



The Facts about

# Spiritual Warfare

*Be of sober spirit, **be on the alert**. Your adversary, the devil, **prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour**. But resist him (by being) firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren, who are in the world.*

- 1 Peter 5:8-10 (NASB)

**FACT #1 - Becoming a Christian does not mean we will no longer have problems; we are at war and will experience "dark valleys."**

## GOD'S ANTIDOTE FOR THE DARK VALLEYS

*"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and staff, they comfort me."*

- Psalm 23:4

### A. What to remember in the "dark valleys" of life:

#### 1. Valleys are inevitable.

*"In this world, you will have trouble."*

- John 16:33 (LB)

*"Consider it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials. . ."*

- James 1:2 (NASB)

#### 2. Valleys are unpredictable.

*"**Disaster follows** disaster . . . in an instant my tents are destroyed, my shelter falls in a moment."*

- Jeremiah 4:20 (LB)

#### 3. Valleys are impartial.

*"(It) rains on the just and the unjust too."*

- Matthew 5:45 (LB)

#### 4. Valleys are temporary.

*"There is wonderful joy ahead, even though the going is rough for a while, down here."  
- 1 Peter 1:6 (LB)*

*"Our troubles are short-lived and their outcome is an eternal glory which outweighs them all."  
- 2 Corinthians 4:17*

#### 5. Valleys do serve a purpose.

*". . . at the present you may be temporarily harassed by all kind of trials. This is no accident—it happens to prove your faith . . ."*

- 1 Peter 1:6b-7 (PME)

### B. What to do in "dark valleys":

#### 1. Refuse to be *eternally* discouraged or depressed.

*"I will fear no evil . . ."*

- Psalm 23:4a

#### 2. Remember that God is with you.

*". . . for you are with me. . ."*

- Psalm 23:4b

*"When you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up—the flames will not consume you."*

- Isaiah 43:2 (LB)

#### 3. Rely on God's protection and provision.

*"Your rod and staff comfort me."*

- Psalm 23:4

*"The good man does not escape all troubles—he has them too. But the Lord helps him in each and every one."*

- Psalm 34:19 (LB)

### **FACT #2 - The difficulties we experience as Christians will come from one of six sources (see worksheet on page 121):**

- The natural consequences of foolish actions and/or decisions.
- The temptations of Satan.
- The discipline of God as a consequence of sin.
- The testing of God designed to cause spiritual growth.
- The consequences of other people's sin our lives
- Just life in general . . . "*We live in a fallen world.*"

**FACT #3 - Adversity caused by any one of these six sources is allowed by God through a perfect blending of two biblical principles:**

- Galatians 6:7-8 - "One reaps what one sows, good or bad."
- Romans 8:28 - "God can turn even the bad into good."

**FACT #4 - Christians are to flee temptation and/or resist the devil.**

"Flee temptation" means you leave or get away from the temptation. If you cannot leave the temptation, here is a Biblical formula for resisting the devil based on Matthew 4:

- (1) Address the demon directly.
- (2) Command him to leave you alone and cease his activities in your life.
- (3) Remind him of the authority you have as you have God in your life—*claim the Blood!*
- (4) Reinforce yourself by gathering Christians around you for prayer, accountability, and support.

**FACT #5 - When you sin, confession and humble repentance before God will restore you to a right fellowship with Him.**

Remember. . .

- (1) God does forgive sin.
- (2) God still loves you.
- (3) God still wants to help you overcome personal problems.
- (4) God will help you overcome Satan's temptations in your life.
- (5) God is greater and more powerful than Satan.

**FACT #6 - All believers must use the same weapons in Spiritual warfare. Our battles may be different but our weapons are the same.**

- (1) Prayer/fasting
- (2) God's Word (reading/studying/memorizing/quoting, etc.)
- (3) Discernment
- (4) Church Community—*we need each other!*

# SPIRITUAL DIFFICULTIES WORKSHEET

***What is the source of your difficulties? Take your "difficulty" before the Lord and seek to understand where it came from—then you'll know what to do with it:***

Source option	Advice	Scripture/Insight
Is it the natural consequence of foolish actions and/or decisions?	Learn from your mistakes	A fool learns <u>from his own mistakes</u> but the wise learns from other people's mistakes. – Proverbs (many speak to this truth)
Is it the temptations of Satan?	Endure or (if possible) run from sin	<b>1 Corinthians 10:13, NASB95</b> - <sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but <u>with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.</u>  <b>2 Timothy 2:22, TLB</b> - <sup>22</sup> <u>Run</u> from anything that gives you the evil thoughts that young men often have, but stay close to anything that makes you want to do right. Have faith and love, and enjoy the companionship of those who love the Lord and have pure hearts.
Is it the discipline of God as a consequence of sin?	Confession, repentance, and/or restitution* are the biblical prescription for sin.  *Seek <i>restitution</i> if possible or if needed	<b>James 1:15, NASB95</b> - <sup>15</sup> Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, <u>it brings forth death.</u>  <b>1 John 1:9, NLT</b> - <sup>9</sup> But if we <u>confess our sins</u> to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.
Is it the testing of God designed to cause spiritual growth?	Pray for wisdom—how does God want you to grow?	<b>James 1:2-5, NLT</b> - <sup>2</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. <sup>3</sup> For you know that <u>when your faith is tested</u> , your endurance has a chance to grow. <sup>4</sup> So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing. <sup>5</sup> If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.
Is it the consequence of other people's sin in our lives?	Pray, forgive, and process your story, knowing God brings "good out of bad" (cf., Romans 8:28).	<b>Isaiah 59:3, NIV</b> - <sup>3</sup> For your hands are stained with [ <u>innocent</u> ] blood, your fingers with guilt. Your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue mutters wicked things.
Is it just <i>life in general</i> ? You must realize that " <i>we live in a fallen world</i> " that will not be fair or even make sense.	As kindly as it can be put, "get over it."	<b>Psalms 34:19, LB</b> - " <u>The good man does not escape all troubles—he has them too. But the Lord helps him in each and every one.</u> "