

How to Solve Problems 6 of 8

When Your Problems Involve Others

#0344

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1960

If God loves us so much, why do we have problems? Paul says that's why. Is that right? Well, I'm glad about this, friends, there aren't any jokers in God's problems. There aren't any *silly* questions. There aren't any *meaningless* problems. There aren't any without a solution. There is an answer to every question and a solution to every problem. Do you believe that? Yes. And the purpose of it all is to teach you and me certain principles to cause us to *think* like God; to develop in us the mind of Christ. Isn't that a wonderful privilege?

You know in the Bible two stories that have always interested me very much—the stories of Joseph and Daniel. Joseph and Daniel were the great problem solvers of their time.

When the king of Egypt couldn't get his problem solved any other way, and all the wise men failed him, a servant there in the court said, "Oh, I remember there's a man down in the prison who can take care of that."

"He can? Get him."

And Joseph was pulled out of the dungeon to come up there and solve the problems of the greatest empire of that time. Did he do it? Oh, yes.

And you remember Daniel, called in to give and interpret the dream of the king of Babylon, then later called in again, then later called in to read the writing on the wall. I was reading something very interesting there in the fifth chapter of Daniel. And you remember that this is at the feast of Belshazzar. The Spirit of God has written on the wall, and the wise men have been brought in; they can't read it, they don't know what it means. But the king was greatly troubled. And so the queen came in, apparently the king's mother. And she said:

"There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him"
Daniel 5:11.

And she said the king made him the master of all the wise men of Babylon.

“Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts” Daniel 5:12.

The margin says of knots. That’s the Chaldean. He knew how to unravel the knots, my friends. That’s right. He could solve the problems. All this, it says, “was found” in this same Daniel (Daniel 5:12).

So she said:

“Now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation”
Daniel 5:12.

Did he do it? Oh, yes. He didn’t disappoint their expectations.

Let me tell you, God is waiting for some people to be developed. And when they’re developed as Daniel was, He’s going to put the writing on the wall, and God’s remnant people are going to interpret that handwriting on the wall just before Babylon goes down this last time. Will you be one of those? And I’ll tell you this, friends: The lesson book in solving the problems of the world, that lesson book is filled up with the problems in your own experience. And if you flunk that, you’ll never get a chance to read that writing on the wall.

Oh, let us concentrate on letting God show us how to solve problems, for the same principles that we learn in solving our own personal problems apply to the solving of problems of institutions, churches, nations, the world. And we’ve been told that down here today, just as Jesus in the temple solved the mysteries that priests and rulers had not discerned, so children who have been rightly educated will, in their simplicity, speak words which will be an astonishment to men who now talk of higher education (Volume 6, page 202). They know how to solve problems. They’re like Joseph and Daniel. They have the answers because they have learned the principles.

Now, you who have been to my previous studies on this subject, this is number six on solving problems. If you’ve been to all of them, tell me, what is a problem? Why it’s anything you don’t know the answer to. If you know the answer to it, it’s no longer a problem. But anything you don’t know the answer to, that’s a problem. But there is an answer, friends. There’s the answer to the problem you don’t know the answer to. Who has it? God has it.

That’s why Joseph and Daniel had the answer. They got it from God in each case, didn’t they? That’s where we must get it. Daniel, we see, there in the second chapter of the book, down on his knees with his three friends in a little prayer band *pleading* with God for the answer for the king (Daniel 2:17–23). Did they get it? Sure. And they went in the next morning and Daniel explained it. So if we will learn to go to God with our problems, friends, we can find the answer as Joseph did and as Daniel did.

You remember I've been giving you some ABCs on this. A is what? Accept the assignment. Don't dodge the problem. Don't evade it. Don't run away from it. But take it. Accept it. Accept the assignment. It has your name on it.

And B is what? Believe that without God, you can do nothing, but with Him, you can do all things. That's right.

C? Claim the wisdom that He's promised, James 1:5. Claim the promise that God has given that He will teach you what to do. Get on your knees, study, pray, and come to a conclusion from that wisdom. Come to a conclusion.

And D is what? Do it. And then when you have done the thing, the best you know to solve that problem, then express faith and thanksgiving.

Now, in my last study on this, I led you to F. And what's that? Facing failure. Suppose it seems that after you've gone through A, B, C, D, E, that what you've tried to do looks like a failure, looks like one big mess, then what? Well friends, we read a text that says that God causes us to triumph how often? Always in Christ. Nothing that is done from love to God is ever really a failure. It may seem to be a failure, like the death of Jesus on the cross. But was that really a failure? That was the greatest victory of the ages. Oh, yes.

How often those who seem to fail, even in that failure, come to the very peak of victory and success. Truth forever on the scaffold; God is on the throne, keeping watch above His own. Oh, He is not unmindful of the efforts of His children to bring success and victory. But He lets them sometimes appear to fail for certain reasons. But is there ever any real failure to a child of God? No. We can face failure then without losing heart.

Mistakes, let's suppose we make mistakes. Yes. We're to learn from our mistakes and thus turn defeat into *victory*, disappointing the enemy and honoring our Redeemer (see *Christ Object Lessons*, page 332). And so every even apparent failure is another lesson book out of which we learn most valuable lessons.

Well, I just might mention as a little afterthought to our last study. If you want to carry it just one letter further in the alphabet, G is go ahead. Facing failure, go ahead. Don't stop.

But now tonight, I have a very important lesson to give you on this whole subject of solving problems, and it runs right through A, B, C, D, E, and so on. It's a principle that applies to every step in solving problems. It's this—the relationship of the decisions of others to our problems. You see, friends, very often, solving my problem includes, or *seems* to include, what somebody else will do.

For example: Suppose that I have an appendix that's about to burst and I have a fever. And somebody that loves me sees my condition and takes my temperature, and they look around for a doctor. Suppose that I'm out someplace where a doctor is hard

to find. Suppose one is finally found. Does what that doctor will do or fail to do have any effect upon my problem? It may have quite a bit, may it not? Yes.

Again: suppose we're going into a city and we're looking for an auditorium to preach this message. We look all around and finally we find a hall, but the rent is three times as much as we have any money to pay. What are we going to do? Well, we pray, "Lord impress this man that he will give us this auditorium at a price we can pay." And so we pray. We go down and we talk to him. And he lets us have it. We say, "Isn't that wonderful? God has solved our problem."

But suppose instead that he doesn't do that. Suppose, he says, "No, gentlemen, the price is so much and I cannot afford to reduce it." What do you say then? How do you solve your problem then? What do you do? The man has said no.

Let me illustrate it in another way. I'm teaching a class on Monday. But suppose something comes up and I would like to change that class to Wednesday. So I go to the committee and I say, "Well, now, there are some things that have happened. I have a problem to solve, and the only way I can see to solve it is to change my class, so I teach on Wednesday instead of Monday." The committee takes it up and they send back word, "All right, Brother Frazee, you can teach on Wednesday from now on." I say, "Thank you." That is fine. That problem is solved.

But suppose they don't. Suppose they say, "No Brother Frazee, we've looked the thing over, and we find that while that might seem to solve *your* problem, it would make problems for about eight other people and so we just have to leave it on Monday." Then what do I do? What do I do with that problem? Do I say, "My, what's the matter with that committee anyway? I had this thing all figured out. If they'd only cooperate, then we would get the problem solved, but they won't. They just won't do it."

Let me illustrate it in still another way. I have a problem. I need to go downtown for something. It's very urgent that I get downtown. Perhaps I have a dental appointment. Perhaps my car is in the garage, it won't work, or I may have two flat tires. Whatever the cause, I look around and I see somebody on the campus that apparently isn't doing anything and has an automobile. And I say, "Brother Jones, wouldn't you please take me to town? I have a dental appointment."

He looks at me and says, "Well, Brother Frazee, you know I'd like to, but I don't believe I'll be able to go today."

And I look at him and say, "Why man, I've got this all figured out. I've got to go and you're the one that's supposed to help me get there." But he doesn't seem to see it.

Now, I've used these three or four illustrations, but friends, life is made up of just such things as I've used as samples. Am I correct? Every day, day after day, we are dependent on others to help us solve our problems. And, of course, when they do it the way we have asked them to, the way we've decided is the way to solve the problem,

then there's no question. And if they always did it, probably I wouldn't need to take up this topic. But they don't always do it. Am I correct? At least they don't always do it for *me*. Do they always do it for *you*? No.

Now, I have a little text for you. It's found in Matthew 20:15, and it's a key text. And once you get hold of this, friends, it helps you with this problem which comes up in the solving of problems:

“Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?”
Matthew 20:15.

You remember these are the words of the master of the vineyard in the parable. He had agreed with some of the workers to work all day for how much? A penny. Did he keep his word? Yes. Did they get their money? Yes.

Later in the day, he had agreed with others that if they'd go into the vineyard, he'd pay them what? Whatever was right. Some came at nine o'clock in the morning, some came at twelve and three o'clock, and some came just an hour before sunset. But when he paid them all off, he had the man that paid them to pay them all the same. Do you remember that?

And you remember that some complained. Who were the ones that complained? The ones that had worked all day and had gotten exactly what they agreed to accept. You remember that, don't you? Yes. But they murmured because the man had, well if he hadn't overpaid the others, then they thought he'd done what? Underpaid them.

Nevertheless, in the thirteenth verse, he said:

“Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?” Matthew 20:13–15.

What would you say, is it lawful for a man to do what he will with his own? Yes. Yes, that's a lawful thing for him to do what he will with his own. If it isn't, it isn't his own, is it? Is that right? If you can't decide whether to help somebody with your money or not, then it isn't your money. Is that right?

A friend of mine was telling me several years ago about an experience he had. He had several thousand dollars that he was using to lend to medical students. It wasn't his in the sense of original ownership, but a friend of his who *had* money had put this in his hands, so it was his to decide. And a young medical student who apparently had heard of this came to him. He said, “Brother So and So, you know I have been praying earnestly to the Lord as to how I was going to get through my medical course. And the Lord has impressed me to come and talk with you because I believe you are the one to help answer the prayer.”

And this man looked at him and said, “Well, now my young Brother, if it’s really the Lord that is impressing *you* that I’m the one to answer the prayer about supplying the money for your medical course, don’t you think the Lord would impress *me* too?”

Was that a good question? I think so. And that’s what this text suggests:

“Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?”
Matthew 20:15.

That suggests that the decision regarding a man’s use of time, money, influence, or anything else should be left with whom? With the man himself.

Therefore, get this rule, please, in solving problems: In solving our own problems, let us always leave with other people the making of their decisions as to what they can or cannot do to help us. Let us recognize their right, their duty to do this, and then let us not blame them if they don’t do it the way we think they should. Let’s not do that, for if we do, we are clear out of the path of God’s providence, my friends, and we need to take this lesson in the course in solving problems.

Now, I found some very fine illustrations of this over here in *Volume 1*, page 272. This was a hundred years ago and more when the cause was young. The name of this little chapter is “Duty to the Poor.” They had some poor people back there in the movement. There still are poor people in the church, aren’t there? Yes. There were a hundred years ago, there are. In fact, did Jesus say, you’ll always have the poor with you? That’s what He said.

If you read this little chapter you will find that the servant of the Lord saw in vision that there were some poor people—watch this!—who were feeling bad because their wealthy brethren didn’t *help* them as much as they thought they ought to:

“They look to the church and expect to receive help from them and do not practice self-denial and economy when they are well provided for” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 1*, page 273.

And watch:

“And if they do not receive help every time, Satan tempts them, and they become jealous and very conscientious for their brethren, fearing that they will fail to do all their duty to them” *Ibid.*

Do you see the point? Here’s the poor brother. He’s poor. He looks over here at Brother Smith, and he thinks, “Well now Brother Smith’s in good shape. His barns

are well filled. He has a good herd of cattle. He has money in the bank and here I am a poor fellow. He ought to help me.”

So Brother Smith, lo and behold, he *does* help him some. And then what does the brother think? "Brother Smith just did what he ought to." So next time, what does he expect? The same thing. Suppose he doesn't get it. Well, this says, that some of the poor people back there, *expected* to receive help and if they didn't receive help every time:

“Satan tempts them, and they become jealous and very conscientious for their brethren, fearing that they will fail to do all their duty to them” *Ibid*.

Then the messenger of the Lord says:

“The mistake is on their own part. They are deceived” *Ibid*.

Isn't that interesting? Then the fact that somebody thinks somebody else ought to help them doesn't necessarily prove that they ought to be helped. Is that right? Now, where do you think the decision ought to rest whether a man uses his money to help some poor person or not? In light of our text, where would it rest? With the man that has the money. Isn't that right? That's why he *has* it. God has put it in his hands. Now, true, he'll have to give an account of his stewardship, but who will he have to give it to? To *God*. In the meantime, the brethren may appeal to him; other brethren may counsel him. But where must the decision rest? With the man.

“Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?”
Matthew 20:15.

Now on page 274, there is something very interesting suggested:

“The more able should ever act a noble, generous part in their deal with their poorer brethren, and should also give them good advice, and then leave them to fight life's battles through” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 1, page 274*.

Isn't that interesting? Sometimes what people need instead of money is what? Advice. But of course, many poor people would say, “But I can't put that in the cash register. The grocery store won't take that for beans or peas or flour.” But many poor people need *advice*.

But I want to ask you something. If you were poor, very poor, and you went to some brother that had some money, with the earnest appeal to him, and you were sure in your own mind that God was going to use *him* to solve your problem, and all he gave you was advice instead of money, what would you do? Would that be hard to take? It might be. But might that be in the providence of God the very thing you needed? This suggests that.

Now, this is not the only vision on the subject. Here's another one over on page 224. This is very interesting:

"Many lack wise management and economy. They do not weigh matters well and move cautiously. Such should not trust to their own poor judgment but should counsel with their brethren who have experience. But those who lack economy and good judgment are often unwilling to seek counsel. They generally think that they understand how to conduct their temporal business, and are unwilling to follow advice" *Ibid.*, Volume 1, page 224.

Why you know we're told, using the money standards of that time, that some families could live better on \$400 a year than others could on \$800. But do you know what the people, that would take \$800 to live as well as the other people did on \$400, do you know what they'd say if anybody offered advice? "Oh, you don't understand."

There are people now that have it fixed in their heads that it takes so much money to do something when the principle that *God* has given us is a very simple and important one, and that is that we're all to learn to *bring* our expense within the narrow compass of our what? Our income. That's right. So the first thing in figuring anything is not what we want or even what we need. It's what the what is? What the *income* is.

Some people haven't learned that. They get into financial problems and they want others to help them out. When God says many times, what they need is what? Advice, counsel. But this suggests that generally the ones that need it, don't think they need it. But what they think they need is what? Money. They think money would solve their problems.

I was quite interested in what I heard one of our brethren who's had a lot of experience in financial work say: "To find out what it takes for the average family in America to run, just add 10 percent to what their income is." That's it. Quite often, you'll find those that adding ten percent wouldn't be enough, would it?

Now, do you see I'm dealing with a very *practical* thing tonight in this matter of solving problems? If your problems are financial and you're looking to somebody else to help you with those by furnishing money, God says what you need sometimes is not money but what?

[Audience] Counsel.

Yes. But tell me, if *you* think you need money, how is the only way on earth God can drive you to your real need? By shutting up the generous hearts of those that might shell out the money to you. See? And unless God *helps* you, you'll be tempted to feel hard toward the people that close up.

Now, this that I'm dealing with right now is merely an illustration of the great principle that I am studying tonight. The great principle is that whenever you come to solve your problem and someone else enters into it, you must let *that* person decide whether he enters into it or not. Is that right? And the *way* he enters into it. You must leave that with him and God because God has left it there. If you assume even in your heart to judge him, then you're getting clear out of your place on the judgment seat. Instead of *helping* God solve the problem, you're getting in God's way.

Well, if you want another reference or two on that, I'll give it to you here: Volume 1, page 481 and *Volume 1*, page 642. This was very interesting to me because it was talking about our first sanitarium—The Western Health Reform Institute, you remember it was called, there in Battle Creek.

And of course, when that was started our poor people all out in the churches, what do you suppose they wanted to do? Come to the sanitarium at Battle Creek and get treatments and have the doctors care for them. That's just what they ought to do, wasn't it? Well, you read what it says there. It says because there were many poor people, and the institution didn't have a lot of money, it says the stay of such at the institute must be brief. They were to go there with the idea of learning just as fast as they could some of the simple laws of health, and then going on home and living out those principles, and not wait until they got well. Why? Well, because, friends, they'd sink the institution if they just piled in on it.

"Well," you say, "Couldn't God work a miracle?"

Sure He could. God could work a miracle. He rained manna from Heaven for 40 years, didn't He? But, dear friends, God does not generally *work* miracles to advance His cause. He deals with the laws of sowing and reaping—the law of cause and effect. And in all these problems, remember, He is working out His will. Is that right? Now I leave that with you on that point.

Now, it may not be money, friends. The problem that you're dealing with may have nothing to do with money. Put your purse in your pocket and don't worry about that now. I'll deal with something else.

Sometimes the problem that you're facing is something that calls for somebody else's *time*, somebody's *attention*, somebody's *advice* and counsel, somebody's *thought*. It may be that the problem calls for somebody's loving interest, somebody's affection. Ah, there's many a heart-broken soul, friends, that the only thing that can solve their problem, *they* think, is for somebody to love them, somebody to take an interest in them. Now, what about *that*? Can you make somebody else love you? Can you make somebody else give you their time and attention?

"Ah," but you say, "I don't know what in the world I'm going to do unless So and So does so and so."

Well, that's the point. Under those circumstances, what attitude will you take? Go back to our principle:

"Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?"
Matthew 20:15.

Who should control how a person divides out his time and attention and love and interest? Who should do it? The person himself—guided by God, of course. And ah, my dear friends, we're told very plainly that God often allows those in whom we place confidence to fail us so that we'll learn the folly of trusting in man and making flesh our arm. You've read that, haven't you?

So if God allows somebody that you depend on to fail you, don't think that that means that there's no way to solve your problem. It just means that God has stopped up *that* avenue because that isn't the avenue He wants you to get it through.

"In His mercy and faithfulness, God often permits those in whom we place confidence to fail us, in order that we may learn the folly of trusting in man, and making flesh our arm"
Ministry of Healing, page 486.

So you must not attempt to decide what somebody else is to do for you with their time, their attention, their love, their interest, their tender care. You may ask for it, but if you don't get it, don't let that weigh you down. And don't, please, don't let it cause you to judge that brother or sister, for if you *do*, then you get out of the line of God's providence.

Now, in this same book *Ministry of Healing* (and by the way, this is one of the greatest books on solving problems I know of anywhere; just study it from cover to cover), I came across something here that I think is one of the sweetest things that I ever read. Listen:

"The Lord's care is over all His creatures. He loves them all, and makes no difference, except that He has the most tender pity for those who are called to bear life's heaviest burdens. God's children must meet trials and difficulties. But they should accept their lot with a cheerful spirit, remembering that for all that the world neglects to bestow, God Himself will make up to them in the best of favors" *Ibid.*, page 199.

Isn't that nice? Oh, listen:

"For all that the world neglects to bestow, God Himself will make up to them in the best of favors" *Ibid.*

I wonder if we could say that together. Let me read the first part and then you say it with me:

“For all that the world neglects to bestow” *Ibid.*

Together:

“For all that the world neglects to bestow, God Himself will make up to them in the best of favors” *Ibid.*

Together:

“For all that the world neglects to bestow, God Himself will make up to them in the best of favors” *Ibid.*

Isn't that nice? What does that mean? Well, if I understand this, friends, God has promised me a certain amount. What is that certain amount? Philippians 4:19:

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” Philippians 4:19.

Now I was illustrating it with money a while ago. But right now we're studying the matter of love, attention, interest and all that sort of thing. But whatever it is, I need a certain amount. I need money. We all need some money. And I need love. Don't you? I need attention. I need appreciation. I need understanding. I need security. I need all these other things that the wise men have figured out large names for. I need all of them.

Now, who knows what I need? God does. Has He promised to supply them? Yes. Now listen. Some of it He's going to supply through human beings. But oh, suppose that I think Brother Boykin ought to supply me some of it, either money or attention or love or interest or care or appreciation or understanding, something. I think he ought to. But suppose he doesn't. If he fails to do that, what will God do? Why it says He Himself will make it up to me in the best of favors.

Now, if you believe that, will you worry whether Brother Boykin does it or not? No, you won't. If I really believe that, friends, and I really feel that Brother Boykin is the one through whom God ought to answer my prayer, and Brother Boykin fails up, I'll say, “Never mind, God will see I get it through some other way.” Is that right?

Do you see then, friends, that when we murmur and complain because other people don't do what we think they should in looking after us and taking care of us, we are showing our lack of faith in the promises of God? We are indicating a lack of understanding that God has how many ways? A thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing.

Friends, wouldn't this just relieve us of half the problems and ills of life that cause us to complain, if we would just get hold of this simple lesson tonight? Get down on our knees and cry to God for help, and then go to work in the direction we think God wants us to. If we think that there is somebody over here that ought to help us, go and ask them.

But if they don't do it, don't do like Jonah out there under the gourd tree, start murmuring and complaining. No, no. Go back to our knees and say, "Now, Lord, I thought he was the one that was going to help me, but apparently he isn't. Now Lord, what's the answer? What do You want me to do next? Where shall I go now? Or do You want me just to look to You direct and see what You'll do?"

Why friends, God has how many ways did we just quote? A thousand ways. How foolish I am to shut myself up to *one* man and say, "Lord, he's *got* to do it. He's *got* to do it. Oh, help him, Lord, to do it. Break his hard heart and change his selfish heart and make him willing to help me out." How foolish, friends, to do it that way. How grieved God must be with such a *childish* attitude on the matter. Don't you think so?

How much better to it is to pray, "Now, Lord, You have a thousand ways. I thought that was the way, but if that isn't it, Lord, any one of Your other 999 ways is all right. I'll leave it with you. And I'm willing to wait your time and your channel, and I'm not going to blame my brother. Maybe the thing that I had earmarked, you wanted to use to help somebody else."

And friends, when we get to the eternal land, when we get to the glory country, do you know one of the things we're going to thank God most for? That is that He didn't answer all our prayers the way we asked Him. That's right. That's what we're told here. You can read it in *Ministry of Healing*:

"We shall see that our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings"
Ministry of Healing, page 474.

Oh, thank God for that, friends.

Why do you remember James and John and their mother came to Jesus? They had a problem. They thought Jesus was going to solve it. Their problem was how to get to be first in the kingdom. They thought that if they could get Jesus in with them in it, that would solve it. Don't you know, that's the way some people pray today? They want to get God on their side.

What did Jesus do? Did Jesus allow Himself to become a part of that political clique? No, He didn't. He said, "God will handle that matter." And He didn't promise them anything about being the first in the kingdom. Oh, I am so glad that when James and John get up there with their mother and look over the books, they'll come around to Jesus and say, "Jesus, we're so glad You didn't give in to our suggestions and do what

we wanted You to do. We're so glad you didn't." Won't they? I'm sure they were before they died. Oh, that God may bless us with this spirit of trust in Him.

You know this diet question is a wonderful example of this matter of letting other people make their own decisions. And of course with it, it's a nice thing if they'll let us do the same, don't you think?

I was reading over here in *Counsels on Diet and Foods*. Sister White said:

"All who sit at my table express themselves as being well satisfied with the food provided. But the other members of my family do not eat the same things that I do" *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, page 491.

What? Why, if you were sitting with the prophet at the prophet's table, wouldn't you watch what the prophet ate and eat everything the prophet ate? No.

"But the other members of my family do not eat the same things that I do. I do not hold myself up as a criterion for them. I leave each one to follow his own ideas as to what is best for him" *Ibid*.

I read that and I looked at it again. Could that be possible? The prophet of God? I've seen people who weren't anywhere near being a prophet that could not do that. They knew so much about the diet question that they not only knew what they ought to do, they knew what everyone *else* ought to do, and especially what they ought *not* to do. But the prophet of God, with the advantage of many, many revelations from Heaven on this whole question of diet and health says:

"I leave each one to follow his own ideas as to what is best for him. I bind no one else's conscience by my own" *Ibid*.

Did she have a conscience? Yes. Did she follow it? What did she expect others to do? Do the same with *their* conscience, not *hers*.

"One person cannot be a criterion for another in the matter of eating. It is impossible to make one rule for all to follow. There are those in my family who are very fond of beans, while to me beans are poison" *Ibid*.

Do you suppose she ate them? Probably not. If you were there at her table and saw that she missed the beans when they were passed around, you might begin to figure out why. But unless she told you, you might not know.

"Butter is never placed on my table, but if the members of my family choose to use a little butter away from the table,

they are at liberty to do so. Our table is set twice a day, but if there are those who desire something to eat in the evening, there is no rule that forbids them from getting it”
Ibid., page 491.

Now, that brings me to the thing that I am studying tonight. That is, what to do when other people interfere with your problem? Now there *are* those that conscientiously believe that for them, two meals a day are better than three. But some of those people if they happen to be around where other people are eating in the evening, what kind of a problem do they have?

“Oh,” they say, “My, why do those people have to eat in the evening? If they just wouldn’t eat in the evening, then it wouldn’t be such a bother to me.”

And so what it boils down to is this: “Brother, you shouldn’t eat in the evening and Sister, you shouldn’t eat in the evening.”

“Why?”

“Well, because it makes it hard for me.”

And so to solve *my* problem, there are certain things I want you to do or not to do. Of course, when I put it that way, it makes it look how? Ridiculous, doesn’t it? That’s the way it ought to look, isn’t it? Because it is.

Every time you get your problem solved by trying to decide what other people are to do, whether it’s on the diet question, the money question, or any other question, you are just fixing up a lot of trouble for yourself and maybe for other people too. Because you can sometimes, if you’re a good salesman, sell other people on the fact that they ought to solve your problem in *your* way, and they can get under quite a groaning burden trying to do it too.

Don’t do that. Leave other people with God, and if other people don’t do what you think they should, leave them with God, and you go right ahead and serve God.

Now another facet of this thing. What about people that accuse you? Maybe they tell lies. They might even tell the truth. That sometimes hurts worse than the lies, doesn’t it? Suppose they reproach you to your face or suppose they tell things about you to others. Suppose they circulate reports about you and that makes problems for you. Do you ever have any problems like that? I suppose so. Most people do. What will you do with it? Will you start running down this one and that one, trying to get them to do the thing that will solve your problem?

I was reading a wonderful story over here in 2 Samuel 16 about David. You remember that David’s son, Absalom, rebelled against him, and came into Jerusalem to take the kingdom. And David, to save bloodshed there in Jerusalem, withdrew. And as he

was on his way from Jerusalem down toward Jordan to cross over, there came out one of the servants of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei. It's 2 Samuel 16: 5–13.

What did this man Shimei do? Why friends, watch! He took up stones and started to throw them at the king. And he took up *dirt* and threw it at the king—King David. And he began to curse him and to tell all the bad things that he thought David had done. And what did he say?

“Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial” 2 Samuel 16:7.

And then he started in to belabor him and tell what a wicked man David was and how he had taken the kingdom from Saul and all that sort of thing.

Now, the servants of David were all in an uproar. One of them, one of the leaders of the army said to David, “Oh, just give me the word and I will go over and take my sword and take off his head. He shouldn’t talk that way about the king.” Now, listen:

“And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day” 2 Samuel 16:11–12.

So David just went right on his way and let the stones come and the dirt. And he didn’t let his soldiers go over and take off that foolish man’s head.

I thought it was a wonderful lesson, friends. And if the king of Israel could take the stone-throwing and the dust casting and the cursing and say, “Let him alone, the Lord has bidden him do it. Maybe the Lord will requite me good for it,” I think we shouldn’t get too fussed up if somebody says something about us that we don’t like. What do you say?

Let’s not think that the solving of our problem is dependent on Shimei. No. Nor on Abishai either. Let’s not think that the only way to solve our problem is for somebody to take Shimei’s head off, to stop his cursing. David had a grasp of the providences of God, and he simply left it with God and let him alone. Let him alone.

Now in closing, friends, this thought. I want to take you to the Garden of Gethsemane. There is Jesus in that anguish, and there are the disciples sleeping when they should be praying. And by and by the mob appears. And Jesus says, “Come, let’s be going.” And they get up. And there comes Judas and betrays Him with a kiss. And the mob comes and they’re going to take Jesus. And what does Peter do? Peter begins to solve the problem. Does he work hard at it? Yes. He takes that sword and

smites at once to defend his Master. He hits pretty well, too. He *almost* gets the man's head. But he gets his ear.

What does Jesus do? He does *just* what Peter doesn't *want* Him to do. He steps in and interferes and undoes all of Peter's work. He puts the ear back. And then He tells Peter not to use that sword anymore. Do you remember? And how does Peter feel about it? Peter is offended. You see, Peter had it all figured out what his part in solving the problem was, and what everybody else's part should be. And when the Lord (Watch it!) didn't fit into Peter's plan, Peter ran away from the whole thing.

Oh, my dear brother, my dear sister, there are some people who *think* they know not only how the brethren ought to do, but how even God ought to do. And it's a dangerous thing to know all the answers, friends. Anybody who knows all the answers has some of them wrong. I can tell you that.

And so tonight, if your heart at any time has been oppressed and distressed and perplexed because somebody didn't fit into your problem the way you thought they ought to, I trust that these little lessons will be a blessing to you. They are to my heart tonight, friends.

And I thank God that with David I can say, "Let God handle things." Let *God* handle things. If a problem comes up, let's do our best to find the answer. If it involves other people helping, let's ask them if we feel impressed. Let's let God impress them if that's His way. But if they don't come along and do the thing we think they should, let's leave them with God and turn to anyone of God's other *thousand ways*, for God has never, never put Himself, friends, where you and I are in danger merely because somebody else won't do his duty. Our Father is at the helm.

"Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; All things are open to His divine survey; And from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best"
Ministry of Healing, page 417.

Shall we bow our heads?

Precious Lord, we thank Thee for another lesson in solving problems. And we are so thankful to know that while we can invite and enlist others to help us in these problems, that we are never entirely dependant on them. Our hope is in the Lord our God. And we rejoice that we do not need to judge others or condemn others. That we can leave with them the stewardship of their time, their money, their affection, their interest, everything they have. So teach us, Lord, to work with Thee, and let us learn how to be happy in each problem Thou dost send through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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