



HOW TO DEAL WITH DEPRESSION

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





How to Deal With Depression

ADRIAN ROGERS

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this transcript produced from a live sermon preached by Adrian Rogers while serving as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. This transcript is intended for your personal, non-commercial use.

Note: Though it has been transcribed from a version used for broadcast, it may contain stutters, stammers, and other authentic remarks as would be common in a live setting.

In order to ensure our ability to be good stewards of Adrian Rogers' messages, Love Worth Finding has reserved all rights to this content.

Except for your personal, non-commercial use and except for brief quotations in printed reviews, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—without the prior permission of the publisher.

Copyright © 2022 Love Worth Finding Ministries, Inc.

Transcripts are used by permission of the Rogers Family Trust.



How to Deal With Depression

SERMON REFERENCE: Psalm 42

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1871

Depression is a passive, continual feeling of sadness that seems to linger. It is an attitude that nothing feels good or is worth feeling good about; it is compounded by a state of constant hopelessness.

Depression is a valid and dangerous health crisis. Christians can struggle with depression. King David was a man after God's own heart. Yet, in Psalm 42, he admits to a spiritual dryness, endless tears, and feeling shame and defeat. He lingers over the memories of what once was, and he admits he's overwhelmed by his circumstances.

This honest and unfortunately familiar prayer reminds us that we can't ignore this severe problem. We must learn how to deal with depression and realize our spiritual provision.

First, we must look inward and honestly, firmly, ask ourselves why we're cast down.

"Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? (Psalm 42:5). We must close the door, figure out what happened. Whether it is circumstantial or clinical, we must get it out in the open so we can look at it and understand its effect.

Then, we can look upward in faith.

"The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me—a prayer to the God of my life" (Psalm 42:8).

Whether we understand it or not, whether we've analyzed it correctly or not, we must keep our eyes on Jesus and continue to trust in Him. He is our Rock, strong and tender, who named every star in the sky and binds up every wound.

Finally, we must look onward and focus on the future.

"Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance" (Psalm 42:5).

No matter what's happening to us, it is not God's final plan.

Adrian Rogers says, "God is too good to be unkind and too wise to make a mistake. When we cannot trace His hand, we can trust His heart."

This is the sure promise in the midst of our depression: Our God will see us through. God has not forsaken us; He never has and He never will.

Life Application

Are you down, feeling hopeless, or battling depression? Look inward, upward, and onward. There is hope, and it begins with trusting Jesus, even when things don't make sense. Choose to praise Him, even when it hurts.



How to Deal with Depression

SERMON REFERENCE: Psalm 42

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1871

1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Psalm 42 deals with depression and what to do when a person feels depressed.
- b) In the history of the Christian church, some of God's greatest saints have gone through a dark, deep night of depression.
- c) Americans are spending billions of dollars a year trying to do something about depression.
 - i) They are so depressed that they cannot cope.
 - (1) They miss work.
 - (2) They drop out of society.
- d) It does not do much good to tell a depressed person to simply cheer up.
 - i) There's nothing they would like to do more than to cheer up.
- e) Depression is a passive, listless feeling and an overwhelming sadness.
 - i) It is when nothing feels good, and nothing is worth feeling good about.
 - ii) It is a state of hopelessness.
 - iii) It is when a person has the idea that they do not care, that no one else cares, and that no one understands or accepts them.
 - iv) It is being filled with worry and anxiety.
 - v) It is the loss of all initiative.
 - vi) A person may experience crying spells.
 - vii) You can't sleep and may feel fatigued even after a night's sleep.
 - viii) A person becomes neutralized and cannot make decisions.
 - (1) It is as though they cannot trust their own wisdom or anyone else's.
 - ix) Often time they become irritable and grouchy.
 - x) It is when a person cannot be enthusiastic about anything.
 - xi) A person just wishes the world would stop and let them off.
- f) Our Scripture today will take a look at both the severe problem and the spiritual provision for depression.

2) THE SEVERE PROBLEM OF DEPRESSION

- a) Depression can be a killer disease.
 - i) It has been one of the leading causes of death in some age groups.
- b) It is not uncommon to see a spouse die shortly after his or her mate dies.
- c) David wrote this Psalm.
 - i) David was the sweet singer of Israel and a man after God's own heart.
 - (1) And he says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?"
 - (a) David is speaking to himself.
- d) Many Biblical saints suffered from depression.
 - i) Moses got so depressed that he asked God to kill him.
 - (1) Numbers 11:15



- ii) Elijah, a mighty prophet of God, in a time of extreme physical turmoil and mental anguish, requested that he might die.
 - (1) 1 Kings 19:4
- iii) The prophet Jeremiah wished that he had died in his mother's womb.
 - (1) Jeremiah 20:17
- iv) Paul, the mighty apostle, despaired even of life.
 - (1) 2 Corinthians 1:8
- v) Jonah, who preached the city-wide crusade in Nineveh, asked God to take his life.
 - (1) Jonah 4:3
- vi) John the Baptist, whom Jesus said that there was not a greater man born of woman, got so depressed that he even doubted that Jesus Christ was the Messiah.
 - (1) Matthew 11:11
 - (2) Luke 7:19-20
- e) Great leaders in the secular world have experienced depression.
 - i) Sir Winston Churchill had severe bouts of depression.
 - (1) He called it a black dog that hounded him.
 - ii) The great preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon would get into deep fits of despondency and depression.
 - iii) Martin Luther, the mighty reformer, also experienced depression.
- f) David had plenty of reasons to be depressed.
 - i) His son Absalom, whom he loved with all his heart, rebelled against him.
 - ii) Absalom was killed, and David was deposed as the king.
 - iii) David had to flee for his life.
 - (1) He was hunted and had no power or possessions.
 - iv) He sinned against God and lost a child by death.
 - v) David had a daughter who was raped by one of his sons.
 - vi) David also had a wife who was raped.
 - vii) Another son is killed.
 - viii) The nation was in turmoil.
 - ix) Outwardly, David had several reasons to be depressed.
- g) As we study this Psalm, we see that the author gives almost a clinical case of severe depression.
 - i) Spiritual dryness
 - (1) Psalm 42:1-2
 - (a) He is thirsty for God but cannot find Him.
 - (2) Psalm 42:9
 - (a) God had not forgotten him, but he felt like God had forgotten him.
 - ii) Continual crying jags
 - (1) Psalm 42:3
 - (2) We all cry, have sorrows and heartaches.
 - (a) The normal tears that we all shed are like a thunderstorm.
 - (b) But the tears of a person in depression are like a continual drizzle.
 - iii) A sense of shame and defeat
 - (1) Psalm 42:3



- (2) There's a feeling that he's let God down, that he's a miserable example of a Christian.
- (3) He feels so ashamed.
- (4) He has no witness and no testimony.
 - (a) What a sense of guilt he has over this.
- iv) Lingered memories
 - (1) Psalm 42:4
 - (a) He looks backward to a better time when he had joy, peace, satisfaction, friends, fellowship, and worship.
 - (i) He thinks that it can never be that way again.
 - (ii) The sadness of the present is made worse when set against the background of these memories.
- v) Overwhelming circumstances
 - (1) Psalm 42:6-7
 - (a) In this passage, David is having thoughts of death.
 - (b) In Bible typology, Jordan speaks of death.
 - (i) The Jordan River runs down from Mt. Hermon to the Dead Sea, where it buries itself never to rise again.
 - 1. The Dead Sea – 1,300 feet below sea level at the surface and 1,300 feet deep.
 - a. The lowest spot on the face of the Earth.
 - (c) The word “waterspouts” in this passage refers to waterfalls.
 - (d) David is stating that this river of death has come over him.
 - (2) When a person gets despondent enough, they think that maybe death would be a welcome release.

3) THE SPIRITUAL PROVISION FOR DEPRESSION

- a) Do we have to be depressed?
 - i) No.
- b) Is there no hope?
 - i) There is hope.
- c) Look inward with a firm look.
 - i) Psalm 42:5-6
 - (1) David is beginning to look inward.
 - (2) He is beginning to talk to himself.
 - (a) The soul is the mind, the emotion, and the will.
 - ii) There is someone in us who is always talking to us.
 - (1) It is the old flesh nature who is constantly talking, and that is where negative thinking comes from.
 - (a) This is the mindset that we inherited from Adam.
 - (b) It tells us that we deserve this and that we can never be better.
 - (2) We need to talk back.
 - (a) This is what David does.
 - (b) Psalm 42:5
 - (i) David talks back to himself.
 - iii) David takes a firm inward look and does a spiritual analysis.
 - (1) He asks himself why he is depressed.



- (a) We need to ask ourselves this question.
 - (i) We can answer it perhaps better than anyone else can because no one knows ourselves like we do.
- (b) 1 Corinthians 2:11
- (c) Be honest with the answer.
 - (i) You might be depressed due to the death of a loved one.
 - (ii) You might be depressed because you are brokenhearted.
 - (iii) You might have lost something very valuable to you.
 - 1. It could be your health, a job or maybe your reputation; and you don't see how you will ever get it back.
 - (iv) Perhaps you're depressed because you feel guilty.
- (d) Sometimes poor health can cause depression.
 - (i) If someone has severe clinical depression, they need to have a medical checkup.
- (2) Look yourself straight in the eye, and ask your soul, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?"
- d) Look upward with a faith look.
 - i) Psalm 42:7-9
 - (1) "Deep calleth unto deep" refers to the deepest emotions of the heart crying out to God.
 - ii) Whether we understand it or not, whether we have analyzed it correctly or not, we need to look to God because He will never fail us.
 - iii) We have a friend in Jesus; He is our rock.
 - (1) Look to Him.
 - (2) The only true lasting cure for depression is to put our eyes upon God.
 - iv) Psalm 42:8-9
 - (1) He is our life and our rock.
 - (2) One verse in this passage speaks of God's tenderness and lovingkindness, and the next verse speaks of His strength.
 - (a) He is a tender rock.
 - (b) Psalm 147:3-4
 - (i) The Psalmist here is talking about God and juxtaposes tenderness and strength.
 - (ii) The one who has given a name to every star in the universe is the same one who binds up our wounds.
 - (iii) Everything big is made up of something little.
 - 1. Our material world is made up of atoms.
 - (iv) The God of bigness is also the God of smallness.
 - 1. The God who runs the universe is the God who knows when the sparrow falls.
 - a. Matthew 10:29
 - (v) Do not get the idea that God does not care about you.
 - 1. The very hairs of your head are numbered.
 - a. Matthew 10:30
 - 2. He is your God.
 - 3. If no one else understands you and you cannot see a solution, He will not fail you.



- v) Our hope is in God, and we need to look to Him in faith.
 - (1) If we put our faith anywhere else, we will fail.
 - (2) We need to tie our life to something that can stand.
 - (a) There is a rock, and that rock is God Himself.
 - (i) He cannot and will not be moved.
- vi) When we go to God in our troubles, it does not mean that He will explain it to us and we will understand.
 - (1) We may not understand.
 - (2) Psalm 42:9-10
 - (a) David is telling the Lord in this passage that he doesn't understand.
 - (b) David asks the Lord why He has left him like this.
 - (3) There is one question people ask over and over again when troubles and depression come, and that question is, "Why?"
 - (a) Why did my loved one die?
 - (b) Why did I lose my job?
 - (4) But "Why?" is not our question; it is "How?"
 - (a) "Why?" is God's question.
 - (b) "How am I going to react?" is our question.
- vii) God's ways are not our ways.
 - (1) Many of God's choicest of saints have gone through periods of deep darkness, and they could not understand why.
 - (a) David was one of them.
 - (i) In the very verse where he tells God that God is his rock, he also says that he doesn't understand.
 - (2) "Life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived."
 - (3) Warren Wiersbe stated that we do not live by explanations but by promises.
- viii) Many people think that if there is a God, then He has let them down.
 - (1) He has not let them down.
 - (2) If something happens in our lives that we cannot understand, then it becomes an incredible opportunity for trust.
 - (a) Robert Frost said, "It was in the essence of the trial that you should not understand it; it had to have un-meaning to have meaning."
 - (i) If God explains everything to us, then it ceases to be a trial.
 - (ii) But if we don't understand yet choose to trust Him, then we are coming to the place Job came to when he said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."
 - 1. Job 13:15
- ix) According to Andrew Murray, in times of trouble we must trust God and say:
 - (1) I am here by God's appointment.
 - (2) I am in His keeping.
 - (3) I am under His training.
 - (4) For His time.
 - (a) In His good time, He can bring me out again.
- x) God is too good to be unkind and too wise to make a mistake.



- xi) When we cannot trace His hand, we can trust His heart.
 - (1) Psalm 42:9
- e) Take a focused onward look.
 - i) Psalm 42:11
 - (1) David is looking to the future.
 - (2) He will hope in God no matter how bleak it is, no matter how dark it is, and no matter how despairing it is.
 - ii) There are only two places where there is no hope:
 - (1) One is in Heaven, where we don't need it because faith has turned to reality.
 - (2) The other is in Hell, where people have no hope.
 - iii) As long as there is a God, there is hope.
 - iv) If anyone is depressed, hope in God.
 - (1) He is our rock, and we will praise Him.
 - v) By His grace and in His time, He will turn every hurt to a hallelujah, every tear to a pearl, every midnight to a sunrise and every Calvary to an Easter.
 - (1) Don't lose hope.
 - vi) It may be that God is taking everything else away so that we can trust in Him and hope in Him alone to bring us to Psalm 42:11.

4) CONCLUSION

- a) God is not really finished with us until our chief delight is in Him alone.
 - i) When God alone is our chief desire, then we can say that no matter what happens, He is God; and we will yet praise Him and seek His face.
- b) We need to take a firm inward look, take a faith upward look, and then take a focused future look.
- c) If you are depressed, don't let Satan blow out the light of hope in your heart and in your life.
 - i) Jesus is not finished with you.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



How to Deal with Depression

SERMON REFERENCE: Psalm 42

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1871

Take God's Word and find Psalm 42. What Psalm 42 deals with is depression and what to do when you're feeling depressed. When you say, "I have fallen and I can't get up!" Not physically, but emotionally. You're down in the dumps. You're in despair. You're depressed. Well, you say, "That's never happened to me, Pastor." Well, just hang on, hang on. You say, "Well, I am a Christian." If you'll study the history of the Christian church, you'll find out that some of God's greatest saints have gone through a dark, deep night of depression. Now this psalm is a wonderful psalm. The National Institute of Mental Health reports that depression is a multi-billion dollar a year business. That is, Americans are spending a billions of dollars a year trying to do something with depression. Millions of Americans are so depressed they can't cope. They miss work. They drop out. Many of them name the name of Christ. And by the way, it doesn't do much good to tell a depressed person, "Well, cheer up!" There's nothing they would like to do better than to cheer up. And you just come along with some silly grin and a slap on the back and think you've done good; well, you haven't.

What do we mean by depression? Well, it's a passive, listless feeling, an overwhelming sadness. Nothing feels good and nothing is worth feeling good about. It's a state of hopelessness. The idea that, "I don't care, and no one else cares. No one understands me. No one accepts me." And so you're just filled with worry and anxiety. You might checkup right now, some of you who are listening to me through television, and others in this auditorium right now, you might be really in a state of depression. You seem to have lost all initiative. Maybe you have, when you get alone, just crying spells. Every now and then you just heave with a sigh. You just maybe sometimes wake up in the middle of the night for no reason, can't go back to sleep. You feel fatigued, worn out. You wake up in the morning after a night's sleep and you're still tired and you kind of ache all over; not specifically anywhere, but mostly just all over. You get neutralized. You can't make decisions. You can't even trust your own wisdom or anybody else's. You find yourself irritable and grouchy. You can't be enthusiastic about anything and very frankly, you just wish the world would stop and let you off.

Well, let's look in this psalm. Look if you will in chapter 42 verse 5. David asked this question, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me?" He's talking here about depression, **the severe problem of depression**. Depression really can be a killer disease. In a study that I've done, I found out that depression is the second or third leading cause of death in some age groups. Not a bit uncommon to see a spouse die shortly after his or her mate has died. And I want to say this, that David wrote this psalm, the sweet singer of Israel! A man after God's own heart! And he says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" He's speaking to himself, a man of God.

Call the role of the biblical saints. They got depressed. Moses got depressed, so depressed that he asked God to kill him. Read that in Exodus 32:32. And in First Kings 19:4, Elijah, a mighty prophet of God, running from Jezebel, in a time of extreme physical turmoil and mental anguish, sat down under a juniper tree and requested for himself that he might die. Jeremiah, the prophet, I was reading amazing prophecies of Jeremiah, and I read in Jeremiah 20 verse 14 where Jeremiah said, "I wish I had died in my mother's womb." That's a man of God said that! Even Paul the apostle, the mighty apostle said in Second Corinthians 1 verse



8, he despaired even of life. Jonah, who preached that city-wide crusade in Nineveh, where an entire city repented in sackcloth and ashes, even after having that incredible experience, asked God to take away his life in Jonah 4:3. John the Baptist, in Matthew 11:11, Jesus said, "There's not a greater man born of woman than John the Baptist." John the Baptist got down in a dungeon, he got so depressed, he even doubted that Jesus Christ was the Messiah. You can find that in Matthew chapter 11 verses 2 and 3.

And some of the people in the secular world, great leaders, have been depressed. Sir Winston Churchill, the man that we remember who said, "Never give up! Never, never, never give up!" That's what he said from the platform, but he had severe bouts of depression. He called it a black dog that hounded him. And in the ministry, I don't guess there's a greater preacher that ever lived, outside the apostle Paul, than Charles Haddon Spurgeon. And Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a man of wit and warmth and yet all of his biographers tell that there were times when Spurgeon would get into deep fits of despondency and depression. It's also true of Martin Luther, the mighty reformer. And I'm not saying it's good, but I'm saying if you get depressed you're in good company. I mean, there are a lot of folks in the Bible and out of the Bible, in the spiritual world, in the secular world, who have a session with depression! And it's a very severe problem.

Now David, I, I assume that David wrote this psalm. You know others than David wrote psalms also. There's no superscription that says who wrote it, but I assume that David wrote it. And if he did write it, he had plenty of reason to be depressed. I mean after all David had a son, Absalom, that rebelled against him, a son that he loved with all of his heart. And then this rebellious son also is killed and David now is deposed as the king. He's had to flee for his life. He's living like a partridge on the mountainside; he's hunted. He has no power. He has no possession. He's been deposed. He sinned against God. He's committed a horrible sin. He's lost a child by death. He's had a daughter that was raped, a son who had done the dastardly deed. He had a wife that was raped. Now another son killed. The nation is in turmoil. Outwardly, he had some reason to be depressed. And as you look at this psalm, and as you study this psalm, you'll find out that the man who wrote this psalm gives almost a clinical case of severe depression.

Look at it, Psalm 42 verses 1 and 2, "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?" Write down **spiritual dryness**. Here's a man who says, "God, I'm so thirsty for You, but I can't find You. I'm like a deer hunted by a pack of wild dogs. God, where are You? God, have You forgotten me?" Look if you will in Psalm 42 verse 9, "I will say unto God, my Rock, 'Why hast Thou forgotten me?'" Now God had not forgotten him, and God has not forgotten you. But he felt like God had forgotten him.

I was talking to a preacher who, who'd been in a church for a long time, and they weren't treating him too well, and he said, "I know that God put me here, but I just wonder if He remembers where He put me." That's what David felt, "God, You have forgotten me." There's a spiritual dryness.

And then he's on **continual crying jags**. Look if you will in Psalm 42 verse 3, "My tears have been my meat," that is my food, "day and night, while they continually say unto me, 'Where is thy God?'" Continual crying jags. Now we all cry. We all have sorrow. We all have heartaches. That comes, but that's not depression. The sorrows, the normal tears that we all shed, that's like a thunderstorm, but when a person gets in depression, it's like a front that moves through and just camps overhead. It's just a continual drizzle, just a continual dropping. That's that sorrow, where my tears have been my food day and night.



Look again if you will in Psalm 42 verse 3, he has **a sense of shame and defeat**. Look in the last part, “While they continually say unto me, ‘Where is thy God?’” There’s a feeling that he’s let God down. Has a feeling that he’s such a miserable example of a Christian. He feels so ashamed. He has no witness, he has no testimony. What a sense of guilt he has over that.

Alright, spiritual dryness, continual crying, feeling of shame. And then that’s compounded by lingering memories of what used to be, **lingering memories**. Look if you will in Psalm 42 verse 4, “When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me, for I had gone with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with the multitude that kept holy day.” He’s looking backward, looking backward to some better time when he used to have joy, used to have peace, satisfaction, friends and fellowship and worship, and it was so real to him. And now it’s only a memory that haunts him, and he thinks it never can be this way again. And that just makes the sadness of the present, all the worse, because it’s set against this background.

And the sum total of all of that is just **overwhelming circumstances**. Look in Psalm 42 verses 6 and 7, “Oh my God, my soul is cast down within me; therefore will I remember Thee from the land of Jordan,” underscore that, “and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts: all Thy waves and billows are gone over me.” What is the imagery here? This is poetry, but what’s he talking about? He’s having thoughts of death. He talks of Jordan. Jordan in Bible typology speaks of death. Jordan starts up there at Mt. Hermon, beautiful, snow-capped all year round. It bubbles up there and comes and trickles down and it runs that torturous route down to the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea, 1,300 feet below sea level at its surface and 1,300 feet deep, the lowest spot on the face of the Earth. And the river Jordan runs down from the snow-capped mountains of Mt. Hermon, all the way down to the Dead Sea, and it buries itself there, never to rise again. And Jordan speaks of death. He says, “All Thy waterspouts have gone over me.” What does he mean by waterspouts? He’s talking about waterfalls. I’ve been up there if they had waters of the Jordan. One of the most beautiful waterfalls you will ever see on this Earth is right up there. I’ve stood there and looked at this torrential water coming out and David says, “This river of death has come over me.” He’s thinking about death, I believe. And when you get despondent enough, you think maybe death would be a welcome release. That’s the reason why we’re having such a plethora of suicide today.

I was reading what a sixteen-year-old said just before he committed suicide. It was so sad. I want you to listen to it. He wrote a note to his parents. At least his parents found it. He said, “Dear world, I don’t want to get my hair cut. I don’t want to tend kids. I don’t want to see Tina at school Monday. I don’t want to do my biology assignment or English or history or anything. I don’t want to be sad or lonely or depressed anymore. I don’t want to eat, drink, talk, breathe, sleep, move, feel, or live anymore. Mom and Dad, it’s not your fault. I am not free. I feel ill. I’m sad and lonely.” Sixteen-year old. That’s depression. That’s the way David was saying. He was saying, “God, all Your waterspouts have come over me. I feel the chilly waters of Jordan washing over me.” He’s depressed. “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?” The severe problem of depression.

Now **the spiritual provision for depression**. Do we have to be depressed? Is there no hope? Have we fallen and indeed can we not get up? No. There’s hope. I want you to see first of all what you need to do when you’re depressed. Now you may not be clinically depressed, you may be on the margin. You may be on the bubble. You may be just mildly depressed. You may be just having a bad day, but this will apply to you wherever you are on that continuum.



Number one, **look inward with a firm look.** Notice Psalm 42 verses 5 and 6, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquiet 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.” Now what’s he saying? He’s beginning to look inward. He’s beginning to talk to himself. His soul is the man, the person. The soul, the mind, the emotion, and the will. Did you know there’s someone in you that’s always talking to you? I mean, there’s the old flesh nature in you. There’s that old man, and he is constantly talking to you, and that’s where negative thinking comes from. That mindset that we inherited from Adam. That soul is talking, saying, “You deserve this. You can never be better. You ought to have a pity party. You’d be better off dead.” Your soul is just talking to you, it’s always there, always talking. You know what you need to do? You need to talk back. You need to talk back. That’s what David does. He takes his soul by the scruff of the neck, wrings it up, looks it in the face and says, “Why are you this way, O my soul?” I mean, he has an inward look, and it is a firm look! “Why are you cast down, O my soul?” He just talks back to himself. You ever talk back to yourself? Do you ever talk to yourself?

One man said, “I am concerned about my wife. She always talks to herself.” His friend says, “Does she know she’s doing it?” He says, “Oh, no, she thinks I’m listening to her.” Do you ever talk to yourself? You ought to. I mean, you’re not wacko if you do that. David is talking to himself. He is taking a firm inward look. He’s doing some spiritual analysis. He’s asking himself this question, “Why am I depressed? Why am I depressed?” You need to ask yourself that question. You can answer it perhaps better than anybody else, because nobody knows you like you. First Corinthians 2:11, “What man knows the things of man, save the spirit of man that’s in him?” So you need to look yourself in the face and ask yourself this question, “Why am I depressed?” And be honest.

You might be depressed because of the death of a loved one, and you’re bereaved. That might be the cause of your depression and you need to recognize it. You might be depressed because you’re brokenhearted. Somebody has rejected you and done you wrong. Maybe it’s your child. Maybe it’s your parent. Maybe it’s your husband. Maybe it’s your wife. Maybe it’s your sweetheart. Maybe you’ve had a broken relationship. Maybe you’ve lost something very valuable to you. Might be your health. Might be your job. Might be your reputation, but you’ve lost something. You don’t see how you’ll ever get it back. Maybe you’re depressed because you feel guilty, and the grime of guilt has dirtied up the window panes of your spiritual house, and everything just sort of looks yellowish-gray as you look out. I mean, think about it. Ask yourself this question: “Why am I so depressed?” “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?”

Did you know it just might be that you’re in bad health? If you have what I have described as severe clinical depression, let me ask you, first thing, just go get a checkup. You know, what you may need it just a vacation. I mean, you just may need some vitamins and a better diet, a little rest, or you may have these other problems and your poor health is compounding these other problems. I don’t know, but you know. So, first of all, the first thing is look inward with a firm look. Don’t tiptoe around it. Look yourself straight in the eye. Ask your soul, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?”

Second look you need to take: look inward with a firm look, and then **look upward with a faith look.** Look if you will in Psalm 42 verses 7 through 9, “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts.” That is, the deepest emotions of my heart are crying out to You, O my God. “All Thy waves and billows are gone over me; yet the Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song



shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.” Here’s the key verse, verse 9, “I will say unto God, my Rock.” Look upward with a faith look. Whether you understand it or not, whether you’ve analyzed it correctly or not, look to Him, because He will never fail you.

I read where Abraham Maslow, the famed research analyst, said this; it was shocking when I read it. He said, “The truth is that the average American does not have a real friend in the world.” Now you think everybody has one. He says the average America doesn’t have one real friend. Every Christian does. What a friend we have in Jesus. What a friend we have in Jesus! He is your Rock. When you look inward with a firm look and try to analyze. Look upward with a faith look. Look to Him. There is absolutely no real lasting cure for depression, other than putting your eyes upon the Lord. Now if that seems simplistic to you, friend, it’s only simplistic because of the hardness of your heart.

Notice how God is described in Psalm 42 verses 8 and 9, “Yet the Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.” Underscore “my life.” “I will say unto God, my Rock.” He is your life and He is your rock. Now one verse speaks of His tenderness, His lovingkindness. The next verse speaks of His strength. He’s a rock. Have you ever heard of a tender rock? That’s what God is. He is a tender rock!

Here’s a verse for your margin right here. Put this in your margin, Psalm 147 verses 3 and 4. The psalmist is talking about God, and I want you to notice how he juxtaposes tenderness and strength. It says of Him, “He healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds.” Now that’s a picture of TLC, tender loving care. And then in verse 4 it says, “He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names.” How many stars are there? You say, “Pastor, you don’t know. No one knows. There are billions and billions and quad zillions, or whatever number you can think of stars. They just go on and on and on into infinitude.” God’ll tell you about every one of them, where they’re located, the size, their weight, their brightness, their magnitude, and He’s got a name for every one of them. He has given a name to every star in the universe! And yet He’s the One who binds up your wounds. Now that’s the tender rock. That’s how great God is. You see, if you think about it, everything big is made up of something little. Our material world is made up of atoms. Atoms are so small that you could put 25 trillion of them side by side within an inch. And the mighty universe is made up of atoms. And so it’s the God of bigness who is the God of smallness. And the God who runs this universe attends the funeral of every sparrow. Not a sparrow falls but what God knows about it. He’s the tender rock.

What I’m trying to say to you is this: don’t get the idea that God doesn’t care about you. The very hairs of your head are numbered. He is your God, and if nobody else understands you, if you don’t have a friend anywhere, if you cannot see a solution, He will not fail you. When you take the inward look, then take the upward look and look to Him. This is not a platitude. I’m not just trying to tell you something that a preacher might say that doesn’t work. I am telling you that your hope is God! And you need to look to Him in faith. If you put your faith anywhere else, sooner or later you’re going down.

When I was a boy living down there in West Palm Beach, it seemed like for a while in the fifties, the hurricanes seemed to come right across Palm Beach and West Palm Beach. And when a hurricane would come, of course, we would take everything loose in the yard and bring it in the house and the shed. And then we’d go up and nail shutters up all over the windows, but there were some things we couldn’t bring inside by the very nature of the thing, so we’d get rope and tie it down so it wouldn’t get blown away. But the problem was sometimes you’d come out, and those winds would exceed a hundred miles an hour,



and the thing that you had tied down was blown away, and the thing you tied it to was blown away also. I mean, you better tie your life to something that can stand. There is a rock, and that rock is God Himself. He cannot, He will not be moved.

Now you say, "Well, Pastor Rogers, do you mean if I come to God in all my troubles, He'll explain it to me and I'll understand?" Nope, you may not understand. Look in Psalm 42 verse 9 and 10, "I will say unto God, my rock, 'Why have You forgotten me?'" In other words, here he's saying, David is so wise in this psalm. He's saying, "Lord, I don't understand. Why have You left me like this?" "Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, 'Where is thy God?'"

Now you know as a pastor there's one question that I'm asked over and over again when I meet people in depression. They say, "Pastor, why? Why did this happen? Why? Why'd my husband die? Why? Why do I lose my job? Why? Why did the doctor? Why? Why? Why?" Well, why is not your question. It's how. Why is God's question; how are you going to react? That's your question. God's ways are not your ways. Many of God's choicest of saints have gone through periods of deep darkness, and they couldn't understand why, and David was one of them. In the very verse that he tells God that God is his rock, he's also saying, "God, I don't understand." Someone has well said that, "Life is not a problem to be solved, it is a mystery to be lived. Not a problem to be solved, a mystery to be lived." And Warren Wiersbe has reminded us that, "We do not live by explanations; we live by promises." So many people, you know, they figure, "Well, if there is a God, why has He let me down?" He's not let you down. As a matter of fact, if there is something that has happened to you that you cannot understand, think what an incredible opportunity for trust that is in you.

Robert Frost I think said it perfectly. He said, "It was of the essence of the trial that you shouldn't understand it at the time. It had to have un-meaning to have meaning." "It was of the essence of the trial that you couldn't understand it! It had to have un-meaning to have meaning." You say, "Pastor, I don't think I understand that." What he is saying is that if God explains it all to you, it kind of ceases to be a trial, but if you say, "God, I don't understand it. Lord, why have You forsaken me? Yet, You're my Rock." Then you're coming to the place that Job came to when, in Job 13:15, he said, "Though He slay me, yet shall I trust Him."

The sainted Andrew Murray said this, the old saint of God, listen to it, "In times of trouble God's trusting child must say, first, He brought me here. It is His will that I'm in this straight place. Next, He will keep me here in His love, and He will give me His grace in this trial to behave as His child. Then, He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me the lessons He intends for me to learn, and working in the grace He means to bestow. Last, in His good time, He can bring me out again. How and when He knows." Say, "Number one, I'm here by God's appointment; number two, in His keeping; number three, under His training; number four, for His time. God is too good to be unkind, too wise to make a mistake. When we cannot trace His hand, we can trust His heart." That's good. That's good. That's what David is saying in Psalm 42:9, "I will say unto God, my Rock, 'Why hast Thou forgotten me?'" God, I've got so many questions, but You are my rock.

Now thirdly and finally and quickly. Look, take the inward look, the firm inward look. Take the faith upward look. And finally **take a focused onward look**. Notice Psalm 42 verse 11, "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." He's looking to the future. "I am coming out! I do have a hope! I will hope in God, no matter how bleak it is, no matter how dark it is, no matter how despairing it is. I will hope in God, and I have hope." Friend, there are



only two places where there is no hope. One is in Heaven when you don't need it because faith has turned to reality. And the other's in Hell where people have no hope. But as long as there is a God, there is hope. And I want to tell you today if you're depressed and listening to me, hope in God. Say, "You, O Lord, my Rock, and I will yet praise You. By Your grace and in Your time, You'll turn every hurt to a hallelujah, every tear to a pearl, every midnight to a sunrise, and every Calvary to an Easter. I will yet praise You! I will!" And don't you lose hope. It may be that God is taking everything else away from you to cause you to trust in Him and hope in Him alone to bring you to Psalm 42 verse 11, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him."

St. Augustine asked this question, it's one of the most penetrating questions I've ever heard. He said, "Suppose God were to come to you and God were to offer you a contract, a deal. And God were to say to you, "You can have whatever you want. You will live everlastingly. You will have all power. Every longing will be satisfied. Nothing will be a sin to you. Nothing will be forbidden to you. You can have everything you want, as much as you want. Joy, peace, long life, success, everlasting life, you can have anything you want, with this one exception; you will never see My face." Augustine asked, "Would you take that deal?" And he said, "If you would say no, then you have the pure love of God. But he said, "If a chill went over your soul, when you heard that phrase, 'You will never see My face,'" he said, "thank God, because you're saying God means more to me than all this world and all the universes put together."

You see, I don't think that God is really finished with us until our chief delight is God alone. And when our chief delight is God alone no matter how dark, how deep, how dismal, how despairing, when God and God alone is our chief desire and we'll say, "I don't care what happens. He is God! And I will yet praise Him and see His face." Take a firm inward look. Take a faith upward look. And take a focused future look. If you're depressed, I beg you in the name of Jesus, don't let Satan blow out the light of hope in your heart and in your life. He is not finished with you.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If you would like to know this God, if you'd like to be saved, I want to invite you to pray a prayer like this, "Dear God, I know that You love me and I know that You want to save me. Jesus, I believe You're the Son of God. I believe, Lord Jesus, that You paid for my sin with Your blood on that cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. You promised if I would trust You, You would save me, and I do trust You." Would you tell Him that? "I do trust You right now with all of my heart. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin. Save me, Lord Jesus." Pray it and mean it. "Save me, Lord Jesus." Did you ask Him? Now I want you to seal it by praying this, "Lord Jesus, I am trusting You to save me, and because I'm trusting You I'll make it public. I'll not be ashamed of You because You died for me. In Your name I pray. Amen."



PO Box 38300 | Memphis TN 38183-0300 | (901)382-7900