

SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION – ITS CAUSES AND CURE

CHAPTER 3– MEN AS TREES, WALKING

I. REVIEW

- A. The Condition – Psalm 42:5,11 – “My soul is cast down;” Lack of Joy
- B. Main Cause – Unbelief

II. BLINDNESS NEEDS TO BE HEALED

Mark 8:22-26 And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Do you see anything?” And he looked up and said, “I see people, but they look like trees, walking.” Then Jesus^[6] laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. And he sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.

Who was/is this miracle for?

III. THE PARTICULAR CASE

Stages or Levels of Obscurity

A. Something is Wrong

Very often they are clear that there is something wrong with them as they are. They are unhappy about themselves. Something has happened to them which has given them a sense of dissatisfaction with themselves as they are. ... Something has happened to them which has given them an entirely new view of the kind of life they were living.

B. Another Level – See some Value in the “Christian Life”

- Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
- 1 Corinthians 13 (vs 4,5)

C. Even further – See that Jesus is the answer to their problems, that “Jesus is somehow the Saviour”

IV. WHAT IS MISSING? WHAT ARE THEY NOT SEEING?

A. Clear Understanding of Certain Principles

B. Hearts are not fully Engaged

C. They Have a divided will

The third thing that is true about the people under discussion is that their will is divided. They are rebellious, they do not see why a man, because he calls himself a Christian, has got to do certain things and stop doing others. They think that is being narrow. Yet they denounce the old life and embrace the Christian life in general. They acknowledge Christ as Saviour and yet when it comes to the question of the application of His teaching through the will, there is confusion and they are not clear about it.

V. WHY ARE THEY IN THIS NONDESCRIPT CONDITION?

A. They Dislike Clear Cut Definitions

The more vague and indefinite your religion, the more comfortable it is. There is nothing so uncomfortable as clear-cut Biblical truths that demand decisions. These people therefore say: 'You are being too precise, you are being too legalistic. No, no, I do not like this. I believe in Christianity, but you are being too rigid and too narrow in your conceptions'. You are familiar with that type. But if you start with the theory that Christianity is not clear-cut, do not be surprised if you find yourself, like this man, seeing 'men as trees, walking'. If you start your Christian life and experience by saying that you do not want an exact focus or a precise definition in your picture, you probably will not have it!

B. Denying the teaching and Authority of Scripture

C. Not Interested in Doctrine

It is one thing to look at pictures and to be interested in words and shades of meaning. That does not disturb, that does not focus attention on sin, nor call for decision. We can sit back and enjoy that; but doctrine speaks to us and insists upon a decision. This is truth, and it examines us and tries us and forces us to examine ourselves. So, if we start by objecting to doctrine as such, it is not surprising that we do not see clearly. The whole purpose of all the creeds drawn up by the Christian Church, together with every confession of faith on doctrine and dogma was to enable people to see and to think clearly.

D. Doctrines are not in the right Order

If you take the doctrine of regeneration before the doctrine of the atonement you will be in trouble. If you are interested in the rebirth and having new life, before you are clear about your standing with God, you will go wrong and you will eventually be miserable. The same applies to taking sanctification before justification. The doctrines must be taken in their right order.

VI. WHAT'S THE CURE?

2 Principles:

A. Above everything else avoid making a premature claim that your blindness is cured.

B. Avoid thinking and feeling "Why cannot I see? The whole thing is hopeless". They stop reading their Bible, they stop praying. The devil has discouraged many with lies. Do not listen to him.

Where do we stand? What exactly do we see? Have we got things clearly? Are we happy? Do we really see? We either do or we do not, and we must know exactly where we are. Do we know God? Do we know Jesus Christ? Not only as our Saviour but do we know Him? Are we 'rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory'? That is the New Testament Christian. Do we see? Let us be honest; let us face the questions, let us face them with absolute honesty. What then? Well, the last step is to submit yourself to Him, to submit yourself utterly to Him as this man did.