

## Spiritual Depression-Its Causes and Cures

### -A study through D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones sermon series-

#### Chapter 10 - Where is your faith?

*“There are many Christians who get into difficulty and are unhappy from time to time because they clearly have not understood the nature of faith...what make one a Christian is that one is given the gift of faith. We are given the gift of faith by God through the Holy Spirit and we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and that saves us; but that does not mean that we have fully understood the nature of faith. So it comes to pass that, while we may be truly Christian and genuinely saved through receiving this gift of faith, we may subsequently get into trouble with our spiritual experience because we have not understood what faith really is.”*

Before we look deeper at faith, it is good to be reminded from this passage (Luke 8:22-25) of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ. Here we see the wonder of 1 person, yet 2 natures (truly God and truly man). Jesus was physically exhausted and needed sleep (truly man) and yet with the power of His word He controls the forces of nature (truly God). Orthodox Christianity confesses:

*We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the virgin Mary, the mother of God, according to the manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.-Chalcedonian Creed 451*

Towards the end of the Luke 8 passage, we see the Lord rebuking their disciples. There were several things wrong with the disciple's response to their situation and all of these wrong elements came from not walking by faith in that situation. The first issue for the disciples was that they were not manifesting \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

*“He rebuked them for being in that state of agitation and terror and alarm while He was with them in the boat. That is the first great lesson we have to apply to ourselves and to one another. It is very wrong for a Christian to ever be in such a condition. I do not care what the circumstances may be, the Christian should never be agitated, the Christian should never be beside himself like this, the Christian should never be at his wit's end, the Christian should never be in a condition in which he has lost control of himself.”*

*“The Christian is never meant to be carried away by his feelings, whatever they are-never. That is always wrong in a Christian. He is always to be controlled, as I hope to show you. The trouble with these men was that they were lacking in self-control.”*

Biblical faith should be a self-controlled faith. Not only were the disciples wrong for losing all self-control but they also were not trusting in Christ. They had no confidence that Christ truly \_\_\_\_\_ for them. They began to doubt that Christ really cared for them at all.

*“It is a lack of faith in His concern for us and in His care for us. It means that we take charge and are going to look after the situation ourselves, feeling either that He does not care, or perhaps that He cannot do anything. That is what makes this so terrible...We must never allow ourselves to be agitated*

*and disturbed whatever the circumstances because to do so implies a lack of faith, a lack of trust, a lack of confidence in our blessed Lord and God.”*

What we see here is that the Lord brought his disciples into a situation that was too much for them. He brings us to “trials of faith” where we are forced to walk by faith. The necessity of faith is so important to understand. We want everything to be smooth, we want to have great feelings, we want to see miracles to confirm to us the trustworthiness of what we believe, etc. However, the life of the Christian is a call to \_\_\_\_\_.

*“If we have a magical conception of the Christian life, we are certain to find ourselves in trouble, because, when difficulties come, we shall be tempted to ask: ‘Why is this allowed?’ ...While all this is happening to us, our Lord appears to be utterly unconcerned about us. That is where the real trial of faith comes in. The wind and billows were bad enough and the water coming into the ship. That was terrible, but the thing that to them was most terrible of all was His apparent unconcern.”*

*“Do we not all know something of this position of trial and difficulty, yes, and of a feeling that God somehow does not seem to care? He does not do anything about it...How often are we tempted to say such things, exactly as these disciples in the boat were!”*

*“The fact that God permits these things and that He often appears to be quite unconcerned about it all really constitutes what I am describing as the trial of faith. Those are the conditions in which our faith is tried and tested...”*

True faith is not simply about what or how you feel. Remember the whole man is involved in Christianity. Therefore, faith involves the whole man (understanding, heart, and will) and is something that you must \_\_\_\_.

*“Faith is an activity, it is something that has to be exercised. It does not come into operation itself, you and I have to put it into operation. It is a form of activity.”*

*“The first thing I must do when I find myself in a difficult position is to refuse to allow myself to be controlled by the situation...Faith is a refusal to panic...it is unbelief kept quiet, kept down. That is what these men did not do, they allowed this situation to grip them, they became panicky.”*

*“Having taken that first step, having pulled yourself up, you then remind yourself of what you believe and what you know...faith reminds itself of what the Scriptures call ‘the exceeding great and precious promises’. Faith says: ‘I cannot believe that He who has brought me so far is going to let me down at this point. It is impossible, it would be inconsistent with the character of God’.*

*“The next step is that faith applies all that to the particular situation...whatever your circumstances at this moment, bring all you know to be true of your relationship to God to bear upon it.”*

*“That is the way faith works. But you and I have to exercise it. It does not come into operation automatically.”*

There is one more truth to glean from this passage. One does not need “great” faith to be acceptable to the Lord but the Lord looks with loving \_\_\_\_\_ even on those of little faith.

*“However poor and small and however incomplete the faith of these disciples was on this occasion, they at any rate had a sufficient amount of faith to make them do the right thing in the end. They went to Him. Having been agitated and distressed and alarmed and exhausted, they went to Him. They still had some kind of feeling that He could do something about it and so they woke Him...He produced the condition they were so anxious to enjoy, in spite of their lack of faith. Such is the gracious Lord that you and I believe in and follow. Though He is disappointed in us often and though He rebukes us, He will never neglect us; He will receive us, He will bless us, He will give us peace, indeed He will do for us what he did for these men. With this peace He gave them a still greater conception of Himself than they had had before.”*