

HOW TO MAKE LIFE MORE DIFFICULT

1 Peter 3:10-12

INTRODUCTION:

- A. There have been many books written on how to have an easier, more successful life.
 - 1. How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie.
 - 2. How to Stop Worrying and Start Living by Dale Carnegie.
 - 3. The Life You Always Wanted by John Ortberg.
 - 4. Your Best Life Now by Joel Osteen.
- B. I don't think anyone has ever written a book on "How to Make Your life More Difficult."
- C. God certainly doesn't want your life to be difficult. He wants you to "love life and see good days," **1 Peter 3:10-12**.
- D. However, many are making their lives more difficult every day.
- E. Tonight, let's see some ways that people make their lives more DIFFICULT:

I. LIVE ONLY FOR YOURSELF.

- A. Many are so wrapped up in themselves that they don't have time for others, and have no interest in them. "The world's smallest package is a man all wrapped up in himself."
- B. No man lives to himself: *GOD* is to be a part of our lives, **Romans 14:6-8**.
 - 1. "For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."
 - 2. "For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, *that those who live should live no longer for themselves*, but for Him who died for them and rose again." **2 Cor 5:14-15**.
- C. No man lives to himself; *OTHERS* are to be a part of our lives.
 - 1. "We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. *Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.*" **Romans 15:1-2**.
 - 2. "Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being." **1 Cor 10:24**.
 - 3. "Let each of you look out not only for *HIS OWN* interests, but also for the interests of *OTHERS*." **Philippians 2:4**.
 - a. Don't selfishly look out for Number 1.
 - b. Be concerned about others.
- D. One of the SADDEST things in the world is to see a *SELFISH*, self-centered, ungrateful person.
- E. One who lives selfishly is making the lives of *OTHERS* more difficult.

F. He is also making HIS OWN life more difficult.

II. TRY TO LIVE MORE THAN ONE DAY AT A TIME.

A. Some try to live *YESTERDAY* again.

1. Worrying about yesterday is futile and harmful.
2. We should not carry yesterday's burdens:
 - a. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Phil 3:12-15
 - b. casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7
 - c. Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved. Psalm 55:22.
3. Many lives are marred by "*IF ONLY*":
 - a. "If only" I had not made that mistake.
 - b. "If only" I had made better choices.
 - c. "If only" I had invested in that company when it was starting out.
 - d. "If only" my big break had come.
4. Some live in the GUILT of yesterday:
 - a. Some cannot forgive themselves even after God forgives.
 - b. Some cannot forgive themselves even after others forgive.
5. Some live in the GLORY of yesterday:
 - a. EXAMPLE: Some football teams think they only have to show up to win, because of their past winning tradition.
 - b. Some Christians are "resting on their laurels."
 - c. Some Churches are "resting on their laurels."
6. ILLUSTRATION: In Africa there is a nomadic tribe known as the Masai. When they move a village, they burn their huts so they can never go back. Sometimes we need to "burn our huts," or "burn our bridges" behind us.

B. Some worry too much about what will happen *TOMORROW*.

1. This is just "begging trouble."
2. "Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth." Proverbs 27:1.
3. "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." **Matthew 6:34.**
4. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." **Philippians 4:6.**
 - a. Do not worry over what the future may hold.

- b. This does not mean you cannot be concerned.
 - c. Let your requests be known to God and you won't have to worry.
5. One study about worry shows:
- 40%** of things we worry about never happen.
 - 30%** relate to past events that cannot be changed.
 - 12%** are unnecessary worries about health.
 - 10%** are worries over trivial things.
 - 8%** are matters of real concern.
6. Trying to live tomorrow today will make your life much more difficult.
- C. So, there are two days I should never let control my life – YESTERDAY and TOMORROW.
 - D. Righteous living today will prepare us for the future.
 - E. Everyone should live as though each day was his last.

III. TRY TO LIVE WITH A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

- A. Conscience: “the sense or consciousness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one’s own conduct, intentions or character together with a feeling of obligation to do right or be good.” (Webster’s Dictionary).
- B. Hurricane Hattie in The Born Loser comic strip: “No you won’t...You’ll just keep me from enjoyin’ ‘em.”
- C. **ILLUSTRATION:** An old man was asked to explain his conscience. Placing his hand over his heart, he said, “My conscience is a *little triangular thing* in here which **STANDS PERFECTLY STILL** when I do what is right, but *when I do wrong, it turns slowly* and causes much pain.
- D. We like to avoid pain at all costs.
 - 1. **ILLUSTRATION:** I heard of a little girl who did not feel pain. She was always in danger of putting her hand in a fire or on a hot stove eye and burning herself.
 - 2. Pain is an essential part of human existence. It tells us when something is wrong. We feel pain, get it checked out and find a serious health problem.
 - 3. We don’t like pain, but it is an essential part of life.
 - 4. **EXAMPLE:** the people on Pentecost were **CUT TO THE HEART** and obeyed the gospel, **Acts 2:36-38**.
- E. *Guilt is pain you feel when you transgress the conscience.*
 - 1. There are two types of guilt:
 - a. **RATIONAL:** ought to feel guilty.
 - b. **IRRATIONAL:** no logical reason to feel guilty. (Example: feeling guilty for what your grandfather did).

2. Most people feel guilty *BECAUSE THEY SHOULD*.
- F. What guilt can do TO you:
1. Affect our *PHYSICAL* health.
 2. Affect our *MENTAL* health.
 3. Lead to *OTHER SINS* (David/Uriah; Cain-murder).
- G. When we feel the pain of guilt, that tells us that we need to do something about it. Paul refers to this as **GODLY SORROW, 2 Corinthians 7:8-12.**
- H. What trying to live with a guilty conscience will do to you:
1. Take away the **JOY** of salvation, Psalm 51:12.
 2. Make your **WHOLE LIFE** miserable.
 3. Destroy your **MENTAL** health.
 4. Destroy your **SPIRITUAL** health.
 5. Lead you **FURTHER** from God.
- I. **ILLUSTRATION: CONCLUSION OF ABOVE ILLUSTRATION:** And, if I keep on doing wrong for a long time, by and by the sharp corners wear down and it doesn't hurt anymore."
- J. "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own *CONSCIENCE SEARED WITH A HOT IRON.*" **1 Timothy 4:1-2.**
- K. Are you trying to live with a guilty conscience? It will make your life more difficult.
- L. The best thing to do is remove that guilt **TONIGHT.**

CONCLUSION:

- A. God wants **YOU** to have a good life, free from excessive difficulties.
- B. Too many are doing these things and making life more difficult.
- C. Are **YOU** making your life more difficult tonight?

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