

SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION – ITS CAUSES AND CURE

CHAPTER 5 – THAT ONE SIN

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)
- D. Involvement of the Whole Man – Mind, Heart, and Will

1 Timothy 1:16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life

II. BEING A CHRISTIAN

A. In the NT

A Christian must, therefore, be perfectly happy. But, as experience and the history of the Church show very clearly, that is far from being the case, and if we have adopted that superficial view we shall soon be in some kind of trouble. The fact is that there are always Christian people who are in difficulties for various reasons, and you cannot read the New Testament Epistles without seeing the truth of what I am saying. If simply to believe and to accept salvation is everything, then these New Testament Epistles would never have been needed, indeed, in a sense, you would not need the Church at all.

B. Trouble in the Christian Life

The fact that you are unhappy or troubled is no indication that you are not a Christian; indeed, I would go further and say that if you have never had any trouble in your Christian life I should very much doubt whether you are a Christian at all.

C. The Devil

For from the moment we become Christians we become the special objects of the attention of the devil... It is because we belong to Him that the devil will do his utmost to disturb and upset us. He cannot rob us of our salvation, thank God, but while he cannot rob us of our salvation he can make us miserable. He can, if we are foolish enough to listen to him, seriously limit our enjoyment of our salvation.

III. OUR PAST

A. Right Doctrine, But...

- i. Sin in the past
- ii. Unfulfilled promises

B. The Devil

C. Doctrine Again?!?!?

I would again say that this condition is almost entirely due to an ignorance of doctrine—a failure to understand the New Testament doctrine of salvation clearly and this is of the very essence of the treatment of the condition.

D. Don't Pray About It?

There is a sense in which the one thing that these people who are in this condition must not do is to pray to be delivered from it!

Now the Christian must always pray, the Christian must 'pray without ceasing', but this is one of those points at which the Christian must stop praying for a moment and begin to think! for there are particular problems in the Christian life concerning which I say that if you do nothing but pray about them you will never solve them. You must stop praying at times because your prayer may just be reminding you of the problem and keeping your mind fixed upon it. So you must stop praying and think, and work out your doctrine.

E. What to think? 1 Tim 1:12-16

- i. Paul as a model?**
- ii. Particular Sins v. Our Relationship to the Law of God**
 - 1. Joseph**
 - 2. David**
- iii. Only 1 Sin? Unbelief**

The trouble with this type of unhappy Christian is that he does not really believe the Scriptures. Have you thought of that? You say; 'My trouble is that terrible sin which I have committed'. Let me tell you in the Name of God that that is not your trouble. Your trouble is unbelief. You do not believe the Word of God. I am referring to the First Epistle of John and the first chapter where we read this; 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness'. That is a categorical statement made by God the Holy Spirit through His servant. There is no limit to it; there is no differentiation between sin and sin. I cannot see any qualification at all. Whatever your sin—it is as wide as that—it does not matter what it is, it does not matter what it was, 'if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness'. So if you do not believe that word, and if you go on dwelling on your sin, I say that you are not accepting the Word of God, you are not taking God at His word, you do not believe what He tells you and that is your real sin.

F. Union with Christ

- i. Acts 10: 9-16**
- ii. What was accomplished on the Cross?**
 - 1. Matt 1:21, 1 Peter 2:24, 2 Corinthians 5:21, John 19:30 "It is finished"**
- iii. Justification (again!)**
 - 1. Colossians 3:3, Romans 6:11**

G. Moving forward

If you look at your past and are depressed by it, if as a result you are feeling miserable as a Christian, you must do what Paul did. 'I was a blasphemer,' he said, but he did not stop at that. Does he then say: 'I am unworthy to be a preacher of the gospel'? In fact he says the exact opposite: 'I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful putting me into the ministry, etc.'. When Paul looks at the past and sees his sin he does not stay in a corner and say: 'I am not fit to be a Christian, I have done such terrible things'. Not at all. What it does to him, its effect upon him, is to make him praise God.