

Overcoming Self-Pity

Those I love have turned against me. ... I have escaped with only the skin of my teeth. Have pity on me, my friends, have pity, for the hand of God has struck me. **—Job 19:19-21**

Self-pity doesn't receive as much attention as some sins receive, and it doesn't cause the scandal that some sins cause. For instance, everyone is interested in a sexual sin because it causes such a scandal. But you can be overcome with self-pity, and it won't be as scandalous. You may think that the devil only wants you to fall into sexual sin. Listen. The devil doesn't care how he gets hold of you, so if he can get hold of you by causing you to wallow in self-pity, he will do it.

How can we define self-pity? It is feeling sorry for oneself, and it is a self-justifying condition. It always seems right. The frightening thing about it is that sometimes we fail to recognize we are in this condition. Self-pity is acquired without any training or discipline. It is as natural to us as a pig wallowing in mire.

The devil loves your self-pity, because once you start feeling sorry for yourself you will be no threat to him. He may leave you alone. He won't bring any other temptation into your life. He will say, "I've won with that person." He can now toy with you. If you stay in that condition, you are perilously close to self-destruction, and that's not just sin—that is gross, heinous sin. You are letting the archenemy of Jesus Christ have you where he wants you.

I will tell you where to begin to find your cure. You begin where Jesus ended His life on earth, at the cross. Until His last breath, He was being tempted to succumb to self-pity greater than any you will ever know. Jesus couldn't even allow Himself a single instant of self-pity, because it is sin.

Jesus never sinned despite being tempted at all points as we are. He knows what you are feeling, and He understands. But you need to recognize what self-pity is and come to terms with the problem. You have to stop blaming others and admit that you have sinned before God.

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