

DISPELLING DEPRESSION

Psm 40:1 - 3, Matt 11:28 - 30

- **Depression** is a state of low mood and aversion to activity ... it refers to loss of interest ~ or a loss of pleasure from activities which usually brings joy to people
 - It's a state which effects **many** ... *not always aware when depressed*
 - American Psychiatric Assoc: **1** in **15** adults experience depression in a given year ... w/ **1** in **6** experiencing it at some point in their life
 - **Christians** ~ *who are taught to address life's problems with prayer and faith* ... often wrestle w/ how to understand and deal w/ their depression
- Let's start by realizing even the most committed believer can become depressed
 - In **OT** - **Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Job, Jonah** dealt w/ depression ~ in **NT** ... **Judas** was certainly depressed and even the **Apostle Paul** dealt w/ depression
 - When you and I experience depression ... we can find super-natural resources to deal w/ our depression in the **42 & 43 Psalm**
 - To **dispel depression** ... helps to understand **three** things ... starting with:

CHARACTERISTICS OF DEPRESSION

- The key verse for today's sermon is the found **three** times in these Psalms
 - Maybe this idea is important to God: **Psm 42:5 - 42:11 - 43:5**
 - 1st part of these verses describes the Biblical Characteristics of Depression
 - First step in dispelling depression is realizing what depression is ...
 - ... when we're depressed we're **cast down** and **despondent**
 - **NIV:** downcast ... disturbed
 - **Clear Word:** sad ... sick of heart
- Depression includes being gloomy – pessimistic – hopeless – despondent ... dejected
 - Everything looks bleak ~ and even simple tasks become seemingly **big** chores

- Some get depressed once a year ~ some once a month ... maybe others once a week
 - Being depressed is part of this **sin-filled** life ~ depression is a work of **Satan**

TRANS - To dispel depression we need to understand its characteristics; and then:

THE SOCIAL CAUSES OF DEPRESSION - There are **2** primary causes:

- **People** and **Problems**

- Let's start by looking at the **people** issue ~~ **Psm 42:3** then **43:1**
 - The author ... like us ... was fed up with **people** at different times
 - Can happen in a marriage ~ at work ~ school ~ even at church
 - Part of our sinful human nature is to become tired of and irritated by those people we're with **all** the time

- **Standard joke** told at **Pastor's Meetings** ... am sure joke really works **both** ways
 - *Seeing the "saints" in heaven will be **glory** ... living with them down here ~ well ... that's a completely **different story***

- There's a simple principle which helps to prevent people from getting us down
 - It's found in **Proverbs 15:15** then **17:22**
 - A "merry heart" **isn't** something you're lucky to find under some rock
 - It's the **by-product** [**result**] of how we choose to look at things
 - For example ... **Loved one recovering from a heart attack** ... do we constantly grumble about that fact ... **or** do we praise God they didn't pass away
 - Do we look at what we've **lost** ... or what's **left**
 - A **story told by my favorite fellow pastor** illustrates the **power of choice**
 - He received a text with only one word typed in all caps: **STUPID**
 - **How** should he **respond** to the person who sent him: stupid ?

- The following **Sabbath** he said something like:
 - "I get many texts where the sender forgets to sign their **name** ...
 - But this week ... I received a text which was **signed** - but there wasn't any **message** "
 - Things perceived as **real** - are **real** in their consequences
- Helpful to remember it's **not** the actions of other people which get us down ...
 - **Our reactions** to their actions is what depresses us { **Judas/Jesus** - should }
 - People don't depress us ~~ unless we allow them to

TRANS - **People / Problems** may lead us to depression ... addressed **people**

Let's look at those **problems** which we face in our daily lives

- "Introduction" to the 42nd and 43rd Psalm tell us they were written and delivered to the Director of Temple Music ... *they are a yearning for God - in midst of distress*
 - Although theologians *don't know* the exact circumstances ... they assert the psalmist is far from home and distant from the Temple where he worships God
 - Let's notice what the author writes: **Psm 42:2**
 - He remembers how he used to worship in the House of God – **V 4**
 - He also writes he's burdened ... **V 9**
 - *Author seems depressed - caused by his **problems***
- In the 21st Century we also get depressed when we can't be where **we** want to be ...
 - ... doing what **we** want to do (counseling cadets @ USAFA)
 - The truth is ~ as long as we live on this sin-filled planet ~ people and problems will present situations which might lead to depression

TRANS - Not only do we need to know characteristics & causes of Depression, but also:

THE CURE FOR DEPRESSION

~~ there are **three steps** to dispel depression

- **First** ... Admit you are depressed
 - Return to **Psm 42:6 a**
 - **Clear word** shares: *My strength is gone ... all I can do is cling to You*
 - First step in getting rid of depression is to **admit** we're not super-human
 - Principal here: **The beginning of healing is to reveal your feeling**
 - Society teaches we're to **mask** – **hide** our true feelings
 - Underlying cause of depression is **self-pity** ... **Psms 42/43** illustrate this point
 - Author uses a first-person pronoun { I, me, my } > **50** times in 16 verses
 - When we get depressed ~ we're usually thinking **only** of ourselves
 - Depression is often caused by being selfish and thinking too much about ourselves and our problems
 - Contrast this behavior with God's Counsel in **Phil 2:3, 4** **P-2**
 - **Holy Spirit** is urging us **NOT** to be selfish ... our attention shouldn't solely be on ourselves
- **5T 174, 5** ... **selfish ambition**, is the rock upon which many souls have been wrecked and many churches rendered powerless. Those who know least of devotion, who are least connected with God, are the ones who will most eagerly seek the highest place. They have no sense of their weakness and their deficiencies of character.... (We) may have learned the doctrines of Christ, but ... have **not** learned Christ. The soul that is constantly looking unto Jesus will see His self-denying love and deep humility, and will copy His example. Pride, ambition, deceit, hatred, selfishness, must be cleansed from the heart. With many these evil traits are partially subdued, but **not** thoroughly uprooted from the heart.
 - The SOP is teaching us we should quit concentrating solely on our own problems and get involved in helping others
 - My **most satisfying** time being a pastor was ministering to prisoners
- **Second** ... Ask God for His Help
 - When we're depressed - we need more than a pep talk or message @ depression
 - Often we need supernatural help ~ its readily available: **Psm 86:6, 7**

- When asking for God's help ... **let's remember** what He's already done for us
 - Let's Return to **Psm 42:6** ...
 - **NIV** reads: ... *my soul is downcast within me* [depressed] ~ *therefore I will remember you* [God] *from the land of the Joran*
- It is always helpful to look back and remember what God has done for us ...
 - ... those memories will energize our prayers
 - **Servant of the Lord** We have nothing to fear in the future ... *unless* we forget God's leading in the past
- Let's not forget the truth of - **James 4:3**
 - When we pray **w/o** aligning ourselves to God's Will we're praying - **amiss**
 - **Answers** to our prayers **depends** upon both the nature of the requests ... and the spirit of the one praying
- Some of you are still listening ~ some may **take exception** to this assertion
 - I hear you thinking ~~ you're saying: But what about - **Luke 11:9**
 - Apparently Jesus is saying all I have to do is ask ... and it'll be given
 - *If that's true* ... why don't we ask for the winning numbers to the GA Lottery ~~ we could build a new church facility ASAP
 - Very important to realize our prayers are not so much a matter of persuading God to accept our will concerning any situation ...
 - Rather ... **it is about us** discovering **God's Will** w/ respect to the issue
 - God knows our needs before we ask ... *more than that* ... He knows what is best for us in every situation
 - Conversely ~~ often we're often only slightly aware of our real needs
 - Effective prayer will bring our will (lives) into harmony with God's Will
 - Effective prayer is God's Way of educating our desires
 - Effective prayer **changes us** so **Phil 2:13** is true in our lives
 - Please notice it says **HIS** good pleasure (not ours)

- **Cure for Depression:** **First** Admit we're depressed ~ **Second** Ask God for His Help
- **Third** ... Praise God in Advance of His Help
 - Three times in these Psalms ... the author says: *Hope in God ~ for I shall yet praise Him*
 - **This suggests:** we should stop focusing only on ourselves – our situations and start focusing on **God** ... and His Good Pleasure
 - When we do ... a wonderful promise awaits us: **Ish 26:3, 4 a** *P-1*
 - **PERFECT PEACE** refers to a tranquility while dealing with life's problems
 - When we praise God ... **in Advance of His Help** ... we'll find a peace that dispels depression

CONCLUSION

- Adult SS Lesson for last Sabbath - Page 14:
 - " God **didn't** call His people in order to abandon them in the process of **doing** what He called them to do. "
- **Dispelling Depression requires knowing:**
 - ... the **C**haracteristics of depression as described in the Bible
 - ... the **C**auses of depression as outlined in the Bible
 - ... the **C**ure for depression as prescribed in the Bible:
 - Admit we are depressed
 - Ask God to help
 - Praise Him in Advance

Closing Hymn ~ # 530 – It Is Well With My Soul

The words to this hymn were written after traumatic events in Horatio Spafford's life. The first was the death of his son at the age of two and the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which ruined him financially (he had been a successful lawyer and had invested significantly in property in the area of Chicago that was extensively damaged by the great fire). His business interests were further hit by the economic downturn of 1873, at which time he had planned to travel to Europe with his family on the **Steam Ship Ville du Havre**. In a late change of plan, he sent the family ahead while he was delayed with business issues concerning zoning problems following the Great Chicago Fire. While crossing the Atlantic Ocean, the ship sank rapidly after a collision with another sea vessel and all four of Spafford's daughters died. His wife Anna survived and sent him the now famous telegram, "Saved alone ...". Shortly afterwards, as Spafford traveled to meet his grieving wife, he was inspired to write these words as his ship passed near where his daughters had died.