

Learning to Cope
Psalm 3:2-5
By Russell Earl

Thesis: I want to show some healthy ways anyone can cope with difficult situations.

Intro: 1. Things man has to handle:

- a. Stress - from work, lack of work, family problems, health problems, etc
- b. Anxiety & Fear
- c. Loss

I. Reasons one must learn how to cope.

A. Reasons

1. Stress
2. Loss of a loved one
3. Temptation
4. Disappointments
5. Worry

B. Common Reasons

1. Stress (Moses – **Numbers 11:10-15**)
2. Loss of a loved one (David – **2 Samuel 12:15-21**)
3. Temptation (Joseph - **Genesis 39:7-12**)
4. Disappointments (Paul was betrayed and harmed by others – **2 Tim 4:9-10;14-16**)
5. Worry (Jesus – **Matthew 6:25-30**)

II. Dangers to avoid

A. Blame game

1. Blaming others will accomplish nothing.

- a. Even IF the fault is not yours, who is to blame for a situation rarely matters in the end.

2. Response to the area of concern is up to you, not others.

B. Unhealthy reactions

1. Substance use

- a. **This reaction is like jumping down a 50 foot well looking for sunshine.**
- b. **No answers are found here, only more problems.**

2. Binge eating

- a. **This results in building an unhealthy defense.**
- b. **Any comfort is temporary and often results in an addiction to food.**
 - i. From here the problems will only multiply.

3. Hermit response (Isolation)

- a. **This results in building an unhealthy mental defense.**
- b. **As seen with many over the last two years this can result in depression, poor mental and physical health and even suicidal thoughts.**
 - i. **Man was not created to be isolated.**

III. Lessons for Us Today (How the Bible says man should cope)

A. Bible examples

1. Moses (**Numbers 11;10-11a** Moses prayed)
 - a. His stress did not cause Him to stop serving God
2. David (he prayed and worshipped God (**2 Samuel 12:16,20**))
3. Joseph (He remembered what God says about such things (**Genesis 39:9-10**))
4. Paul (He did not return evil for evil (**2 Tim 4:16; Rom 12:17a**))
5. Jesus' response (**Matthew 6:31-34**)

B. Other responses to consider

1. Find somewhere positive to put your focus.
 - a. Find a new hobby
 - b. Find healthy ways to entertain yourself
 - c. Exercise
 - d. Plan a trip or an event that you will look forward to
 - e. If recovering from the loss of a spouse, don't allow your home to be quiet.
 - i. Keep music or your favorite tv program playing in the background.

Application & Conclusion:

1. There will always be things you have to cope with in this life.
2. The Christian must work to cope, to respond in a way that is helpful to self and not harmful to others.
3. Full Invitation

Non-Christians must:

Hear – James 1:22, Romans 10:15,17

Believe – Jn 12:44, Jn 8:24, Mt 16:16

Repent – Luke 13:2-3

Confess – John 12:42, Romans 10:9

Be Baptized – 1 Pt 3:21, Acts 22:16, Col 2:11, Mk 16:16, Rom 6:3-4

Live faithfully – John 14:15, Rev 2:10

Christians must:

Repent: Acts 17:20, Acts 8:37, Lk 13:3

Pray: James 5:16, 1 Jn 1:9