisses you because you have a habit of arriving late for work.
 - f** An earthquake damages your home and you are injured.
 - g** You lose your job because of a serious illness.
-

A RESULT OF OUR OWN CHOICES

Mistakes in Judgment

Objective 5. *Explain the relationship of problems to mistakes in judgment.*



“If only I had driven a little slower, the accident wouldn’t have happened!”

“If I had been more careful, I wouldn’t have slipped and fallen!”

“If I had known all the facts, I would have made a better decision!”

Have you ever caught yourself making statements like these, after something you did created a problem for you? As we go about our activities we must make many choices. Some of them have good results, and we are pleased. Others may be poor choices, and they cause problems. They are not necessarily sinful choices, but may be caused by carelessness, or ignorance, or mixed-up priorities. Or perhaps they *were* carefully thought out, we made a decision that we considered the best possible one, and the result was not what we expected. Because we do not have perfect wisdom, we are bound to make mistakes from time to time. Even though there may be no *sin* involved in this kind of situation, we must deal with the problem that develops from it.

When a child is learning to walk, he stumbles and falls many times in the process. But he learns from experience how to prevent the falls, until he has gained full control of his movements and is able to walk without falling. In the same way, we *do* learn from our mistakes to pay more attention, to exercise greater care in the choices we make. This is part of our maturing process.

Application

7 How can our problems sometimes be related to mistakes in judgment?

.....
.....

8 When we cause a problem for ourselves through a mistake in judgment, what can we learn from the situation?

.....
.....



Carefully Considered Choices

Objective 6. *Select examples of good choices you would make even if you knew they might cause problems.*

Not all choices which cause problems are bad choices. We sometimes make choices which we know are good and right, even though we also know they may cause problems.

There are many biblical examples of this kind of choice. In Daniel 3 we read the story of the three young Hebrew men who chose *not* to bow down and worship a golden image of the king, even though their decision meant certain death. When the king heard of their refusal he was very angry, and asked them to explain. Here is their reply:

O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. *But even if he does not*, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up (Daniel 3:16-18).

In this instance God *did* rescue them from death as a witness of his power. But these three men would have chosen death rather than disobey God!

Throughout his ministry, the apostle Paul chose to preach the gospel even though it brought persecution. Once he was preaching in Lystre and the crowd became so angered that it stoned him and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead (Acts 14:19).

Application

9 Read Acts 14:20-21. What was Paul's next action after he had been stoned and left for dead?

.....

10 What were Paul's words to the other disciples there (Acts 14:22)?

.....

.....

Paul's choice to preach the gospel even if it meant persecution finally resulted in his being thrown into prison for a long period of time. Finally, he was put to death by those who hated the gospel. What an inspiration his words in Philippians 1:12-14 are to us:

Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

Church history provides many examples of Christians who chose to suffer and die rather than give up their Christian testimony. And there are examples of missionaries like Jim Elliot, who died at the hands of the Auca Indians, a primitive tribe in South America to whom he had gone with the gospel. His choice is made clear in these words which he wrote shortly before his death:

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

Jim Elliot was willing to choose eternal values rather than the more immediate benefits of earthly values. As a result of Jim's death, his wife, Elizabeth, was able to approach the Auca tribe along with Rachel Saint, whose brother, Nate, also was martyred with Jim Elliot. Many of the members of the tribe have accepted Christ as their personal Savior through the witness of these two dedicated women.

Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life (John 12:24-25).

Application

11 Which of the following would you consider to be a good choice even though it might cause problems? Circle the letter in front of each statement you choose.

- a** You choose to protect a friend who has committed a crime, by stating that he was with you at the time the crime took place.
 - b** You choose to end a relationship that might lead to your marriage to an unbeliever, even though you love the person very much.
 - c** You choose to work every Sunday, rather than ask your employer to allow you time to go to church.
 - d** You choose to bow your head before eating and thank God for your food, even in the presence of unbelievers who may ridicule you.
 - e** You make a decision without knowing all the important facts.
-

A RESULT OF GOD'S CONCERN FOR US

Objective 7. *Describe the difference between Satan's purpose in tempting us and God's purpose in testing us.*

Why would a good God allow His people to suffer? If He really cares about us, why doesn't He rescue us from all our problems? Have you ever asked questions like this when your trials seem more than you can bear?

God does sometimes rescue us from our trials. We have seen how He rescued the three Hebrew men from the fiery furnace. Possibly you have experienced a miraculous healing, or God has provided in some other unexpected or unexplainable way to meet your needs. We rejoice when this happens, yet we know that at times God allows suffering. He does not do this because He takes pleasure in our suffering, but because He is concerned for us, and His concern goes beyond our momentary trial. Let's look at some reasons why He allows us to experience problems.

To Purify Us and Prove Our Faith

A story is told of a railroad bridge which became old and weak. It was in danger of collapse if a train passed over it, so the railroad

company rebuilt it completely to make it safe and strong. When the work was completed, a dedication ceremony was announced to the entire community. The high point of the ceremony came when two trains crossed the bridge at the same time. Were the officials trying to make the bridge fall? No, they were sure it would not. Their purpose was to prove to the community that the bridge was now very strong and would not fall under pressure.

There is a very important point here. Does God tempt us? No! Does He test us? Yes! There is a great difference between *tempting* someone to do evil, and *testing* something to show its fine quality.

Application

12 Read James 1:2-4 and 12-17, then answer these questions:

- a** How is a Christian supposed to face his trials?
- b** Why is he to have this attitude?.....
.....
- c** Does God tempt us to do evil?
- d** Who is responsible for the evil that we do? (See also John 17:15.)
.....
.....



There is a reason why we are told to be joyful even in times of trial. Nehemiah 8:10 gives us the reason: “Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” It is our joy in the Lord that gives us the strength to persevere and win the victory over our problems.

Application

13 Now read 1 Peter 1:6-7. This Scripture also tells us to rejoice even though we have to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. What is the purpose of these trials?

.....
.....



Peter points out in this Scripture that gold is tested and purified or refined by putting it in the fire, but it can be destroyed. Our faith is of far greater value than gold, because it has eternal value, and it is purified or refined by the trials we go through.

Even as God allows us to be tested, He has promised to be with us. In 1 Corinthians 10:13 we discover these things:

1. God will not allow us to be tested beyond our power to remain firm (persevere, be faithful).
2. He will give us the strength to endure our trials.
3. He will provide us with a way to escape our trials (the solution).

Application

14 Based on these Scriptures, explain the following:

a What is Satan's purpose in tempting us?

.....

b What is God's purpose in testing us?

.....



To Form The Image of Christ in Us

Objective 8. *Determine the message implied in Romans 8:17, 28-29 in relation to the problems we face.*

God's desire for you and me is that we should become like Jesus. This life is a preparation for our eternal life in heaven, and God is interested in helping us to mature in our Christian experience so that we become more and more like Christ. If we approach our problems with the right attitude, He will use them for our good, to develop in us the characteristics of Christ.

I remember two women who each had to care for a dying relative over a long period of time. One of the women became a bitter, complaining person who felt sorry for herself. No one wanted to be around her. The other woman, though her problems were just as difficult to bear, became a patient, loving person and a testimony of the grace of God to give strength and joy even

in times of difficulty. She turned her problem into a victory by allowing it to form the character of Christ in her.

Application

15 Read Romans 8:17, 28-29, then select the statements which correctly express the message implied in these verses.

- a** If we love God, He will allow only good things to happen to us.
 - b** Those who love the Lord and have faith in Him to direct them will benefit spiritually from the trials they go through.
 - c** Part of the process of being conformed in the image of Christ is to share in His sufferings.
 - d** God's purpose in working for good in the things that happen to us is to make us like His Son.
-

Paul expresses this very beautifully in 2 Corinthians 4:7-10:

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

It is God's power in us that makes it possible for us to bear our burdens without being crushed, or in despair, or destroyed. And the purpose is that Jesus might be revealed in us! What a glorious victory!

To Enable Us to Help Others

Objective 9. *Explain how our trials can benefit our relationships to other people and to God.*

Another reason God allows us to endure hardships is to help us respond better to the needs of others. The person who has been lonely can reach out to others who are lonely. A parent whose child has suffered has greater compassion for other parents whose children are suffering. We identify with those who have experienced the same trials we have had. Our own testimony of God's strength and blessing as we experienced difficulty will help another person to look to Him and not despair.

The apostle Paul expressed this in 2 Corinthians 1:34:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

Application

- 16** Choose the correct answer. This Scripture shows us that
- God purposely brings trials upon us so that we will be able to help others who have the same trials.
 - God is concerned for us in our suffering, and He wants us to have the same concern for others.
-

To Teach Us to Lean on Him

I have heard many Christians express the feeling that a burden they were bearing would have been impossible to bear alone, but they were aware of God's strength and help in the trial. In 1 Peter 5:7 this is emphasized: "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

The apostle Paul recognized this benefit of suffering. Here are his words in 2 Corinthians 1:8-10:

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us.

Paul had learned that he could depend on God not only in past trials, but in future times of difficulty also.

Application

17 Compare 2 Corinthians 1:8-10 with 1 Corinthians 10:13. What truth is emphasized in both of these Scriptures?

.....

.....

18 How can trials benefit our relationships to other people and to God?

.....

.....

19 As a final exercise in this lesson, take time to make a list of problems you are facing right now. Then look over the lesson and see if you can identify the source of each problem. List the source next to each problem. Then as we go to the next lesson you will begin to see ways of finding solutions to your problems.



In this lesson we have studied the source of problems. We have seen that the presence of evil in the world is the root of our problems. But we can turn our problems into victories by allowing God to work good for us through them, perfecting us into the image of Christ and making us more useful servants of God.

In our next lesson we will look at the Christian approach to problem solving, and the resources God has given us to deal with our problems in a positive way, so that His name is glorified in everything we do.

self-test

After you have reviewed this lesson, take the self-test. Then check your answers with those given in your student report. Review any questions you answered incorrectly.

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one best answer to each question.

- 1 Until they disobeyed God, Adam and Eve had no
 - a) choices.
 - b) problems.
 - c) communion with God.
 - d) judgment.
- 2 We can avoid problems caused by personal sin by
 - a) obedience to God and His Word.
 - b) doing what feels right to us.
 - c) following Adam's example.
- 3 The Bible tells us that we will receive divine strength when we face our problems with
 - a) fear.
 - b) sorrow.
 - c) determination.
 - d) joy.
- 4 It is Satan's desire to
 - a) help us.
 - b) test us.
 - c) tempt us.
 - d) refine us.
- 5 Which of these statements is correct?
 - a) All men are guilty of personal sin.
 - b) We are sinners only because of Adam's sin.
 - c) We are not personally responsible when we sin, because Satan tempts us to sin.
 - d) Some men are sinners by birth, while others are born Christians because their parents are Christians.
- 6 When something happens which causes a problem, we should first of all be careful about
 - a) wrong reactions.
 - b) what other people will think.
 - c) our own well-being.

- 7 The apostle Paul and Jim Elliot are testimonies to us that our greatest concern should be
- a) personal happiness.
 - b) eternal values.
 - c) avoiding problems.
 - d) meeting our present needs.
- 8 To *persevere* means to
- a) avoid problems.
 - b) continue with your purpose and don't give up.
 - c) solve your problems by your own efforts.
 - d) give in to Satan's temptation.
- 9 Which of these is NOT God's purpose in testing us?
- a) Make us more like Christ.
 - b) Refine us.
 - c) Tempt us to do evil.
 - d) Purify us.

10 MATCHING. How would you identify the source of each of these problems? Write the letter of your choice in the blank space in front of each problem stated.

- | | | |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a | “I thought I was doing the right thing when I refused that job, but now I see that I should have taken it, because my employer is closing his business.” | 1) Sin-damaged world |
| b | “While I was sick, I began to realize I had been neglecting my personal time of prayer and Bible study.” | 2) Personal sin |
| c | “He had an accident while driving under the influence of alcohol.” | 3) Outside influence |
| d | “I need a new coat for winter, but I used my savings to help purchase Bibles for a missionary project.” | 4) Mistaken judgment |
| e | “He cheated while taking the exam, and was not permitted to continue the class.” | 5) Carefully considered choice |
| f | “There was an earthquake in my village and many people lost their lives.” | 6) God’s dealing with us |
| g | “The whole village has suffered from an epidemic of cholera and many people have died.” | |

answers to study questions

These answers have been mixed so that you will not accidentally see the answer to the next question before you write your own response. Please do not look ahead, but write your own answer to each question before comparing it with the one we have given. This will help you to remember what you have studied.

10 “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.”

1 c) Satan’s evil influence and man’s disobedience brought a curse upon the whole earth and were the beginning of problems.

11 Answer b is a good choice, even though it might cause you to suffer, because it is made in obedience to God’s Word. (We will discuss this further in another lesson.) Answer d is also a good choice because it glorifies God and is a testimony of your love for Him. Answers a and c are wrong choices, because answer a involves dishonesty and answer c involves disobedience to God’s Word. Answer e is a wrong choice because it is based on mistaken judgment.

2 Your answer. An example in my area is that certain trees are dying because they have been overcome by insects.

12 a With joy.

b So that he will develop perseverance, which leads to spiritual maturity. (*Perseverance* means “to continue with a purpose or aim, never giving up.” For the Christian, it means continuing in his Christian experience, being faithful, whatever the cost.)

c No, never!

d We are enticed (tempted) by Satan, and we give in to our own evil desires.

3 c) All men are born with a sinful nature, and all are guilty of personal sin.

13 To test our faith, so that it may be proved genuine.

4 Obey God and His Word.

14 a To cause us to do evil, to fall.

b To cause us to persevere, to prove that our faith is genuine (real).

5 Wars, famines, earthquakes, persecution, death.

- 15** a False.
b True.
c True.
d True.
- 6** Based on the evidence given, I would circle a, c, f, and g. There seems to be some personal responsibility indicated in answers b, d, and e.
- 16** b) God is concerned for us in our suffering, and He wants us to have the same concern for others. This is one of the ways God brings good out of a situation that seemingly has no good in it.
- 7** Careless or unwise choices can result in problems.
- 17** God will not give us more trials than we can bear.
- 8** Your answer. We can learn to exercise greater care in the choices we make.
- 18** As we experience trials we become more compassionate to others who are going through similar trials. We also turn to God for help and learn to trust Him more.
- 9** He got up and went to the next town (Derbe) where he continued to preach the good news about Christ
- 19** Your answer.

For Your Notes
