

SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION – ITS CAUSES AND CURE

CHAPTER 4 – MIND, HEART, AND WILL

I. REVIEW

- A. The Condition – Psalm 42:5, 11 – “My soul is cast down;” Lack of Joy
- B. Main Cause – Unbelief
- C. Lack of Clarity (Men as Trees, walking)

Romans 6:17

II. NEED FOR VIGILANCE

A. Awareness of the problem

We must be impressed by the fact that the forms which this particular condition may take seem to be almost endless. It comes in such different forms and guises that some people stumble at that very fact. They are amazed that there can be so many symptoms or manifestations of this one disease, this spiritual condition; and, of course, their ignorance of the problem in and of itself may lead to the very condition we are considering. The kind of person who thinks that once you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ all your problems are left behind and that the rest of the story will be ‘they all lived happily ever after’ is certain sooner or later to suffer from this spiritual depression.

B. Awareness of the Enemy

We are brought into this marvelous life, this spiritual condition by the grace of God. But we must never forget that over and against us is another power. We are citizens of the Kingdom of God, but the Bible tells us that we are opposed by another kingdom, which is also a spiritual kingdom, and that all along we are being attacked and besieged. We are in ‘the fight of faith’ and ‘For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places

III. GENERAL CAUSE

A. The Whole Man

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient [WILL] from the heart [HEART/EMOTION] to the standard of teaching [MIND] to which you were committed

So that, in describing the Christian the thing he is emphasizing is that there is a wholeness about his life. The whole man is involved, the mind, the heart and the will, and a common cause of spiritual depression is the failure to realize that the Christian life is a whole life, a balanced life. Lack of balance is one of the most fruitful causes of trouble and discord and disquietude in the life of the Christian man.

B. Sources of Imbalance

- i. Following in footsteps - *“Lop-sided Christians are generally produced by preachers or evangelists whose doctrine lacks balance, or rotundity, or wholeness.”*
- ii. Romans 5:20 – 6:2

The Christian is now ‘in Christ’, therefore he has not only died with Him, but has also risen with Him. It is only a man who has never really grasped the teaching who can ask such terrible questions as ‘shall we then continue in sin that grace may abound?’ The Apostle’s whole object in this chapter is to show the importance of grasping the balance of truth, the importance of taking hold of the whole gospel, and of seeing that if one but grasps it truly it leads inevitably to certain consequences.

- iii. Failure to realize the greatness of the gospel – WHAT IS IT?

The gospel is not something partial or piecemeal: it takes in the whole life, the whole of history, the whole world. It tells us about the creation and the final judgment and everything in between. It is a complete, whole view of life, and many are unhappy in the Christian life because they have never realized that this way of life caters for the whole of man’s life and covers every eventuality in his experience.

- iv. Failure to involve the Whole Man

1. HEAD
2. HEART
3. WILL

- v. Failure to be in the correct order

Truth comes to the mind and to the understanding enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Then having seen the truth the Christian loves it. It moves his heart. He sees what he was, he sees the life he was living, and he hates it. If you see the truth about yourself as a slave of sin you will hate yourself. Then as you see the glorious truth about the love of Christ you will want it, you will desire it. So the heart is engaged. Truly to see the truth means that you are moved by it and that you love it. You cannot help it. If you see truth clearly, you must feel it. Then that in turn leads to this, that your greatest desire will be to practise it and to live it.

IV. CONCLUSION

But God forbid that anyone should think that it ends with the intellect. It starts there, but it goes on. It then moves the heart and finally the man yields his will. He obeys, not grudgingly or unwillingly, but with the whole heart. The Christian life is a glorious perfect life that takes up and captivates the entire personality. O may God make us balanced Christians, men and women of whom it can be said that we are obviously, patently obeying from the heart the form of doctrine which has been delivered unto us.