

No Solution

Recently I finished a position substitute teaching for a woman on maternity leave. For six weeks I taught seventh and eighth grade math. The students were great, the faculty friendly and helpful, but as an English major, teaching Algebra 1 proved challenging.

I would study the night before, ask my husband for help (he taught Algebra 1 at a different school), and still we would come up against problems in class we couldn't solve. It was a very humbling experience.

One night I opened the teacher's manual to study the next lesson for Algebra 1 and had to laugh. "I can't believe this!" I told my husband. "Now I am to teach a lesson on problems that have **no solution!**" I had a hard enough time teaching the ones with solutions! "Who thinks up problems with no solution?" I wondered.

Yet isn't that what happens in real life? Doesn't it seem at times that our problems have no solution? A marriage headed for divorce, a job loss, school problems, a misbehaving child, an infant who doesn't sleep through the night, a diagnosis of fast-growing cancer, financial problems—any of these problems and others can seem to have no solution when they hit us. There are times we want to write "No solution" in the answer key of life.

Talk about a problem with no solution! Our very first problem started with Adam and Eve's disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Sin entered the world, separating us from our perfect God, and messing up our perfect world. Yet in love, before we even knew the problem, God had the solution. Just *one* solution. Not many solutions. Our Savior Jesus is the one and only solution to our problem of sin.

Some people will tell you there is no problem. They refuse to see their sin. So they see no need for a Savior. Other people will tell you there are many possible solutions. Do good, be a good person, and God, or the gods, will look kindly on you. But our answers to this problem are marked incorrect. God provided the one and only solution to our problem of sin. "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

We receive a passing grade—more than that, an A+—thanks to Jesus taking our place, living a perfect life and taking the punishment for our sins with his death on the cross. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:16,17)

When substitute teaching I had a teacher's manual called "Worked Out Solutions," which supplied the step-by-step solutions to nearly all of the problems in the textbook (but not for the handout worksheets!). In the Bible, God has given us the "worked out solutions" to many of the problems in our lives. Sometimes we don't see an answer to our problems in this life. Yet the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 8:32: "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along

with him, graciously give us all things?" We can be confident that the God who provided the perfect solution for the problem of sin will also provide solutions for all the lesser problems of our lives. Trust that God, our Master Teacher, does have the answers—all the answers—and that he cares for you!

Prayer

Dear God, I have many problems in my life that I don't know the answer to, but I trust that you do. Please guide me in the way that is best and give me wisdom and strength. May your will be done! Amen.

Written by Katrina Bohn

Reviewed by President Emeritus David Valleskey