

July 2020

The response to God's good news, the gospel, could not be simpler or more obvious. We are to believe, to rely on the Lord Jesus Christ and the adequacy of His death for our sins.

Chester McCalley

Sound Doctrine _____

Depression: Some Causes and Cures, part 2

The Bible reveals to us that many of God's greatest leaders had periods of severe depression. Its intensity is evidenced by their request for death. Though they did not consider suicide, they did request God to remove them. In Numbers 11:15, Moses requested relief from the load of leadership and asked God "to kill me at once" if it was not forthcoming. When such a request was made, the answer was left entirely in the hands of God who frequently responded with a remedy for the problem but never responded by taking a life.

A primary example of depression is that of Elijah, whose experience makes it possible to note some of the causes and cures of depression. In our last newsletter, we looked at some of the causes of Elijah's depression; today we will explore some cures for depression.

Elijah's Depression: Its Cures

God assisted Elijah by meeting his physical need for food and rest. At the urging of an angel, Elijah "looked and behold, there was at his head a bread cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again (I Kings 19:6)." It is instructive to note that this was the first thing that God did for him, demonstrating that Elijah's problem was not all spiritual, recognizing the link of the physical and emotional part of man.

God assisted Elijah, not by rebuking him but by supporting him. God supported him

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Suggested Studies _____

Christian Living Series

We hope you've enjoyed going through this study again on Christian Living. It has covered in detail the facets and features of the doctrines a believer needs to live a life pleasing to the Lord. Beginning with our security as believers, to our prayer life, Bible study, attitudes during suffering and discipline, each class covers aspects that are a vital part of Christian Living. The last set of classes in this series are:

- CL 45 Prayer and Worship in the Christian Life
- CL 46 Expectations for Living the Christian Life
- CL 47 Prayer in Acts
- CL 48 Basis for Prayer
- CL 49 The Lord's Prayer, part 1
- CL 50 The Lord's Prayer, part 2

To place your order for these classes, use the enclosed order form or email your order to wtruth@kc.rr.com. When doing so, be sure to specify whether you prefer your classes in CD or Mp3 format. In case you missed some of the series, all of these classes are also available for streaming audio or for download on the Word of Truth website, www.WordofTruthKC.org. □

Honoring the Word

It's hard to believe that it's been 20 years since Chester went home to be with the Lord. We're so thankful for his years of faithful teaching and honoring God's Word.

In a frame on the wall next to the desk in his office was a quotation by someone identified only as C.H.M., who he believed to be C.H. MacIntosh. It read, "It is not a little strange that when a man consents to place his conscience in the keeping of his fellows, and to bow down his understanding to the opinions of men, he is considered meek, modest and liberal; but let him reverently bow to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and he will be looked upon as self-confident, dogmatic and narrow-minded."

This is even more true today. This is man's view of things, but it is not God's. One is reminded of Psalm 94:11 "The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are a mere breath (vain)."

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in a tactile sense—He touched him (I Kings 19:5-6). He supported him in a verbal sense—He spoke to him (I Kings 19:5). He supported him in a physical sense—He gave him bread and water (I Kings 19:6).

God assisted Elijah by asking him questions that helped him see his condition. God said, "What are you doing here, Elijah? (I Kings 19:9)" God did not say, "All right, Elijah. I'm going to level with you; here is your problem." Instead, God asked him questions that would make him think about himself and his condition. God did not criticize his answers, even when he was wrong. God provided him with meaningful activity, all of which supported his sense of being needed in the plan of God.

God assisted Elijah by allowing him to express himself freely. He was allowed to tell how he had been "zealous for the LORD" and how "I alone am left; and they seek my life...(I Kings 19:10)." At the same time, God did not leave him uncorrected, for He told him, "Yet I will leave 7000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him (19:18)." When he was corrected, it was without embarrassment, for the correction took place while God was talking to Elijah about something else. The correction was done indirectly but nonetheless definitely.

God assisted Elijah by giving him something to do. He was told to "Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD (I Kings 19:11)." He was told to "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus (I Kings 19:15)." In each case the task was meaningful—it was not "busy work" designed merely to keep him occupied. In each case the task reinforced Elijah's worth and his usefulness in the service of God.

God assisted Elijah by giving him something to think about. A fierce wind blows, and we are told "the LORD was not in the wind...." This is followed by an earthquake, and we are told "the LORD was not in the earthquake...." Next, a

fire passes by, and again we are reminded "the LORD was not in the fire...." Finally, a gentle wind is blowing, and the voice of God is heard (I Kings 19:11-13). All of this gave Elijah something to think about. It required meditation and reflection.

What, in fact, did all of this mean? First, we should keep in mind that Elijah had been thinking about revival in Israel that had failed to take place. Second, we must recall the dramatic event of chapter 18 and the expectations it created. Wouldn't one have expected a national revival to sweep from Mt. Carmel through the whole country? But this had not happened. In the wind, earthquake, fire, and gentle wind episode, God was reminding Elijah of His normal mode of operation. Fire, earthquake, and wind typically symbolize the presence of God. Here Scripture goes out of its way to say that God is not in these three things. God is saying, "Elijah, my way of bringing men to Myself will not be by repeated Mt. Carmel events." God's voice is rather associated with the gentle wind. Here is the way God will transform men: by the gentle, steady influence of His word.

God assisted Elijah by giving information that corrected his wrong perceptions.

God assisted Elijah by sending him Elisha. The Lord frequently ministers His strength through a human instrument. Paul noted this fact saying, "But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus (II Corinthians 7:6)." □