



# Initial Responses to Life's Challenges

There is no way to avoid life's challenges. Realizing this fact, followers of Christ should face every challenge with the goal of glorifying God. To glorify God in the face of difficulties, your initial responses should be to:

## Focus on the Lord and His divine provisions

- Trust the Lord in this situation to help you grow in Christ and not rely on natural wisdom.

**Proverbs 3:5-7**, Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.<sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.<sup>7</sup> Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

- Remember that God's Word and His Spirit are sufficient to guide you in all circumstances

**John 16:13-14**, When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.<sup>14</sup> He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**, All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- Rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks consistently

**Philippians 4:6-7**, do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**, Rejoice always,<sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing,<sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

**James 1:2-4**, Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,<sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.<sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

## Ask God for wisdom, especially as you examine yourself and confess personal shortcomings to Him

**James 1:5**, If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

- Judging yourself biblically equips you to help others live victoriously.

**Matthew 7:1-5**, Judge not, that you be not judged.<sup>2</sup> For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.<sup>3</sup> Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?<sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when there is the log in your own eye?<sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

- Confessing your sin(s) to the Lord is integral to Christ-like development.

**1 John 1:8-9**, If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*See Confession – The Ultimate Test of Truthfulness at*

<http://wordtruth.org/PDF/Confession%20-%20The%20Ultimate%20Test%20of%20Truthfulness.pdf>

*See Confession – Insight Into the Real You at*

<http://wordtruth.org/PDF/Confession-Insight%20Into%20the%20Real%20You.pdf>

- Demonstrating God-honoring wisdom produces Christ-honoring results.

**James 3:13-18**, Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup> This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup> And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

### **Demonstrate love for God and others**

**Matthew 22:37-39**, . . . You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup> This is the great and first commandment. <sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

See *The Two Greatest Priorities of Life* at

[http://wordtruth.org/PDF/Two%20Greatest%20Priorities%20of%20Life%20\(snippet\).pdf](http://wordtruth.org/PDF/Two%20Greatest%20Priorities%20of%20Life%20(snippet).pdf)

- You demonstrate love for the Lord by obeying God’s Word.

**John 14:15** (spoken by Jesus), If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

**1 John 5:3**, For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

- You demonstrate love for others by living according to characteristics listed in 1 Corinthians 13.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-8a**, Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant <sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; <sup>6</sup> it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup> Love never ends . . .

See *Are You a Loving Person?* at <http://wordtruth.org/PDF/Are%20you%20a%20Loving%20Person.pdf>

It is important to note that initial steps to face and deal with problems are not focused on the problem(s) but, instead, are directed toward the Lord and His powerfully adequate provisions on your behalf.

Focusing on Him reminds you that He is sovereign no matter what difficulties you may encounter. This reality enables you to rest in His sovereign goodness and faithfulness as He accomplishes His purposes in your life.

Focusing on Him also enables you to see what is most important in dealing with the problem so that you can walk in victory by responding in loving ways for the joy of glorifying Him.

Review *Biblical Basics of Dealing with Problems* at

<http://wordtruth.org/PDF/Biblical%20Basics%20of%20Dealing%20with%20Problems.pdf>

and *God’s Purposes in His Children’s Trials* at

<http://wordtruth.org/PDF/Gods%20Purposes%20in%20His%20Childrens%20Trials.pdf>