

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - June 10, 2021

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Title: "When You Are Depressed"

Subtitle: "The Elijah Complex"

Scripture Reference: 1Kings 19:2-4

"Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that the might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers."

I. Introduction/Background/Context

A. In 1 Kings Chapter 18, Elijah challenged 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel and prayed down fire from heaven. God sent fire from heaven and consumed the sacrifices.

B. Then Elijah went to the Brook Kidron and slew the false prophets (1 Kings 18:40). What an act of faith! What an example of courage.

C. Not long after this, Elijah received a message from Jezebel. You would think she would be afraid of a man like this, but she wasn't. She sent word that she was going to make sure Elijah was dead within twenty-four hours.

D. When Elijah got the message, no doubt butterflies began to flutter inside his stomach. His knees grew weak and wobbly. He lost his senses and ran for his life.

E. How could he go from feeling so high, to so low in so short a period of time? Just hours before this, he was victorious on Mount

Carmel. Now, he was hiding and depressed in the wilderness.

F. I'm sure you have heard of the inferiority complex. Elijah was suffering from what we might call "The Elijah Complex."

G. The Elijah Complex is when we lose all sense of God's presence, protection, and provision.

H. Life becomes meaningless. When we are in that situation, we feel forsaken, hopeless, and depressed. Elijah was at such a low point that he wanted to die. How did he lose his perspective? Can it happen to us?

I. Here are some thought patterns that can cause you to acquire The Elijah Complex.

II. Exposition [Part I] - Thought # 1 - Your problem appears to be bigger than God

A. At this point in Elijah's life, Jezebel looked bigger than God. He lost his perspective because he got his eyes off God and on his problem.

B. Consider this historical fact from past history. During the American Civil War, General Robert E. Lee had a shortage of soldiers. His army could be devastated if the Union Army discovered this weakness.

C. Since he could not increase the number of soldiers, he decided he could make his army look larger than it actually was.

D. General Lee loaded troops onto trains and transported them to different places at every train station. The same confederate soldiers were unloaded/reloaded from the trains. It appeared that new troops were being transported in and added to the Rebel Army.

E. The Union Army forces became confused and afraid because they believed the South had a much larger army than they actually had.

F. General Lee hadn't made his army any larger or more powerful.

He was simply using a psychological tactic to discourage the Union Army; and it worked!

G. For the Union Army, things were not as they appeared but they did not have the big picture.

H. If you recognize that you are falling into the Elijah Complex, you must look at the big picture, not just the details.

I. Our difficulties are never as large as they appear to be. Satan tries to magnify them in our minds in order to discourage us. Don't let him do it.

Point: Our problems will never become bigger than God!

III. Exposition [Part II] - Thought # 2 - You see yourself as the only one with problems

A. In 1 Kings 19:10, listen to what Elijah told God. "And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

B. Elijah had spiritual claustrophobia. A person with claustrophobia gets into an elevator and panics because he or she thinks the four walls are closing in on them. Elijah felt closed in, he thought that he was the only one with problems.

C. The Apostle Peter wrote to a group of Christians who thought they were the only ones who were experiencing trials. Peter told them to resist Satan, "knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." (1 Peter 5:9)

D. When Elijah thought he was the only one left, God told him, "**Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.**" (1 Kings 19:18).

E. Not only was God aware of what Elijah was going through, but He also knew exactly how many others were having the same

experiences as his servant Elijah.

Comment: God was aware of their problems back then, and He is also aware of the struggles we are experiencing right now!

IV. Exposition [Part III] - Thought # 3 - You lose hope for the future

A. Elijah requested that "he might die." (1 Kings 19:4) He was fleeing from death, yet he prayed for death.

Comment: Sometimes, we do not pray wisely when we have the Elijah Complex.

B. Elijah had lost hope for the future and had slipped into depression. Even though he prayed for death, he never died. In fact, he would be caught up alive in a whirlwind to heaven without tasting death (2 Kings 2:11)

C. Little did he realize during his time of depression, the great plans God had in store for him.

Point: Depression will always blind us to all hope for the future.

D. Have you ever wondered why you became depressed? Consider this little test to help you analyze yourself.

1. When I am happy, I have been thinking _____ thoughts.
2. When I am sad, I have been thinking _____ thoughts.
3. When I am angry, I have been thinking _____ thoughts.
4. When I am depressed, I have been thinking _____ thoughts.

The answers are:

1. happy

2. sad
3. angry
4. Depressing

E. The way we think will affect the moods we are in. Thoughts affect emotions. Your thoughts tell your emotions what to do. Emotions respond to the information that is fed to them.

F. For example- If you go to a horror movie, you may experience fear, even though you know what you are watching is not real.

G. If you watch a sad movie, you may cry, because your emotions have been touched by your thoughts.

Point: Thoughts have a powerful effect upon emotions.

H. Some depression is caused by poor diet and a lack of exercise. However, the vast majority of cases are caused because people have been dwelling upon depressing thoughts.

Point: You cannot continue to dwell upon negative thoughts without becoming depressed.

I. Consider this - If thoughts determine emotions, then depression can be reversed by changing the way you think.

Comment: I don't want to minimize those with deep depression and may be under the care of a doctor and taking medication. However, I know The **Divine Physician** who is still in the healing business. THANK YOU LORD!!

J. If your emotions are to be turned around, your thought process must be reversed. Rather than thinking depressing thoughts, choose to think joyful thoughts.

K. Although God did not explain to us the medical reasons for rejoicing, He did tell us "A merry heart doeth good like medicine." (Proverbs 17:22)

L. Here are several positive steps you can take to improve your perspective when you are feeling depressed.

V. Exposition [Part IV] - First - Put your hope in God

A. David was once depressed and in despair. He said in Psalm 42:5 - "Why are thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted (i.e., disturbed) in me? hope thou in God: ..."

B. If you have lost hope, you will find it if you look to God. James 4:8a says - "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."

C. This verse is not talking about our distance from God, but intimacy with Him. A man and wife can be standing side by side, yet be far away from each other in their hearts.

Point: We must draw near to God in our hearts.

D. Consider this - A man in a row boat was caught in a current and floated down stream toward a waterfall. As he was drifting away, he saw a large rock on the river bank. The rock provided security and stability for the man who was about to lose hope. He took a rope, threw it around the rock, and pulled the boat toward it. As he drew near to the rock; the rock drew near to him.

F. When we call out to God for help, we are throwing out the rope to the Rock of our Salvation. "Unto thee will I cry, O Lord, my rock; ..." (Psalm 28:1)

G. As we draw near to God's throne of grace and mercy, He will draw near to us.

VI. Exposition [Part V] - Second - Sing in the dark

A. The second thing David said was, "... and in the night his song shall be with me:" (Psalm 42:8) If you are going through a dark time, sing in the dark, Listen to some praise music and sing along with it. Continue singing to the Lord until your depression leaves.

B. We need to learn to sing in the dark times that we experience. We may not see what lies ahead because our vision is restricted by

the darkness of trials and despair. But that is the best time to sing. It will help us endure the dark times until morning arrives. ("Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.")
THANK YOU, LORD!!

VII. Exposition [Part VI] - Third - Rejoice in the Lord

A. Philippians 4:4 commands us to "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again, I say, Rejoice." That includes during times of depression.

B. Telling a depressed person to rejoice is like asking a man with broken legs to dance. You may not feel like doing it, or even think that you can, but you must obey because rejoicing is one of the main factors in being healed from depression.

C., Remember, changing your thought patterns from negative to positive is the key to turning your emotions around.

VIII. Exposition [Part VII] - Fourth - Reach out and help other people

A. Depressed people are consumed with thoughts about themselves. This inward thinking process will cause a person to sink continually deeper into depression.

B. The way out is to turn your eyes from inward to outward. Rather than thinking about yourself, reach out to other people and with God's help, meet their needs. If you do this, you will find that your depression will lift.

IX. Exposition [Part VIII] - Fifth - Change the way you view your Problems

A. The Apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 4:8 to let our minds dwell on good things.

B. We may not choose our circumstances, but we can choose the way we view them. We can decide whether to focus our attention on the positive or the negative.

C. In the Book of Numbers, Chapter 13, when Moses sent the

spies into the promised land, all of them viewed the same set of circumstances.

D. They observed that the land flowed with milk and honey, but they also noticed that giants were in the land.

E. When they returned to give Moses their intelligence report, ten of the spies were fearful of the giants, but there were two, Joshua and Caleb, who were excited about the land that God had promised to them.

F. Even though they all had seen the same things, ten chose to focus on the giants and two chose to focus on the promises of God.

G. I'm sure that you remember the story of David and Goliath. Just as God gave David the ability to defeat Goliath the giant, God can give you victory over the giants in your life. When that happens, the weight of depression will be lifted.

H. When you change your view of your problems and put all of your trust and cares in the hands of Almighty God, you can be set free from depression, and you can see that God's promises are so much bigger than your problems.

It is once again interactive time. Please complete the biblical passages that follow by filling in the blank spaces. As usual, all passages have been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

"Blessed be God, even the _____ of our Lord _____ Christ, the Father of _____, and the God of all _____; Who _____ us in all our _____, that we may be able to _____ them which are in any trouble, by the _____ wherewith we ourselves are _____ of God."

[2 Corinthians 1:3,4]

"And be not _____ to this world: but be ye
_____ by the renewing of your _____, that
ye may _____ what is that _____, and _____,
and _____ will of God."

[Romans 12:2]

"And now, Lord, what _____ I for? my _____ is in thee."

[Psalm 39:7]

"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his _____, whose
_____ is in the Lord his God: Which made _____, and
_____, the sea, and all that _____ is: which keepeth
_____ for ever:"

[Psalm 145:5,6]

"Thou wilt _____ him in _____, whose mind is stayed on
thee: because he _____ in thee."

[Isaiah 26:3]

"The Lord is my _____ and my _____; whom shall I
_____? the Lord is the _____ of my _____; of whom
shall
I be _____?"

[Psalm 27:1]

"The Lord _____ thee, and _____ thee: The Lord make his face
_____ upon thee, and be _____ unto thee: The Lord _____

up his _____ upon thee, and give thee _____."

[Numbers 6:24-26]

CLOSING THOUGHTS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

- Rather than thinking depressing thoughts, verbally rejoice in the Lord. Listen to uplifting Christian music and sing praises to God.
- Turn your thinking outward by reaching out to others. Visit a lonely person or someone in the hospital (if possible, during this COVID-19 season). Take some food to a needy person.
- Write down positive things in your situation that you can dwell upon. Post it on a mirror or another visible place a reminder.
- Most importantly, read and meditate upon the Word of God on a daily basis for in it, you will find strength, hope, and encouragement.

Thank you for sharing in another Bible Study session and my prayer is that you have been blessed.

Jude 3

Pastor Austin