

## Spiritual Depression-Its Causes and Cures

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

#### Chapter 14 - Weary in Well Doing

*“We can be quite certain that there is no cause of spiritual depression today that is not dealt with in the Epistles. The ills of the spiritual life are always the same, they never vary.”*

The cause of spiritual depression that we will deal with today is of a different kind than what we have been dealing with. Spiritual depression can also be caused by seemingly doing the \_\_\_\_\_ things.

*“Here, the devil does something much more subtle, in that there is apparently nothing wrong at all. What happens is that people just become weary and tired, while still going in the right direction.”*

One of the reasons that we can grow weary in doing well is because we find ourselves in a different \_\_\_\_\_ in our spiritual life. In the beginning, our spiritual life was exciting and everything was new. However, as we are saved for longer we can begin to find the excitement, the zeal that we once had is now waning.

*“That thrill of new discovery which animated us in the early stages suddenly seems to have gone. Nothing seems to be happening, there does not seem to be any change or advance or development...then this trial arises, and we are no longer carried over it by that initial momentum which seemed to take us through it all in the early stages at the beginning...Very often Christian people become weary because certain feelings have gone.”*

When we find ourselves struggling with this problem how should we respond? How are we to deal with our soul as we find that the good work of the Lord seems to be tiring us out - It doesn't seem as easy or \_\_\_\_\_ as it once was for us, what should we do? Lloyd-Jones gives us a list of negatives and positives that we are to apply to our own soul to overcome this cause of spiritual depression.

*“You say: ‘I am weary and tired, the things is too much for me’. And there is nothing to say at that point but this negative-do not listen. You always have to start with these ‘don'ts’ on the very lowest level; and that is the lowest level. You must say to yourself: ‘Whatever happens I am going on’. You do not give in or give way.”*

However, it is not enough just to not listen to these doubts. You must also not “\_\_\_\_\_ yourself to it”. You should not simply say, “it will always be this way, I will just have to put up with it.”

*“There is something, of course, which seems wonderful about this, something that seems heroic about it. But you notice that I put it as a negative...this is perhaps the greatest danger of all confronting the Christian Church, the danger of doing a thing in a formal spirit and as a matter of duty.”*

What you also must not do is seek to get over or through this despair by looking for \_\_\_\_\_. Now Christians can look for physical stimulants (alcohol, drugs, etc.) but a more common problem is looking to other “works” for extra energy and motivation to press on.

*“They work up some kind of excitement or they adopt new methods. They say that they must rouse themselves out of this, so they put on some new program...Can you not think of certain churches that are always putting out some fresh announcements of finding some new attraction? Such churches are obviously living on artificial stimulants, and it is all being done with this idea in mind.”*

These are the things you must not do (negatives) when you feel this weariness (do not listen to yourself, do not resign yourself to just always being in a state of spiritual weariness, and do not go searching for some new stimulant). We must also ask the question, “\_\_\_\_\_ am I weary?” and seek to discover the answer.

*“You must not treat the condition before you diagnose it; you do not apply the remedy before you know the cause. It is a dangerous thing to rush to treatment before you know the cause; you must diagnose first.”*

Next, examine yourself to see if there are some \_\_\_\_\_ factors that are adding to this feeling of weariness. Are you physically exhausted? Have you been overworking yourself? Remember the case of Elijah, *“The real thing he needed was sleep and food; and God gave him both! He gave him food and rest before He gave him spiritual help.”* If this is not the case then move on to this next consideration. Ask yourself, *“Have I been trying to do all this good work in my own strength?”*

*“We may have been trying to do God’s work ourselves; and of course, if we try to do that there will be only one result, it will ultimately crush us because it is such high work.”*

We must also ask ourselves if we have had a right \_\_\_\_\_ in our working for the Lord. Has the glory of God truly been what I have been aiming at or has there been a base and carnal motive that has been driving my service to God?

*“I must ask myself why I have been doing this work and what has really been my motive... We have taken all for granted and assumed that our motive was pure. But we may find that it was not. Some people work for the sake of the thrill and excitement. There is no question about it all. I have seen people very actively engaged in Christian work because there was a certain amount of excitement in it. There are some people who are not happy unless they are always doing something, and they do not always realize that what they are out for is the thrill and excitement of the activity.”*

One last question to ask yourself is, *“Has this work, I wonder, kept me going? Instead of being God’s work, has it been a sort of mainspring of my life?”* Has it been the work that has given you \_\_\_\_\_ in life? If so, when the work is done one will find that there is a weariness and despair because the one work that was giving you purpose is not around anymore.

We also must think about our \_\_\_\_\_. Do we consider the Christian life to be drudgery? Do you find it all just so boring and dull? If so, you need to consider how great of a sin this is and how ungrateful such a mindset is towards God. Instead, think about where you have been taken from, that which awaits you, and the Lord whom you serve.

*“If you regard the Christian life as a dreary task you are insulting God... The Christian life is not a task... if I ever, even for a fraction of a second, question the greatness and the glory and the wonder and the nobility of this walk in which I am engaged, well then I am spitting upon Him. My friend, if you think of your Christian life in any shape or form with this sense of grudge, or as a wearisome task or duty, I tell you to go back to the beginning of your life, retrace your steps to the wicket gate through which you passed. Look at the world in its evil and sin, look at the hell to which it was leading you, and then look forward and realize that you are set in the midst of the most glorious campaign into which a man could ever enter, and that you are on the noblest road that the world has ever known.”*

*“Go back and look at your life and put it into the context of eternity... Our greatest joys are but the first fruits and the foretaste of the eternal joy that is coming... We are too immersed in our problems. We need to look ahead, to anticipate, to look forward to the eternal glories gleaming afar.”*

*“Above all let us consider the Master for Whom we work. Let us remember how He endured and how patient He was... He came down and endured it all, and how patient He was. How humdrum His life was, most of His time was spent with ordinary petty people who misunderstood Him. But He went steadfastly on and did not complain... you and I have the privilege of being like Him.”*