

EIGHT PRACTICAL, EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND LESSONS  
SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR YOU

# WE ALL HAVE ~~PROBLEMS~~

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ROGER HERNANDEZ

REAL PROBLEMS. REAL SOLUTIONS. REAL GOD.



This resource is brought to you for by:

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and

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# HOW TO USE THE LESSONS

## 1. Purpose:

These lessons are intended to help you understand, deal with, and overcome life's hurts, hang-ups, and negative habits, and to bring you hope and healing.

## 2. The Lessons:

Each lesson contains four parts, based on the acronym **H-O-P-E**:

**Hear**—We start with a relevant introductory thought, quote, story, or scripture. Read it carefully.

**Open**—This part focuses specifically on opening the Bible and gleaning what the Word of God has to say about that lesson's topic. Some of the questions are the fill-in-the-blank type. Feel free to write in, mark up, and underline key thoughts.

**Practice**—In this part of the lesson, you turn your knowledge about an issue into practical ideas on how to implement it in your life. The truth is, many of us are educated well above our level of obedience, so if you are only reading and not applying, these lessons will be only partially successful. Each day you will have three practical suggestions.

**Empower**—This section ends the lesson. It answers the "what's next?" question. It also connects that lesson with something called the gospel (good news). You'll be called on to answer, What is the good news in this lesson? What can I do with this information this week? How can my life be changed for the better as a result?

## 3. Small-group study or personal study:

This resource is Part 1 of a three-part series. Eight lessons are included here, enough for one per week for a small group. The lessons can be studied in homes, workplaces, during church services, or wherever God leads you. They are simple, easy, and very practical. The lesson should take around 30 minutes to complete.

## 4. What to aim for:

### Remember these axioms as you study:

Done over perfect

Progress over perfection

Enjoy the lessons. Engage them with an open mind and open heart, and pray that God will lead you into His truth about Himself and you.

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# TROUBLE

## WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

### LESSON 1

#### HEAR

Someone has said that *"peace is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of God."* In today's lesson we will learn how to react and act when trouble arises in our life. The reality of both problems and blessings is that they often come into our lives unannounced. Let's search together for solutions to the troubles in our lives.

#### OPEN

**1.** What two characteristics define our human existence, according to Job?

*"How frail is humanity! How short is life, how full of trouble!" (Job 14:1, NLT).*

Life is \_\_\_\_\_

Life is full of \_\_\_\_\_

## TROUBLE WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

**2.** The Bible mentions several areas where we may be experiencing trouble. What are they?

- Trouble in relationships because of lack or need.  
Read **Proverbs 19:4, 7**.
- Trouble because of other people's attacks.  
Read **Psalm 25:19**.
- Trouble because of our own poor choices or sin.  
Read **Psalm 38:18**.

Of these three causes of trouble, which one would you say is presently affecting you?

**3.** Instead of spending your life concentrated on worry about your problems, what better option does Scripture suggest we take? Read **Philippians 4:6**. \_\_\_\_\_

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**4.** Paul, the author of several books of the Bible, had his share of difficult situations. Even though he was troubled by his circumstances, what did he experience in the midst of his pain? Read **2 Corinthians 7:4**. \_\_\_\_\_

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**5.** Read **Romans 8:35–37**. List at least four things that the Bible guarantees cannot separate you from God and His love:

_____	_____
_____	_____

### PRACTICE

If and when you experience trouble, remember to apply the following principles to your life.

- 1.** Pray about it.  
*"I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble" (Psalm 142:2, NIV).*
-



## TROUBLE WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

You don't have to carry your burden alone. You don't need to feel as though you are fighting by yourself. What problem can we pray for right now? You can write it here if you wish:

God, please help me with

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### 2. Don't worry about it.

*"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own"* (**Matthew 6:34**, NIV).

#### **Why? Let me give you three reasons:**

- Worry doesn't make sense. If you can fix it, do it. If you can't, worrying won't make a difference.
- Worry doesn't make it better. Worry makes it bigger.
- Worry doesn't increase your faith. By worrying, you minimize God's power and increase your anxiety level.

### 3. Trust God to help you through it.

God uses a three-pronged method to deal with our troubles:

**a.** He delivers us from trouble. *"Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress"* (**Psalms 107:6**, NIV).

**b.** He comforts us in trouble. *". . . who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God"* (**2 Corinthians 1:4**, NIV).

**c.** He will eventually eliminate all trouble. *". . . and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels"* (**2 Thessalonians 1:7**, NIV).

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**EMPOWER****My decision today:**

With God's help I will seek to worry less, pray more, and trust completely. I will make my requests known to God and will wait on His response. The good news is that God is bigger than any of my problems and that He cares for me and about me. He is for me!

# CONNECTION

## WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

### LESSON 2

#### HEAR

*"Do not make prayer a monologue—make it a conversation."*

Kid's prayers are the best. Before we go on to our study, let's read three short ones that will put a smile on your face.

A mother was teaching her three-year-old the Lord's Prayer. For several evenings at bedtime, the child repeated it after her mother. One night she said she was ready to go solo. The mother listened with pride as her child carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer. *"Lead us not into temptation,"* she prayed, *"but deliver us some email, amen."*

A daddy was listening to his child say his prayer. *"Dear Harold,"* he said. At this, Dad interrupted and said, *"Wait a minute. How come you called God, Harold?"* The little boy

looked up and said, *“That’s what they call Him in church. You know the prayer we say: ‘Our Father, who art in heaven, Harold be Thy name.’ ”*

A little boy’s prayer: *“Dear God, please take care of my daddy and my mommy and my sister and my brother and my doggy and me. Oh, please take care of Yourself, God. If anything happens to You, we’re gonna be in a big mess.”*

### OPEN

1. What important question did the disciples ask Jesus?

Read **Luke 11:1**.

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2. The Lord’s Prayer is a classic prayer found in **Mathew 6:9–13**. Read it now. What are the first two words?

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Why do you think God wants us to see him as a Father? Is it easy or difficult to picture God as a Father? Why?

3. Let’s look together at four characteristics of effective prayer.

a. Prayer is best when it’s honest.

Read **1 Samuel 1:10**.

b. Prayer admits our weaknesses and protects us in temptation. Read **Matthew 26:41**.

c. Prayer works best when it’s accompanied with actions. Read **2 Chronicles 7:14**.

d. Prayer is more powerful when we seek God, not just what He can do for us. Read **Psalms 66:20**.

4. What hinders the effectiveness of prayer?

Read **Mark 11:25**.

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## CONNECTION WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

**5.** It is important to ask God for what we need. What else should we do as we pray? Read **Philippians 4:6**.

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### PRACTICE

Now comes the time for practice. You may choose to do these prayers now or later by yourself. We can learn these principles together.

God encourages us to . . .

#### 1. Be balanced.

Prayer that is effective looks three ways:

**a.** Prayer looks up. We focus on God and what He is.

- Read **2 Corinthians 9:8**. God is

\_\_\_\_\_.

- Read **1 John 5:14**. God is

\_\_\_\_\_.

- Read **Deuteronomy 4:31**. God is

\_\_\_\_\_.

When we focus on God, our perspective changes.

**b.** Prayer looks in. We recognize, confess, and address our sin and shortcomings. Read **Psalms 38:18**.

**c.** Prayer looks around. We seek to bless others and pray to God on their behalf. Read **James 5:15**.

#### 2. Be careful.

One of the most important principles you will learn today is this: prayer is seeking God, not just for what He can do for you. He is not a means to an end, even though He is our provider. When you pray, seek Him and not just His blessings.

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**3. Be bold.**

Read Hebrews 4:16. This passage tells us that as God's children we can go to Him without fear. Don't say no to yourself by failing to ask God. Pray according to His will and in Jesus' name, and let Him decide what is best for you.

**EMPOWER****My decision today:**

This week I commit to pray. I will use the three-pronged approach to prayer: I will look up and focus on God first. Then I will look at myself honestly and address what needs to change within. And finally, as a grateful response to His grace, I will pray and help others.

My text for the week: *"Whenever they were in trouble and turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and sought him out, they found him"* (**2 Chronicles 15:4**, NLT). I understand that God accepts and hears my prayer not because of who prays but because He loves that I pray. As I decide to develop my relationship with God through prayer, I understand that the good news is that God hears me and loves to talk to me, no matter what I have done or who I am.

# PRIORITIES

## WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

### LESSON 3

#### HEAR

*"As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!'*

*'Martha, Martha,' the Lord answered, 'you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.' "* **(Luke 10:38-42, NIV).**

**OPEN**

**1.** Who showed up at Martha's house? Read **Luke 10:38**.  
(**Clue:** It's more than one person!)

**2.** Describe Martha's emotions. Write at least three of them here.

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**3.** The name Martha means "*Is becoming bitter.*" Why do you think Jesus mentions her name twice? What could be making her bitter?

**4.** As you look at Martha's attitude, how do you imagine her talking to Jesus in verse **40**?

**5.** Jesus told Martha that Mary had "*chosen*" what was better. How hard is it for you to take time out to spend with Jesus?

**PRACTICE**

In order to refocus your life, you must make the following three decisions daily.

**1.** Choose the important over the urgent. Mary chose the important, while Martha chose the urgent. Beware of the "*tyranny of the urgent*" that seeks to divert you from concentrating on the important issues in life, like God, family, and personal growth. What are one or two urgent things you keep doing that keep you away from the important ones?

**2.** Choose the best over the good. The most difficult decision for a Christian is not the choice between good and bad; it's between good and better. In what areas of your life are you settling for good enough?

**3.** Choose the permanent over the temporary. The latest

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## PRIORITIES WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

fad—summer blockbuster, phone, clothing—looks to gain our immediate attention.

They all have something in common: they are temporary. Don't concentrate your efforts on people, pastimes, and problems that will not be here ten years from now. What is one problem you are fretting about that you know will soon pass?

### **EMPOWER**

#### **My decision today:**

This week, I'll memorize these three words: important, best, permanent. Every time a decision needs to be made, I'll ask myself if the choice I'm making is in line with those three words. I will share what I learned this week with a friend who needs to hear it.

Remember, you are not a human doing. Your actions don't make you more valuable to God. The cross reminds you that Jesus died before you could do something to deserve it.

The gospel says, It's done. It's finished. It's complete. Now rest in it.

# DOLLARS AND SENSE

## WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

### LESSON 4

#### HEAR

Money is neither moral nor immoral, neither good nor bad. It's like a brick, which can be used to build a nice chimney or break the window of the neighbor who plays loud music at **3:00** a.m. The problem is not money itself but how it's used. It adopts the characteristics of its owner and makes him or her more of what they already are. There are more than **2,500** references in the Bible to finances. Let's look at three key principles that can help you.

#### OPEN

1. "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it?" (**Luke 14:28**, NIV).

## DOLLARS AND SENSE WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

This short verse has four biblical principles for better administration of our finances. Answer the questions that follow the principles.

- a. Set goals. The goal of the man was to build a tower. What are your financial goals? Write one down here:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Think first. What did the man do before he began to build? Are you an impulse buyer, or do you think first?
- c. Budget expenses. What is the true purpose of a budget? What holds you back from developing one for yourself?
- d. Always persevere. Is it easy or difficult for you to finish what you begin?

**2.** The book of Job has a great passage concerning finances. **It reads:** *"If they obey and serve him, they will spend the rest of their days in prosperity and their years in contentment"* (**Job 36:11**, NIV). According to this verse, what is our role regarding finances?  
We should obey and \_\_\_\_\_ God.

**3.** Jesus told a sobering story of the ever-present danger of concentrating too much on material items. Read **Luke 12:16-20**. What lesson do you think Jesus was trying to teach us?

**4.** One of the most freeing aspects of the gospel (good news) is that our worth is not in what we produce, gain, or possess. Instead, what is that Jesus invites us to freely receive? Read **Revelation 22:17**.

### PRACTICE

Here are three more practical lessons about finances:

**1.** Don't let yourself be enticed. The Bible gives the following advice in **Job 36:18**: *"Be careful that no one entices you by*

*riches*" (NIV). Is there an object in your life that is enticing you to fall in love with it?

**2.** Don't become obsessed. Check (√) all that apply to you (these will not be discussed out loud; they're personal).

- Do you neglect your family because of your work?
- Is it hard for you to leave your work behind at your worksite?
- Do you continue thinking about work during vacations and times of rest?
- Do you think about work first thing when you get up and last thing as you go to sleep?
- Do you think about work or your finances when you pray, read the Bible, or are in church?
- In selecting your career, were you thinking about how much money you would earn?
- Do you buy things on sale even though you don't need them?
- When you go out to eat, do you eat more when someone else is paying?
- Is making money the object of your life?

**3.** Don't commit yourself to others' debts. The Bible is clear about this. **Proverbs 22:26** and **27** (GNT) counsels us, "*Don't promise to be responsible for someone else's debts. If you should be unable to pay, they will take away even your bed.*" What danger does a person face who signs for another's debt? Mention two reasons it's not advisable to do so.

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### EMPOWER

When John D. Rockefeller, the famous magnate, died, someone asked his bookkeeper, "*How much money did Rockefeller leave?*"

The bookkeeper replied, "*He left everything.*"

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Think about a garbage dump. There you'll find electrical devices, clothing, scraps of wood—a thousand things that at one time possessed value for someone. Because of those objects, which are now rotting, marriages broke up, friendships dissolved, values were compromised, families were neglected, and churches were forsaken. Was it worth it? How did it all turn out in the end?

**My decision today:**

With God's help I choose to manage my finances in a way that honors God and values my health and my family. I pray to find my worth in what God accomplished for me on the cross and not in my temporary earthly accomplishments.

The gospel frees us from having to produce in order to be noticed, loved, or valued. You are valued, loved, and accepted because of His sacrifice, not your success.

You are loved. Period.

# HURT

## WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

### LESSON 5

#### HEAR

*" I hurt with the hurt of my people. I mourn and am overcome with grief. Is there no medicine in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why is there no healing for the wounds of my people?" (Jeremiah 8:21, 22, NLT).*

Everyone has experienced hurt. For some, emotional and physical pain is a constant reminder that words and actions matter. Once again, this is a topic that Scripture addresses at length.

#### OPEN

There are several causes of pain. Among them are physical, spiritual, mental/emotional, and sexual abuse. We fall into one of two categories: we have either experienced abuse or know a person who has.

## HURT WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

**1.** Who is responsible for the pain in this world? Read **Revelation 12:9; Romans 1:24.**

**2.** There are at least four reasons for your pain. Take a moment to look at the four categories below, then analyze your painful experiences and ascribe a percentage to each one:

- Intentional hurt from others \_\_\_\_\_
- Unintentional hurt from others \_\_\_\_\_
- Intentional hurt from yourself \_\_\_\_\_
- Unintentional hurt from yourself \_\_\_\_\_

**3.** Even in Bible times, God provided guidelines for respect and consequences for abuse of every kind. Let's review two of them here.

- a.** Abuse through incest. Read **Deuteronomy 27:22.**
- b.** Respect and care of children. Read **Matthew 18:6.**

**4.** Hurt can create deep wounds, especially if you don't talk about it and forgive. Hurt prospers in secrecy. Here are two suggestions from the Bible about the importance of sharing your struggles.

- a.** How did David feel when he had not been able to speak about his situation? Read **Psalms 32:3.** Why is it important to share with a responsible and qualified person what happened to us?
- b.** What is another blessing of sharing your pain with another? Read **James 5:16.**

**5.** Why is it so important to forgive? What does forgiving really mean? What is one thing we can do? Read **Luke 6:28.**

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**6.** What can I do for people who have experienced hurt? Read **Hebrews 12:12, 13; Isaiah 35:3, 4.**

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**7.** What does God promise concerning the end of all hurt? Revelation 21:3, 4.

### **PRACTICE**

These are three important actions you can take:

**1.** Deal with it correctly. According to recent findings, more than half of women experience abuse and at least 40 percent of men. How do you deal with it? Some try to bury it, ignore it, or mitigate the pain with addiction. Instead, speak about it, address it, and understand how God can bring healing to your life. What proactive steps are you taking to address the pain in your life?

**2.** Forgive it completely. Holding in resentment is like drinking rat poison and hoping the rat will die. Therefore you must forgive. Forgiving does not mean the restoration of the relationship or welcoming into your home a known abuser. It means that you treat with respect and love the one who hurt you. If you have been a victim, the first step is to forgive. Whom do you need to forgive today?

**3.** Grow from it immediately. The moment you forgive, you start growing. As you leave the past behind, sharing your experiences can help other people, either by keeping them from suffering what you did or by comforting those who can identify with your pain.

### **EMPOWER**

This week, pray for God to help you do the following three things: deal with, forgive, and grow from painful experiences in your life. If you have never had such things happen to you, be thankful and look for ways to bless others who have.

The cross of Christ shows us that the God of the Bible saw our plight, entered our suffering, endured our trials, and can restore all things. While other religions teach that man can work himself upward to get to God, Christianity shows a God who descends and rescues us. He seldom provides answers. He ultimately provides solutions.

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# FRENEMIES

## WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

### LESSON 6

#### HEAR

We were created for relationships. They determine in large part our well-being. Billy Graham had it right when he stated, *"God is more interested in your future and your relationships than you are."*

#### OPEN

It's surprising to some, but the Bible has a lot to say about relationships. Here is some practical advice from the Designer of relationships as you seek to surround yourself with friends that help, not harm. I have made some comments to spur discussion on this topic.

1. Choose friends wisely. Read **Proverbs 12:26**.  
Be friendly with everyone, but establish deep friendship

## FRENEMIES WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

with a few. Be very careful whom you let into your inner circle. Can you remember a time when a poorly chosen friend caused you problems?

**2.** Understand the frailty of the human condition. Read **Psalm 41:9**.

Even the best relationships can end on a sour note. What does that text teach us about the reality of the fickleness of human relationships?

**3.** Avoid gossip. It's one of the surefire ways of killing your friendships. Read about two damaging results of gossip:

**Proverbs 16:28** \_\_\_\_\_

**Proverbs 17:9** \_\_\_\_\_

**4.** It's tragic and hurtful, but who can cause us grief and pain? Read **Matthew 10:36**.

**5.** Instead of holding a grudge, what counsel does the Bible give us to do? Read **Psalm 143:9**.

**6.** Friend or foe, people will never meet all your expectations and are sure to disappoint. Who can you really trust that has called you friend? Read **John 15:15**.

### PRACTICE

Here are some more thoughts on the subject of friendships.

**1.** Those around us are usually most like us. Your friendships can be the source of the greatest pain or the most amazing joy. Here are some practical questions to ask yourself when selecting friends:

- a.** Is my friend bringing me closer to God? If your ultimate objective is to get closer to Jesus, then friends help or
-

## FRENEMIES WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

harm that goal. The writer of the books of Proverbs tells us that *“as iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend”* (**Proverbs 27:17**, NLT). This means that friends have a chance either to help us grow in our spiritual walk or guide us away from God.

- b.** Is my friend drawing me closer to my goals? One way of getting ahead in life is by having specific, measurable, reachable goals. What are yours? What career do you want? What about marriage? Where do you want to be in ten years? Are your friends holding you back or are they pushing you forward?
      - c.** Is my friend getting closer to me only because of what he or she can get out of me? Some friends are only interested in what they get from you. Others are very needy and want you so they can unload on you. Both of these kinds of friends are takers, not givers. How can you help your needy/selfish friend stand on his or her own and be a giver as well as a taker?
    - 2.** As you deal with people who don't like you, think of these things:
      - a.** Don't remember. A common response to an offense is to hold on to the pain caused by it. This helps no one, especially the one who holds the grudge. Give it to God instead. What could be some drawbacks in holding a grudge? How can we overcome that habit?
      - b.** Don't relate. One of the most disturbing facts about people who are dealing with haters in their life is their desire to continue to relate with people who cause them pain, either by actions or words. Instead, find new friends. Go outside your circle. Don't continue in a relationship with *“toxic”* people. Can you think of a person right now from whom you need to cut ties?
-

- c. Don't retaliate. Vengeance is God's. He is a just judge who will pay according to people's actions. Resist the urge to treat people with the same hate they treat you. Remember, people who hate usually don't love themselves. Are you wanting to retaliate? What practical steps can you take to not do it?

**EMPOWER****My decision today:**

I will intentionally seek to surround myself with people who will build me up and not tear me down. I will put my trust in Jesus and find my acceptance first and foremost from my Father, not my friends. The gospel frees me from approval addiction. I am loved and accepted by God because of His son Jesus, who is not only my Savior but also my Friend, and He loves me, warts and all.

# FAILURE

## WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

### LESSON 7

#### HEAR

*"If it doesn't matter who wins or loses, then why do they keep score?"—Vince Lombardi.*

We all like winners. That's why we keep score. If we are truthful with ourselves we will admit that there are areas in our lives we could be doing better.

Right off the bat, let's remember three powerful principles as we deal with this topic:

- Failure is an event, not an identity.
- You can fail, but you are not a failure.
- Everyone fails—everyone! It's a matter of when, not if.

#### OPEN

**1.** Why do people fail? *"Pride leads to destruction, and arrogance to downfall"* (**Proverbs 16:18**, GNT).

## FAILURE WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

The main reason is that we are \_\_\_\_\_.

The three most dangerous words in the English language are *"I already know!"* *"Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty"* (**Proverbs 21:5**, NLT, emphasis supplied).

We fail because we take \_\_\_\_\_.

In what areas of your life do you tend to take shortcuts? Feel free to either share or just reflect privately. Mark all that apply:

- Relationships
- Exercise/diet
- Finances
- Education
- Spirituality
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**2.** When we fail, it's important to examine ourselves and find out why it happened. After we have taken an honest look at ourselves, what is a great step to take? Read **Lamentations 3:40** and write your thoughts here:

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**3.** An important step to take when you fail is to look in Scripture for hope, claiming the promises of God for your life. Read these three beautiful ones that you can apply today:

**Psalm 50:5**

**Psalm 34:7**

**Isaiah 41:10**

### PRACTICE

Different people will have different reactions when they fail. Here are three common ones:

- 1.** Some will quit.
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## FAILURE WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

*"If your boss is angry at you, don't quit! A quiet spirit can overcome even great mistakes" (Ecclesiastes 10:4, NLT). Don't give up on God. Don't give up on relationships. Don't give up on your dreams.*

### 2. Some will blame.

*"Then Sarai said to Abram, 'This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The LORD will show who's wrong—you or me!'" (Genesis 16:5, NLT).*

### 3. Some will grow.

*"I have not yet reached my goal, and I am not perfect. But Christ has taken hold of me. So I keep on running and struggling to take hold of the prize. My friends, I don't feel that I have already arrived. But I forget what is behind, and I struggle for what is ahead. I run toward the goal, so that I can win the prize of being called to heaven. This is the prize that God offers because of what Christ Jesus has done" (Philippians 3:12-14, CEV, emphasis supplied).*

*"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen" (Ephesians 3:20, 21, NIV).*

## EMPOWER

### My decision today:

With God's help I will remember that failure is an event, not an identity. I can learn from my failures, but I won't be defined by them. Christ's death and resurrection teach me that from my darkest hour, great blessing can come. I choose to trust Jesus and His plan instead of my own.

# FAITH

## WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

### LESSON 8

#### **HEAR**

There are four questions that people like us have asked themselves throughout history.

Where do I come from?  
How should I live?  
What is my purpose?  
Where am I going?

The gospel (good news) answers them. The gospel is good news, not just good advice. What's the good news? Let's study the basic tenets of the gospel according to Jesus.

#### **OPEN**

There are five significant components of the gospel:



## FAITH WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

**1.** What we are. How does the Bible describe the human condition?

Read **Romans 3:10–12**. We are \_\_\_\_\_.

Read **Ephesians 2:1**. We are \_\_\_\_\_.

**2.** We are accountable for our actions. Every action and decision has a consequence. Read **Hebrews 9:27**.

Think about it. Accountability is built into us. We demand it from our civic leaders, teachers, and family. In a macro sense, God will hold us accountable for the decisions we have made.

**3.** We are unable to “*make it right*” on our own. Enter Jesus! What did Jesus do about our condition? Read **Colossians 2:13**.

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**4.** We can accept or deny a historical fact, the death and resurrection of Jesus. Read **1 Corinthians 15:1–8**. Take your time and analyze the details in that passage.

**5.** Accepting the gospel results in life transformation. Notice this passage: “*For our gospel did not come to you merely in words, but in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction [in much assurance]*” (**1 Thessalonians 1:5**, NIV).

A changed life is not the means to salvation but is definitely the result of understanding and experiencing the gospel in your life.

### PRACTICE

Here is the best summary concerning the gospel:

**1.** A relationship with Jesus affects your past. Read **2 Corinthians 5:17**.

We have all made mistakes, errors, wrong choices that

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## TROUBLE WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS/HOPE

have produced pain in ourselves and others. The process of dealing with your past starts with two elements:

- a. Confession: when you confess your sins to God, you admit responsibility.
- b. Repentance: when you repent, you recognize change is needed.

### 2. A relationship with Jesus affects your present.

Living as a person who has been forgiven has practical implications. Notice this passage: "*Put all your rebellion behind you, and find yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O people of Israel?*" (**Ezekiel 18:31**, NLT).

It's freeing to know you don't have to live shackled by past mistakes and worried about future issues. Since you have been forgiven and accepted by God, you can do the same for others.

### 3. A relationship with God affects your future. Read **Psalm 31:15**.

One of the most important ways the gospel affects your life is in helping you live with the hope of a better future. All through Scripture, prophecies are made about deliverance, salvation, and restoration. We can know our future is secure when we see how God has fulfilled His prophecies in the past. If you are interested in a study of Bible prophecy, the next set of lessons (Part 2) will dive deep into that subject. We invite you to join us and continue that study.

## EMPOWER

### My decision today:

I acknowledge that I am a sinner. I give control of my life to God and ask Jesus to be my Savior and leader. I believe that no matter how awful the sins I have committed, God is not mad at me. Instead, my heavenly Father allowed Jesus to take upon Himself all the guilt, shame, and rejection I deserve. I choose to follow Christ.

## WHERE YOU GO FROM HERE

**1.** If you enjoyed the lessons and want to contact us, please do so at **rhvidaministries@gmail.com**.

**2.** This set of lessons is **Part 1** of a three-part series. If you are interested in Bible prophecy or just understanding what is the next step for growth in your walk with Christ, please contact the person who shared these lessons with you, and they will indicate how you can continue on to **Part 2**. Or you can write me at **rhvidaministries@gmail.com** for more information.

**3.** The best way to learn and grow is to share. Think of someone who would benefit from the study of these lessons and invite them to join you.

