



MISPLACED HOPE.

“WHY ARE CAST DOWN, O MY SOUL,
AND WHY ARE YOU IN TURMOIL WITHIN ME?
HOPE IN GOD; FOR I SHALL AGAIN PRAISE HIM,
MY SALVATION AND MY GOD.”

PSALM 42:5, 11; 43:5

Tonight, we'll continue in our series *Hope in God: A Study on Spiritual Depression*. Why we've chosen to study what God's Word has to say about this issue is fairly self-explanatory. I've spoken to numerous Christians in this room and in other areas of the church who would say that their lives are marked by sadness, apathy, fear, and shame. These are Christians! Brothers and sisters who claim the name of Christ, who cling to him, and yet, they are in ruts, devastating pain. A definition of spiritual depression that we'll work with is this: **a severe sadness and darkness of soul linked to a crisis of faith**. As always in this series, my aim tonight will be to direct you to Scriptures in order to determine a significant cause of spiritual depression and anxiety as well as provide its cure.

BIG IDEA:

I will hope in God because
He is absolutely good, dependable, and trustworthy.

SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION'S CAUSE: MISPLACED HOPE.

- Christians place their hope in the wrong place, and when those things fail, they are left feeling miserable.
 - Christians experiencing pain want to experience joy.
 - In attempt to experience happiness, we turn to the wrong places.
 - Instead of lifting our spirits, we experience pain when those things let us down.
 - Being let down leaves us feeling spiritually depressed, anxious, and exhausted.

DEFINING HOPE:

A confident expectation and desire
for something good to happen in the future.¹

HOPE THAT FAILS:

1. Self.
2. Others.
3. Things.

ANSWERING FEAR WITH REAL HOPE:

FEAR: I am ALONE. (v. 2)

- I'll never feel the presence of God again.
- My best days of faith are gone.

DESIRE: I want to enjoy RELATIONSHIP.

HOPE IN GOD: I am confident that God LOVES me, so I expect him to care for me.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 - “For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath he swore to your fathers...”

John 3:16 - “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

¹ Piper, John. “What Is Hope?” *Desiring God*, 6 April 1986, Retrieved from <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/what-is-hope>.

John 17:26 – “I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Ephesians 1:3-6 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace...”

FEAR: I am REJECTED. (vv. 3, 9, 10; 43:2)

- God has forgotten me. (vv. 3, 9, 10)
 - God just doesn't care about me that much.
 - Lie: I'm not valuable enough to feel cared about.
 - BECAUSE something has taken away my value. I am unacceptable
 - This is the **passive** side of rejection.
- God has abandoned me. (43:2)
 - God was once with me, but he decided to leave me.
 - Lie: I'm too messy for God.
 - This is the **active** side of rejection.

DESIRE: I want to be ACCEPTED.

HOPE IN GOD: I am confident that Jesus' sacrifice applies to me, so I expect to enjoy ACCEPTANCE by God.

2 Corinthians 5:21 – “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Hebrews 10:19-22 – “Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.”

FEAR: I am DOOMED. (v. 9; 43:2)

- My issues might win this fight.
- I don't have the strength to continue this fight.
- I worry that I won't make it through this fight.
- I'm alone and alone I'm useless.

DESIRE: I want a FUTURE.

HOPE IN GOD: I am confident that God will KEEP me, so I will expect him to lead me through the wilderness.

Jude 24-25 – “Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.”

2 Thessalonians 5:23-24 – “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”