

Title: WHY GOD PERMITS PROBLEMS

Text: Psalms 119:71-72

Intro: How many of us have not heard some people make these following complaints – *“Someone cheated me.” “I got laid off work.” “A storm destroyed my house.” “My husband left me for another woman.” “My wife spent all the money while I was overseas.” “I was diagnosed with cancer.” “I have a disability.” “I am gay.” “I didn’t ask for this.” “I don’t deserve any of this.” “Life is so unfair!” “God, why me?”*

Unfortunately, most people including Christians find it hard to believe how God wants to use problems for good in their lives. Unlike the Psalmist, people react foolishly and resent their problems rather than pausing to consider what possible benefit problems could bring. The problems you face will either MAKE or BREAK you, DEFEAT or DEVELOP you – depending on how you respond to them. Problems can either become STEPPING STONES or STUMBLING BLOCKS based on how you face them. Here are five reasons why God may have permitted some problems in your life –

1. God permits problems to CORRECT YOU. It’s likely that as a child your parents told you not to touch a hot stove. But you probably learned the hard way by being stubborn and burned. Sometimes we only learn the value of something like health, time, money, a relationship after losing it! (**Psa. 119:71-72**) Problems are used by God to reveal our weaknesses and keep us humble.

2. God permits problems to DIRECT YOU. Due to your stubbornness, God must blister you with hot coal to get you moving. Problems often point us in a new direction and motivate us to change. Is God allowing this situation to get your attention? Sometimes we are too proud, or too busy, or too lazy to learn a lesson from God that it takes a painful or tragic situation to make us change our ways! (**Prov. 20:30**)

3. God permits problems to INSPECT YOU. People are like tea bags ... if you want to know what’s inside them, just drop them into hot water! Has God tested your faith by

allowing a problem or two into your life? What do problems reveal about you? The greatness of a man is measured not only by his attitude in good times but better yet in bad times (**Jas. 1:2-3**). It is problems and how people face them that separates the mature from the immature, the strong from the weak, the spiritual from the carnal. It is the refining fire of God's furnace that purifies and makes gold so precious!

4. God permits problems to PROTECT YOU. Problems could be blessings in disguise if they prevent you from being harmed by something more serious. I know a man who was forced to resign his marketing managerial position in 1988 when he refused to do something unethical that his boss had asked him to do. For 13 months he was unemployed but used the same time to preach and teach the word of God in home Bible studies. As a family man His unemployment was a problem but it saved him from compromise and evil. In 1989 his former company went bankrupt but the man found a better job in the Office of the President (**Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28**). You are listening to that man right now!!

5. God permits problems to PERFECT YOU. Problems, when properly addressed, are great character builders. God is more interested in our CHARACTER than our COMFORT. Our relationship to God and our character are two things you're going to take with you in eternity. We can still rejoice when we run into problems. They help us learn to be patient. Patience develops inner strength of character and helps us trust God more each time we use it (**Rom. 5:3-4**).

Conclusion: It is a negative reality of life that problems are here to stay. Every person has had a problem in the past, has a problem in the present, and will have a problem in the future. There are only three people without problems here on earth: (1) the LIAR, (2) the MAD, and (3) the DEAD!

Always remember dear Christian brethren, God is still at work in our lives even when we don't realize or understand it. But then it's much easier and profitable when you and I cooperate with the Lord instead (**Heb. 12:9-11**). Amen!!