

7 Reasons Why Feeling Sorry for Yourself Is a Sin

Yesterday morning I had a good reason to feel sorry for myself. I woke up at 1:30 a.m. in a quiet, comfortable hotel room and could not go back to sleep. I'm used to insomnia as a nightly occurrence, but when 4:00 and then 5:00 rolled around (and the alarm is set for 6:00) tears of self-pity started to rise. I had a five-hour drive ahead of me, and it seemed unfair that I would have to face that on three hours of sleep.

Unfortunately, I had been listening all day to John Piper's audio book, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals*, and he listed the particular sins he struggles with. Self-pity was one of them.

Is self-pity a sin? I had never considered this until Piper's words and my lack of sleep collided. After much thought (and I had plenty of time to think about it in the middle of the night—don't you feel sorry for me?), I begrudgingly have to agree.

7 Reasons Why I Think Self-Pity Is a Sin

- Self-pity is a **refusal to accept a trial as a test of faith**, thus **inhibiting my own growth toward maturity** and completion in Christ. "My brothers, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith develops patience. But let patience perfect its work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing" (James 1:2-4).
- Self-pity **demand that I am entitled** to a certain quality of life that has not been promised to me in Scripture. Jesus says, "I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome

the world” (John 16:33).

- Self-pity **dilutes my compassion** for others, as I elevate my own suffering to a place of prominence. “Finally, be all of one mind, be loving toward one another, be gracious, and be kind” (1 Pet. 3:8).
- Self-pity is married to **grumbling** and complaining. “Do all things without murmuring and disputing” (Phil. 2:14).
- Self-pity **ousts gratitude**. “Let the peace of God, to which also you are called in one body, rule in your hearts. And be thankful” (Col. 3:15).
- Self-pity **fills my time** with useless whining and moaning instead of prayers for help and rescue from the Almighty God. “... and call on Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will glorify Me” Ps. 50:15).
- Self-pity **will only accept joy that comes from reversal of circumstances** instead of joy that comes from the Lord. (“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” (Phil. 4:4).

So, I accepted the sleepless night as a trial from the Lord and decided I would rejoice in the opportunity to trust Him for my day of travel. I made the trip safely and wide awake (minus one 20-minute snooze at a truck stop). I even came home with enough energy to unpack, do two loads of laundry and write this blog post.

What do you think—life without self-pity?