

Pilgrim's Progress - Part 8

by Alfred P. Gibbs

Soul depression is a spiritual slump that can be caused by physical, mental, or spiritual disability, and can be used by God to teach us valuable lessons.

Duration: 46:20

Scripture: Habakkuk 3:17

Topics: "Pilgrim's Progress"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that as disciples of Christ, we should not expect an easy path but rather face opposition and persecution from the world. He uses the analogy of a rough and difficult road to illustrate this point. The preacher encourages believers to have faith in God's word and trust in Him, even when circumstances are challenging. He also highlights the importance of finding joy in God, even in times of soul depression, and references the story of Jesus walking on water to illustrate this concept.

Transcript

Shall we read together in the 42nd Psalm? Psalm 42. As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.

When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me. For I had gone with a multitude. I went with them to the house of God, with a voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. O my God, my soul is cast down within me. Therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites from the hill Mizar.

Deep calls he unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts, all thy ways and thy billows, and his lovingkindness in the daytime. And in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. I will say unto God, my rock, why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me, while they say continually unto me, Where is thy God? Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

And now in Psalm 43. Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation. O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man, for thou art the God of my strength.

Why dost thou cast me off? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? O send out thy light and thy truth. Let them lead me, let them bring me into thy holy hill. Unto thy tabernacles.

Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy. Yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

I will speak this evening on the subject of soul depression. The Puritan's comment on those two verses repeated in Psalm 42, Why art thou cast down, O my soul, was this. David chideth David out of his dumps.

That's good. David grabs himself by the back of his neck and gives himself a good talking to. Did you ever give yourself a good talking to? Not a. You've heard of the man, haven't you, who was walking down the street talking with himself? And someone inquired, why do you talk to yourself like that? But he said, for two reasons.

First, I like to hear an intelligent gentleman speak. And secondly, I like to speak to an equally intelligent gentleman. Now David gave himself a good talking to in Psalm 42.

Just as you and I need sometimes to do the same thing. Now, the Psalms, as is well known, in fact that word soul occurs over 150 times in the Psalms. It is the book to which all believers turn in a crisis, and from which they are never sent empty away.

Human nature hasn't changed through the years. We still love and hate. We still have joys and sorrows.

We still enjoy prosperity and suffer adversity. Oftentimes we alternate between hope and despair. Sometimes we are optimistic, sometimes very pessimistic.

For man, as you know, is a tripartite being composed of spirit and soul and body. And, of course, the classic scripture for that is 1 Thessalonians 5.23. I pray God your whole spirit and body and soul be deserved blameless of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Three words are used to distinguish these three parts which go off to make man.

Soma is the body. Psuche, the soul. Pneuma is the spirit.

And these are kept distinct in the Word of God. In fact, only the Spirit of God and the Word of God can divide in thunder the soul and the spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart. It has been often pointed out that the body is the seat of world consciousness.

We become aware of the world around us through what we can see, and hear, and smell, and taste, and touch. That's the body. The soul is a seat of self-consciousness, like the man in the Triumph of Luke, who soliloquized, addressed his own soul, Soul, thou hast much good there laid up for many years.

Take thine ease. Be drink and be merry. We become aware of our own entity through our soul.

The spirit is the highest part of man to which God can communicate Himself. In fact, the body, and the soul, and the spirit may be likened to a three-story building. The ground floor is the body that rests on earth.

We get in touch with the world around us, the world of human beings in which we live and move, and have our being. And, as far as possible, the Christian should keep that ground floor in a good healthy condition. Proper food, proper rest, proper exercise keeps that ground floor in good physical trim.

The soul should be kept wholesome by reading those books that will minister to the development of our mind. And, as far as possible, the soul, then, should be kept in a wholesome condition. The spirit should be kept holy, holy for God.

And, when the body, and the soul, and the spirit are placed unreservedly at the disposal of the one who created it, and the one that redeemed both body, and soul, and spirit by His precious blood, then the soul can be said to be in a healthy condition. And, the words health, and whole, and wholesome, and holy all come from the same root word. Sometimes, however, the soul is used to describe the spiritual part of man as distinct from the physical part of man.

And, in the Psalms, we find the phrase often recurring, O my soul, bless the Lord, O my soul. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? So, we shall think this evening of the soul's depression. Here, then, is the soul's depression, a spiritual slump, a downward trend.

A lack of spiritual prosperity, with its consequent sorrow and sense of loss. Were you ever gripped by an unnameable dread, cold fear clutching your heart, a cloud upon the spirit, an acute melancholic outlook on things, a drab, pessimistic view of affairs, or, as David puts it, a mourning? Why go I mourning all the day because of the oppression of the enemy? This we do know that Satan will do his best to discourage a child of God, for he knows full well that the discouraged Christian is useless in God's service, and useful in his service. This soul depression, however, can arise from various sources.

So, we shall think of three things in regard to soul depression. First of all, the cause of it. Second, the consultation in it, and third, the cure of it.

First, then, the cause. Soul depression may have a varied origin. It may stem from a physical disability.

The spiritual is far more closely allied to the physical than we imagine. I told you, if you've ever read anything by A. T. Schofield, if going to a second-hand bookstore you can find any books written by A. T. Schofield, grab them. They're worth their weight in gold.

Two of his best books, to my mind, are Christian Sanity and Nerves in Disorder. And, the great point that Dr. A. T. Schofield, a nerve specialist, a Harley Street specialist, one of the top men of his class in his day, was this. When a Christian forgets what God remembers, he's in for trouble.

God knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are what? Dust. And, when we forget that we are dust, and imagine we're made of cast iron, that's when we lie on our back and count the fly specks on the ceiling, until such time as we get back our nervous energy, and that depression gives place to delight.

You have a case of that in the Bible. Elijah, 1 Kings 19, after the great victory on Mount Carmel, a message was brought to him from Jezebel. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if you're not like one of those prophets that you killed yesterday.

And, poor old Elijah, beat it for the snakes. It says he went for his life. A woman caught on his trail.

How far did he go? Well, he went 30 miles to Jezreel, from Jezreel into the wilderness. The poor fellow had gone about a hundred miles. He saw a bit of a juniper tree.

He flopped under the shade of that juniper tree, and handed in his resignation. She said, Lord, I know better than my fathers. Let me die.

Come on, undertaker, do your stuff. Shove me down, and put the dirt in on top of me. I'm all through.

I'm no better than my fathers. And, what was God's reply? The journey is too much for thee. You've overtaxed your physical ability.

You're jittery. You've come to an end of your physical resources. Elijah, what you need more than anything else right now is a good sleep.

Go to sleep. And, when Elijah awakened, God provided him some food. He said, now, Elijah, eat and drink.

Now, go to sleep again. And so, Elijah had a good night's rest. In fact, probably two nights rest.

He needed it badly. And now, in the strength of that food which God had provided for him, he went 40 days and for 40 nights. Many a godly Christian worker who has overtaxed his physical and mental powers has had to be laid aside from active service.

Many in this condition have doubted their soul's salvation. Good godly preachers and teachers of the Word of God have doubted that they were ever saved, while under this fearful mental depression produced by nervous exhaustion. They've become an easy prey to discouragement and doubt and despair.

That's why we said the physical is more closely allied to the spiritual than we imagine. Story is told of some Welsh miners, all Christians, who decided they would climb Mount Snowdon, at the mountain in Wales, and have a prayer meeting on the top of that mountain. To fortify themselves physically, they took with them several dozen of pork pies, one of the most indigestible things imaginable. In fact, if you don't digest these at the time, you digest after them.

When they got to the top of Mount Snowdon, they wrapped themselves around these pork pies, and then they sat, looking at one another, too full for words. Finally, one brother said, I fear, brethren, the Lord has departed from us. No, said a wiser brother, the Lord hasn't departed from us.

It's a case of too much pork pie inside of us. I knew a man once who went to see a girl who had got into a state of depression and was doubting their soul's salvation. True Christian.

When he came back, we inquired, well, what scripture did you give her? She didn't give her any scripture at all. I gave her some Carter little liver pills. Her liver was in poor shape.

Did you ever feel happy in the Lord with a splitting headache, or a pain in the front of your back? No. The physical and the spiritual are very closely allied, and the devil will take advantage, full advantage of that. Eat a great big meal before you preach, see what happens.

Now, secondly, it may be due to mental disability. The line between sanity and insanity is very finely drawn, particularly so when the person happens to be a near genius. Then there's only a hairline between

genius and insanity.

Some of God's choicest saints were so afflicted. A diseased mind instead of a diseased body. We can understand a diseased body in a child of God, but it's difficult to understand a diseased mind.

But what is the difference? Whether your brain is diseased, or your body is diseased, whether it's ulcers in your stomach or a tumor on the brain. Sickness of the mind. Calper had this.

That's why we chose that hymn, God Moves in a Mysterious Way, His Wonders Still Perform. He wrote that after an unsuccessful attempt to commit suicide. He got into a cab, ordered this cab to drive down to the Thames River in London.

But a fog came on, so dense that even the cabman, accustomed as he was to the streets of London, could not find his way to the Thames River, and so drove him back again to his house. God intervened, and Calper wrote that lovely hymn that's been such a blessing to the saints of God ever since. Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take.

The clouds you so much dread are big with mercy as you're breaking blessings on your head. You know what makes a desert? All sunshine and no clouds. I love the clouds.

I like to take colored pictures. I wish you could see some of the pictures I brought with me from colorful Colorado. Ah, that's the state.

Beautiful blue skies, flecked by cottonwood clouds. Beautiful sunshine, except when it rains and snows. We have 33 inches at one time down there.

But even that was lovely because the sunshine came out, and my, what a lovely, lovely picture it made. It's the clouds. Someone once wrote in the autographed album of a friend, May your life have enough clouds in it to make a glorious sunset.

It takes the clouds to produce the glorious sunset. Ultra-introspection will often cause a Christian to temporarily lose his mental balance. Undue brooding or morbid self-occupation may result in permanent mental imbalance.

Chronic melancholia and kindred ills are not uncommon to the children of God. Our psychological makeup. My, what a complex personality we had.

No wonder David said, I am wonderfully and fearfully made. These inhibitions, frustrations, complexes, superior and inferior. Sometimes Christians get a persecution complex.

And imagine that anybody's against them, including God. Poor old Jacob got into that and said, all these things are against me. Little realizing that God was working all things together for his good.

And 17 of the happiest years of his life, they just around the corner where prosperity is. So, soul depression may be due to mental disability. Third, it may be due to spiritual disability.

It may be due to spiritual declensions. David realized that fact. Day and night my hand was heavy upon me.

My moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Seal off. The lash of God was upon him.

His pillow was stuck with thorns. His blanket scorching. He had no rest by day or by night.

Day and night my hand is heavy upon me. And why? For a very good reason. David had sinned.

Unconfessed, unjudged sin was the result of this soul depression in his case. And not until his sin was honestly faced and confessed did the Lord put away his sin. And he in turn was compassed about with songs of deliverance.

And the depression gave place to delight. His sighing to singing. His darkness to dawn.

So, the depression in this case was God's end in chastening upon him. It may be due to one belief that causes us to say with Jacob, all these things are against me. Or with David, I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul.

Or with John the Baptist, sending his messages to Christ with a query, Art thou he that should come? Or do we look for another? A momentary lapse in our faith. I knew a very godly and a much used servant of Christ, now at home with the Lord. And he said to me on one occasion, Offred, do you know what my greatest difficulty is? I said, no.

He said, atheism. There he was, a godly man, much used of God. Man whose name was a household word in this country.

The devil hop on his trail. It may be due to disobedience to the known will of God. Jonah, if you recall, was one day very much down in the mountains.

Why? He had disobeyed God. When he came to the city of Joppa, he found there was a ship sailing for Tarsus. Goody, goody, goody! Divine providence! No, indeed, he paid the fare thereof.

And, believe me, he paid through the nose. There's a high cost of doing the will of God, but there's a higher cost of failing to do the will of God. Fourth, this soul depression may be caused by satanic activity.

Why go I mourning all the day because of the oppression of the enemy? We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness or wicked spirits in high places. The devil is a great hinderer, and he will seek to hinder the believer's fellowship and communion, knowing that in so doing he will hinder the believer's joy and assurance. And peace and usefulness.

Paul could say we are not ignorant of his devices, the oppression of the enemy. He tempted Christ. If he tempted our Lord who had no sin, who knew no sin, and did no sin, he will tempt you and me.

Indeed, he will. And he has plenty of material to work on when he tempts us. For there is that within our sinful nature that responds to his temptations.

The lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life. But then again, soul depression may be educational. And with this in view, turn with me, please, to the sixth chapter of Mark, where you have a lovely illustration of this fact.

Verse 45 of Mark, chapter 6, And straightway he, that is Christ, constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. And when evening was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

And he saw them toiling and rowing, for the wind was contrary unto them. And about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, as would have passed by them. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a ghost, or a spirit, and cried out.

For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship, and the wind ceased, and they were sore amazed in themselves, beyond measure, and wondered.

Let us look at this a few moments. This sole depression may be from God, to teach us what we never could have learned otherwise. Notice, first of all, Christ constrained them to enter into the boat, and put off for the other side.

He constrained them. He persuaded them to get into that boat, to go to the other side, knowing full well, when he constrained them thus, that in themselves they could not fulfill the mission. He knew of that contrary wind, of the darkness, of the stormy sea.

But, he has a lesson to teach them. He sent them into the darkness, and into the storm. Does the Lord Jesus send his disciples, sometimes, into the darkness, into the storm, into the teeth of a contrary wind? Why, of course he does.

The pillar of cloud led the people of Israel, after the triumph of the Red Sea, into the wilderness, beside what? The bitter waters of Marah. Does God sometimes lead his people beside the bitter waters? Yes, indeed. Don't imagine that bitter experience has come to you by chance.

It may come to you by the hand of God. As God allowed Job, you recall, to be stripped of his possessions, his family, and his health. And, as Job went through the valley of the shadow, in the darkness, all he could say was this.

He knoweth the way that I take, and what I have tried, I shall come forth as gold. Second, notice, he promised they should reach the other side, but he didn't tell them how they were going to reach the other side, nor did he say, I want you to go to the bottom. Their destination had been predetermined, the other side.

How far the other side is, we do not know. But, we do know our destination has been predetermined. Third, the fact that they were in darkness was no indication that they were out of the will of God, and that's important to remember.

You see, I don't know which way to turn. Everything is dark. I must be out of the will of God.

Not necessarily. These disciples are in the darkness, but they're in the will of God. See, it's testament of the darkness.

There are lessons we can learn in the darkness we can never learn in the light. That was God's promise to Cyrus, I will give thee the treasures of darkness. Darkness has treasures that the light cannot give.

The mushroom has been called the flower of darkness. It loves to bloom in the darkness. There's a wonderful verse in the 50th chapter of Isaiah.

It was a great help to me years ago. When I didn't know just what to do. It reads thus, "'Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?'

Now, notice those words again.

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord?' In what spiritual condition is a man who fears the Lord? In a good spiritual condition, or a bad spiritual condition?" You say, in a good spiritual condition. Splendid. "Who fears the voice of Jehovah's servant?' Who is Jehovah's servant? The Lord Jesus.

And yet, where is he? He's in the darkness, and he hath no light. Now, what is a man to do who fears the Lord, and obeys the voice of God's servant, and finds himself in darkness?" The 50th chapter of Isaiah. It was a great help to me years ago, when I didn't know just what to do.

Darkness and hath no light. Now, notice those words again. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord?' In what spiritual condition is a man who fears the Lord? In a good spiritual condition, or a bad spiritual condition?" You say, in a good spiritual condition.

Splendid. "Who fears the voice of Jehovah's servant?' Who is Jehovah's servant? The Lord Jesus. And yet, where is he? He's in the darkness, and he hath no light.

Now, what is a man to do who fears the Lord, and obeys the voice of God's servant, and finds himself in darkness?" Well, the Spirit of God tells us exactly what a man should do under those circumstances. And what's that? Nothing. If he brought you into the darkness, stay there till he takes you out.

Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. That's all you can do. Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

The next verse goes on to say, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks. Walk in the light of your fire, and in the spark that ye have kindled. This shall you have of my hand, you shall lie down in sorrow." Here's a Christian that gets into the darkness.

My, I'm in the darkness! Here's where I'm going to get busy. So, he gropes around in the darkness, gets a bit of kindling wood together, takes the match out of his pocket, lights it, and immediately he's in the light. Goody, goody, goody! He's in the light.

Sparks everywhere! A regular pyrotechnic display. Now, does our God walk in the light of the fire that you've kindled? Now, where does a man walk if he walks in the light of a fire that he has kindled? Let's suppose he heeds the advice of Horace Greeley. Go west, young man! And so he walks due west.

What happens? Get into the darkness. I must have gone east. I must go east.

So, he walks due east. What happens? Get into the darkness. Well, we try the north.

He goes due north. What happens? He gets into the darkness as he leaves the fire of his own making. Well, I'll go south.

With the time, anyhow. And so he takes a walk south. What happens? Gets into the darkness.

Now, where does a man walk if he walks in the light of his own fire? He goes round and round. Tremendous lot of motion, but he doesn't make an inch of progress. And finally, utterly, utterly exhausted, he lies down in sorrow.

And soon, he's where he was before. He's in darkness. He's wasting his breath and his energy trying to get out of the darkness into which God has allowed him to go, in order to teach him in the darkness the lesson he could learn in no other way.

So, I go on not knowing, nor would I if I might. I'd rather walk in the dark with God than go alone by sight. Therefore, the fact of the contrary wind that they experienced was no indication they were out of the will of God.

The contrary wind? Do Christians have a contrary wind? I'll say they do. In the world, he shall have what? Tribulations. Plenty of contrary winds, and this all-evil, corrupt nature within you will provide you with a tornado every now and then to break the monotony.

No easy path has been promised to the disciples of Christ. All that has been promised is the world's hatred, the world's scorn, the world's opposition, the world's persecution, plus the presence of the Lord Jesus in every emergency that may arise. You know, it's always an encouragement.

You're going from one place to another. You say, what's the best route? Well, they said there's only one route, and the best route is this. Ten miles out of the city, you'll come to a very rough part of the road for three miles.

Bumpity-bump, bumpity-bump, bumpity-bump. And then, about 14 miles after that, you'll have several very difficult hills to climb. You'll almost have to go in second gear.

And then, down! Boy, watch that downward grade there. You've been warned. And then, you've got to go through a ford.

I hope the water's low when you get to that ford, because, believe me, you're going to have trouble, unless you watch out. But, that's the way to go. And so, you start off.

And, when you come to the bumpity road, you say, oh, goody, goody, goody, this good old bumpity road. I know I'm on the right road now. It's bumpity.

Then, comes those hills. Oh, good, this is right. I must be on the right road.

There are these hills. Look at that. Boy, I'm on the right road, all right.

And, there's that ford. So, hope the river's low. And so, all these difficulties but confirm you in the fact you're on the right road.

So, when men persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for the sake of the Lord Jesus, don't get discouraged. That's what you've been promised. A hundredfold with persecutions.

You see, God gives ten thousand percent interest on all spiritual investments with persecutions. What are the persecutions for? To keep you humble while you're accepting your coupons, of course. What do you think? Keeps your feet on the ground.

So, the fact that you are bucking a contrary wind is no indication you're out of the will of God. Good. The fact that they made no seeming progress was no sign they were out of His will.

They didn't seem to be getting anywhere, but they didn't give up. They didn't hand in their resignation. They didn't say, come on, folks, let's quit.

Let's make it unanimous. Let's call into a hole and pull the holy knuckles. Nothing doing.

Though the wind was contrary, they pulled on those oars, and though they made no seeming progress, they were in the will of God. So, if you're having a kind of a lean time, don't get discouraged. Don't quit.

Don't take a huff. If you'd like to live in the kind of a church you'd like, don't get in a huff and go on a long, long hike, for you'll only find what you left behind, for there's nothing that's really new. It's a knock on yourself when you knock your church.

It isn't a church. It's lovely weather outside. Sixth, a sense of loneliness is no indication you're out of the will of God.

Christ left them alone. Christ left them alone. He deliberately withdrew from those disciples.

Now then, what are they going to learn? They're going to learn how much they need Him, how indispensable the Son of God is, for they never could have learned that lesson apart from this. In the desert, God shall teach thee what a God that thou hast found. Where was the Lord Jesus all this while? Careless? No, indeed.

He was on the mountaintop, praying for them, in the attitude of intercession. And from the top of that mountain, as He prayed, He saw them toiling in ruin. Jesus knows all about our struggles.

He will guide till the day is done. There's not a friend like the Lord Jesus. No, not one.

No, not one. He knows all about you. He knows all about those temptations, all about those difficulties.

And then notice next, in the midst of their trial, they were delivered by the presence of Christ. Jesus walked on the water. The contrary elements were under His control.

They were having a great deal of trouble with the sea, but now they saw one coming toward them, who walked on the sea, and everything other than His feet was under His absolute control. And you notice this. I love this.

He tested their desire to experience His presence. He made as though He had gone past them. I can see the Lord Jesus looking at them out of the corner of His eye.

See the picture? He wanted to see whether they realized their need of Him. How good! The Lord won't force Himself on anyone. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

He wants us to invite Him. And He calmed their fears with His assuring word. Be of good cheer.

It is I, be not afraid. And the moment they received Him into the ship, they were there. They'd arrived.

Their difficulties were over, and I'll guarantee they thank God for the rest of their lives for this experience on the dark and stormy seas of Galilee. So, cheer up, brethren. The worst is yet to come.

Cheer up! He'll not leave you alone. I will never leave thee. I'll never forsake thee.

But, He puts us through the testing. Now, second, the consultation in depression. Soul depression, first of all, must be faced.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? No use dodging it, or forcing an optimism that is unreal. Fear the lion in his den. You can't sing it off, or laugh it off, or shrug it off.

So, face it. I am suffering from a soul depression. Why? Second, it must be traced.

Not only faced, but traced. Why this soul depression? Is it some physical disability? If so, I'd better see a doctor. Get some pills.

Is it a mental disability? Let me lay hold upon God. Let me not indulge in undue, and over, and ultra introspection. Is it spiritual? Is it because of something in my life? Have I got out of the will of God? Is it the result of satanic energy? Or, is God teaching me something in this trial, in this difficulty? Andrew Murray wrote, in time of trouble, say, he brought me here.

It is by his will I am in this difficult place. In that, I will rest. Second, he will keep me in his care, and give me grace in this trial to behave as his child.

Third, he will make the trial a blessing, teaching me the lessons he wants me to learn, and working in me the grace he intends for me. Fourth, in his good time, he can bring me out again, how and when he knows best. So, therefore, the child of God, in difficulty, can say, I am here by God's appointment.

I am here in God's keeping. I am here under his training, and I am here for his time. It must be traced.

Many a child of God, when he gets into difficulty, says, how can I get out of it? When he should have said, what can I get out of it? Let me say that again. Very often, when a child of God gets into difficulty, his one consuming thought is, how can I get out of it? It would be to his spiritual profit if he asked another question. What can I get out of this? What can I learn from this? Third, it must be placed in the hands of the one who knows, and loves, and cares.

It must be placed, it must be traced, it must be placed in the hands of the strong, eternal Son of God. Now, third, the cure of depression. First, hope thou in God.

Hope is the anchor of the soul. Some trust in horses, some trust in chariots, but, says David, we will remember the name of the Lord our God. The worst that can happen to the child of God simply shortens the distance to the homeland.

So, cheer up. Second, he must stay in God. Let him trust in the Lord, and stay upon his God.

Third, he must trust to God. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. You remember that lovely chorus? Trust in the Lord, and don't despair, he will take care of you.

A Christian man once said to a brother in the Lord, I have no faith in this matter, or feeling, but I'm just acting on the Word of God. His friend answered, why, that is faith. That is faith.

If our faith were but more simple, we would take him at his word, and our lives would be all sunshine with the glory of the Lord. Fourth, let him joy in God. One of the great passages of the Word of God is found in the closing chapter of the prophecy according to Habakkuk.

You remember what he says? Though the fig tree shall not blossom, although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines. The labor of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat. The flocks shall be cut off from the herd, and there shall be no herd in the stalls.

What a depressing situation! What are you going to do, Habakkuk? Yes, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. That's one of the greatest verses in the Bible. That's faith.

When nothing whereon to lean remains, when strongholds crumple to dust, when nothing is sure but that God still reigns, that is the time to trust. It is better to walk by faith than sight in this path of yours and mine, and the pitch-black night when there's no outer light is the hour for faith to shine. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God.

So, if your soul gets into a slump, don't stay home. Don't crawl into that hole. Get amongst your brethren.

Encourage yourself in God, and as you do so, you'll find that these experiences will combine to produce the good that God has in mind for you. May we take a leaf out of the book of David, and as we experience these things that come to us on our Christian pathway, may it be ours to place and trace and place all these things into the strong hands of that one who has all knowledge and all power, and whose omnipresence will guarantee our eternal blessings. May he grant it for his name's sake.

Shall we pray, and our meeting will be over. Perhaps Mr. Chappell will close the meeting.

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