

# The Decision in Depression

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you will, take your Bible this morning and turn to Matthew 26. Matthew 26, as you're finding your spot there, don't you look forward to the day when the sun will never set again? I don't know if that little phrase stuck out at you as the lady sang today, but I'm grateful for that.

As you're finding your spot there, Matthew 26, I will say probably I would go to the hipster coffee place, Pastor Trent, especially in February in Ohio. But if I'm here, maybe I'd do the ice cream.

But I'm grateful to be here and your pastor's kind invitation, all the staff has done to host us into your hospitality. Matthew 26 today, we're going to look at verse 36 through verse 39, as you see there in your handout.

And on the slide today, we're looking at the decision in depression and looking forward to hopefully some things God will click in your mind. Before we read our text today, how many of you have teenagers right now?

Could you raise your hand for a minute? You have teenagers in your house. Somebody was saying this. They said, when you have children as teenagers, it's important to have a dog. You've heard why, right? This is very important for we who have teenagers.

[ 1 : 11 ] And we've all been there. We've been these teenagers. It's important to have a dog so that someone in your house is happy to see you when you come home, right? And my parents were also probably, they should have had a few more dogs when I was a teenager.

But it's something that often we need help on. Art, we have a little dog named Mo. So his first name is Mo, M-O, and his middle name is Bacon, if you can catch the pun there or the Mo Bacon.

All 11 to 12 pounds of him. And a few, it's been maybe a year and a half or so ago, I came home from church and walked through the garage into the breezeway and then opened the door to the house.

And as soon as I opened the door to the house, the smell, this distinct smell met my nostrils and made me kind of pull back a bit. And so I kind of, what happened, I walked through the house and I get back to the bathtub and my wife is washing our dog.

She's not in the tub, but the dog is. And she's muttering under her breath, something to this effect, dumb dog, dumb dog, dumb dog, something to that effect. And here, just a few minutes before I got home, it was dark out, our dog who was going out front to do his business, the door opened and right in front of him was a skunk.

[ 2 : 25 ] Yeah, and dogs, their instinct is to run and bark at whatever they see, right? And so he learned very quickly that responding impulsively in the dark can get you in trouble.

We're gonna talk about today the darker moods, the low ebb moments of our lives. And the fact that, listen, it is not our circumstances that largely determine our success or failure emotionally, but it is the context inside of us that processes those circumstances that largely shapes what God's gospel can do in our lives.

So we wanna look at today the decision in depression, and I hope our study will be an encouragement. Look here in Matthew 26, in verse 36, Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, why go and pray yonder?

And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. Notice that.

Tarry ye here and watch with me. And he went a little farther and fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

[ 3 : 33 ] And so we see here in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus processing, I think, a level of depression that we cannot fully appreciate this morning. Gethsemane was a place where they would press olives, and the extract of that olive was used for all kinds of medicinal purposes, dietary purposes.

But to get that oil out of those olives required pressure. And so here in Matthew 26, we see Jesus, I believe, navigating depression the way each of us should navigate depression.

Listen, without sin. Often I hear folks who will say, Well, if you're depressed, you're in sin. If you have anxiety, you're sinful. Can I remind you of at least one exception to that? It's the individual we're reading about this morning.

Jesus Christ, I believe, here in the Garden, suffered from a bout of depression on the cross when he said, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? I think we see a panic attack at a level we cannot fully fathom.

And yet it also says, as was just read this morning, he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without what? Sin. And so it is possible, now how discouraged you are today, how anxious you may be today, it is possible through Christ, his example, his provision, his word, his spirit, to make decisions that avail to you everything that God has promised us.

[ 4 : 48 ] And so we want to talk about today for a few moments how we can be less reactive to the darker downturns of our emotions and instead to be more decisive for the Lord. So let's talk about two of them in the time that we have left today.

Number one, let's talk for a few minutes, first of all, about the fact that we have to admit. The first step we must take in our relationship with God and his gospel is we have to admit when we have depression.

I don't know if this takes you back to some traumatic, maybe some trauma you've yet to resolve. Okay, so I'm going to bring it up for you again today. Do you remember playing dodgeball, especially elementary, and maybe you got hit in the head or usually if we got hit in the head, you're not out, right?

I think it was the rule. But I still just would hit people in the head just to have another shot at them again before they got out. But I remember just, there was always that one kid, hopefully this wasn't you, they'd get hit and they would say they weren't out.

Do you remember this? Their own mama would have said they got hit and they just, and so by the time they've got hit four or five times, you just kind of let the kid just keep running around pretending he's still in the game.

[ 5 : 51 ] Let's focus on who is still really in the dodgeball game. Can I say to you today, there is no level of depression with what God has provided to us, his common grace, there may be support of medical intervention and counseling and support, as well as the soul level through the provision of God that God cannot help us address as it relates to depression, except for one thing.

Depression plus denial, even the gospel can't fix that. And so we have to this morning start when we are most intuitively wanting to deny it, we must instead admit it as we see Jesus modeling for us today.

So I give you a couple of areas that we have to be more decisive with when we feel down. This could be a mild discouragement to maybe something that's more serious and long, that lasts for a lengthy period of time.

We have to be willing to admit it. So two things, look at verse 37, and I love how Jesus models this for us so perfectly today. Verse 37, and he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, so James and John, the inner circle as we refer to them, notice, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

Number one, you and I have to admit where we're navigating this or help others do the same with decisive feelings. Does that sound like an oxymoron? Decisive feelings. Often we let our feelings be the engine, if you will, of the train in our lives instead of being the caboose that reinforces right decisions.

[ 7 : 19 ] We let our feelings dictate where we're going, what we're going to do, what our values are, as opposed to being decisive the way Christ is with his feelings. The language here in verse 36 where it says, or verse 37, this idea of being sorrowful and very heavy has the idea of being grieved or sad to the point of distress.

I would submit to you today, likely this is the most intense downturn emotionally that Christ has felt to this point in his earthly ministry. When he was broken over the city of Jerusalem, other places where he was frustrated by the Pharisees, whatever the specific, this is a downturn emotionally that Jesus is navigating in his life.

And so we see that he owns it. How does Matthew know what he writes in verse 37? Because Jesus was willing to admit it. He was willing to let those closest to him know that he was going through a downturn emotionally.

Now, before we get to the text in detail, can I give you a few roots or causes of feelings of depression? Because I think sometimes we act as if depression or anxiety or stress, burnout, that they just come out of nowhere.

For example, a panic attack and the profile of anxiety, it feels like it just sneaks up on you. But those that I've worked with and those that I've studied under, clearly there's often a thought process that slowly builds to that point where it feels like it just creeps up on you.

[ 8 : 45 ] And the same is true with depression. There are often decisions and maybe something's going on inside of us that cause us to feel the moods that we have. So I'll give you just a few of them.

Maybe jot down anything that jumps out at you in this section. First, there are theologically rooted feelings. Some of the despondency of what we feel this morning may be because of something theologically that needs to be addressed in our life.

Aren't you thankful before you got saved that one of the things that helped you get saved is you were miserable? You were sad. You were empty, right? And God used the melancholy of the soul to cause you to respond to the joy of the salvation that God offered.

And so God can redeem even the downturn of our emotions to bring us into right relationship with Him. And I would just encourage you, if that's you today, you don't know Jesus Christ as Savior, there's a level of joy that you'll never experience and there's a level of depression you'll never shake without the gospel of Jesus Christ, right?

He alone provides for us that peace, that joy, that comfort through the finished work of Calvary. For the saved individual as well, Ed Welch puts it this way, it is a myth that the profile of faith is always smiling.

[ 9 : 55 ] You do know that we don't have to always be perky and happy and joyful. In fact, look in the Psalms, look at what they said to God. Somebody said it this way, one-third of the Psalms were written in the minor key. There's a bit of dissonance, right?

A bit of discouragement. Even full-blown depression modeled there as they worship the Lord in the midst of the difficulty. So some of our feelings today that are off or down could be a result of some theological rooted things that need to be identified and addressed.

And what I love about God is this, He can use even our depression to strengthen our relationship with Him. He draws us to Himself when we are down, He encourages us when we are discouraged, and so may we turn to God instead of away from God if there are feelings that are theologically rooted.

Number two, there are also psychologically or mentally generated feelings that we navigate. And I give you just quickly a few categorical clinical perspective on depression as it relates to the mind.

There would be first what is called major depression. This includes a depressed mood or loss of interest for at least two weeks. And so if you have that persisting in your life, interfering with daily activities, you might be diagnosed with major depression.

[ 11 : 07 ] There's secondly, persistent depressive disorder, which consists of less severe symptoms but lasts for a lengthy period of time. And typically, that's a two-year kind of benchmark that leads you to be diagnosed with persistent depressive disorder.

Some of you ladies would be familiar with this, perinatal depression, right? So you could have prenatal depression, that would be during the pregnancy. You can also have postpartum depression, which is a very real thing.

For many of the ladies, they can testify of that. Seasonal affective disorder, that would be we who live up north. As the sunlight disappears, we had just a few weeks here, we're like, what is that big yellow orb on the horizon?

Oh, it's the sun. And so as your serotonin levels dip with the lack of sunlight, there's all kinds of things that psychologically are impacted by the circumstances around us.

And then there would be depression with symptoms of psychosis. This would be hallucinations. This would be derealization. Those kind of things can be a part of the psychological struggle with depression.

[ 12 : 08 ] And one of the things that I have observed and studied on and learned from others in is that often a traumatic experience can cause us mentally to have a break with reality. Almost without exception, someone who loses a spouse, their soulmate, is going to struggle with depression.

We all know that, right? A circumstance in life, a loss, a traumatic experience often leads to this struggle with depression. What's interesting about Jesus here in Matthew 26 is we are traumatized by things that happen behind us, right?

Things that have happened in our past. With Jesus, what was bringing on this depression for him mentally was knowing fully what was ahead of him. Being separated from the Father, being made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

He knew what was coming. And so the mental burden that placed upon our Lord and Savior, we see that clearly there in the text. So that's what's so much, what's such a challenge with depression is the mind is often the root cause of some of our depression, but it's also the battleground for the solutions.

And so we need God's help to discern where it's causing problems and where we need to be more decisive as we interact with those symptoms. And then thirdly and lastly, by way of introduction, we have biologically rooted feelings.

[ 13 : 23 ] Some of our feelings are because of our bodies, how we're wired, how we're made, the fall and curse of sin and its consequences in our lives. And I think we have to be very careful not to assign to all depression.

It's a spiritual-only issue or it's a mental-only issue. Many times it is a result of biological causes. And I list just a few of them for you today. Depression can be the result of physical problems such as anemia, arteriosclerosis, low blood sugar, thyroid disorders, hormone challenges or imbalances, infections, and even dehydration.

Just not getting the water you need can lead to symptoms that would have the profile of depression. So here would be my encouragement without getting into it at much length, and it's this. If you have persistent somatic or having to do with the body symptoms, consult with your physician.

That's actually a spiritual thing to do. That's a godly thing to do. And so maybe we lean into that where we maybe need to in our lives. I was just at a conference this last week and a general practitioner, a doctor, he said nothing is more frustrating in counseling than trying to help somebody spiritually that the root cause is a physical issue.

And some of you may be frustrated in this area, either you or someone you love because you haven't dealt with these physical causes or these psychological causes that God wants us to deal with.

[ 14 : 47 ] It's kind of like the last thing I would say on this is like if you're looking at a dashboard of your car, you know you have the dummy lights we call them for those of us who aren't as mechanically inclined, yours truly being one of them.

Can you imagine riding with me somewhere, you know, and you see that light come on in my car and you see me pull out a roll of duct tape and then you notice I've already done this a few times and I take the duct tape and I cover another one of those lights?

Sometimes you're starting to look, you're looking at your Uber app, right, looking for a backup plan. This guy's not going to get me home tonight. Sometimes with our emotions, we do just that, don't we?

We mask, we duct tape when there's a root cause that needs to be cautiously and thoroughly examined and then submitted to the provisions God has given us in the gospel.

Who gave us our emotions? God did. And he gave them to us not to lead the way but to reveal when there is a root cause that needs to be addressed. You cannot deny, you cannot suppress what God is revealing in this area.

[ 15 : 46 ] Alright, look now at verse 38. So we see that Jesus is decisive with his emotions. See how carefully he orchestrates this moment. He has the men there, he wants to be there and now notice what he says in verse 38.

Then saith he unto them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. Tarry ye here and watch with me. So number one, we admit with decisive feelings. Number two, this is key. Admit that you have depression with decisive words.

I have in my Bible underlined or circled there in verse 38, then saith he. Jesus verbalized to these men what he was feeling in his heart and in his mind and in his body.

And so we must be willing to admit with decisive words. Have you noticed that the scientific community, the medical community, whatever professional community, that they're always iterating their understanding of things?

You know, what used to be the standard no longer is the standard. My mom is a registered dietitian. I remember we were always, she would go away for continuing education. It's margarine, now it's butter. Now we're back to margarine.

[ 16 : 50 ] We would have that dynamic with my mom being a dietitian. Just this last week, I went to the dentist and they're like, sir, it's been a while. We have some suspect teeth. We'd like to do x-rays.

Are you okay with that? I said, yes, I'm fine with that. And I noticed as we started to gear up for this, they got those real comfortable tabs they put in between your teeth. They're like gouging. You're like, that might be a concern as well at the end of this exam.

But they got all these things in your teeth. Is that what was missing was they did not bring out that big heavy mat to place over me to protect my essential organs from the gamma rays or x-rays or whatever my body is going to be subjected to.

And so I, you know, I'm just, I ask. I said, you know, what's the deal? Where's the thing? And she said, oh, just on Friday, the ADA said we no longer need to do that. And so I'm like, either way I lose because either I was overdoing it before or right now I now have cancer as a result of what we just did.

But all because a board said it's now okay. Can I say to you this morning that if we're not careful, our decisions and our interaction with this struggle of depression is not as verbal as it should be.

[ 17 : 57 ] We're letting man's words, we're letting maybe some other people's words versus God's word and them coming through our lips be how we process depression. Study after study bears out, listen, that talk therapy in any of these struggles we have of the soul, of the moods, of the mind, of the thoughts is just as effective or more so as chemical therapy.

Talk therapy, the things we're doing today, the things we're going to do this week with a friend as your pastor admonished you to do, it is decisively talking out the depression we're struggling with that leads to the provision God has given.

You notice in verse 38 he says, my soul is exceeding sorrowful. My soul is. His words are direct words. He doesn't beat around the bush.

He says, guys, I'm so sorrowful, I feel like dying. I feel like I am dying. I'm so pressed. I'm so burdened. He says it like it is. When you think of the profile of Jesus as he's there in the garden with these that were just mentioned, if we're not careful, we almost view him as kind of this, he's got this aura about him.

He's very resolute. He's very calm. He's very collected. When Matthew as well as Luke are very clear that it was anything but that. It was a distressful moment. It was a depressed moment that Jesus was going through.

[ 19 : 15 ] In fact, he suffers from what medical science would tell us is hematohidrosis, where there's so much pressure upon him that the capillaries in his forehead as he sweated drops of blood, the pressure that was on him.

And he chooses to release that pressure and to process that pressure with direct words to those who were around him. And then I love the end of verse 38 where he says, Terry, you hear, and notice this, and watch, here's the two words, with me.

His words were direct words. Number two, his words were communal words. Could Jesus have said these same words to the darkness? I don't know if you ever yelled at a wall, punched a wall.

He didn't say it just out into the darkness. He said it to people. He said it to those that God had given to him as he referred to earlier to in a communal setting to process the mood, the downturn that he's experiencing in this moment.

Here's a question I would ask you today when we, not if, but when we have a downturn emotionally, where do we turn for listening ears that God has put in our life? Because I think a lot of us in the room, we feel like we've got to constantly project, I'm happy, I'm joyful, things are amazing, it's never been better, and tomorrow will be even better than this, never better today.

[ 20 : 31 ] And we feel like we have to give off that vibe and always have that perky profile. Where do we turn when we don't feel that and we need to process that in community? Can I give you a couple practical things, maybe jot down ones that jump out you need to lean into?

Begin with God-given leadership that he has put in your life. If you're a teenager today, turn to your parents. As much as you want them to look to the dog for their joy and happiness, let them in.

Let them know what you're working through. Turn to your pastor. Turn to your mentor. Turn to someone that God has placed in your life that he's already given to you. Listen, and find from them and other biblically aligned counsel the support that you need to be heard as well as to hear from the Lord.

Secondly, just to double down on what I said a moment ago, consult with your physician. You should not proceed without making sure that you and your primary care physician have talked about and worked through the symptoms that you're experiencing.

And the only thing I would add to that because I'm not a doctor is do not flippantly add medication to address this issue and also don't go off of the medication flippantly. The counselees that I work with I will regularly say, okay, I heard what your primary care physician said.

[ 21 : 42 ] Have you gotten a second opinion? It's very important with the side effects involved with a lot of the medical treatment that's out there that you consider the pros and cons. And then I would say this, it's a matter of soul liberty.

Whether you choose with your doctor to opt in or to opt out, but may you wisely pursue the relationship and conversation you need with your physician. All right, thirdly, this would be the spiritual piece.

Commit to daily reading God's word and praying in the spirit. One of the things that happens with commit to reading God's word and praying in the spirit is that when you're depressed you don't feel like doing anything, right?

And so by leaning into spiritual disciplines it's setting a tone for the day. I don't feel like, I don't want to even, but I'm going to lean into God's word. I'm going to pray in the spirit. I'm going to let God renew my soul even when I do not feel like engaging in it.

Now the elephant in the room as it relates to depression is that depression can lead us to self-destruct, right? It can lead us to harm ourselves, to hurt ourselves, to end even life itself if we let it go far enough and so we need, next, jot this down, a trusted friend.

[ 22 : 48 ] Someone who knows we're struggling with it that we can call. Someone we can text. Someone that will support us in those low moments emotionally that we need someone's support. Of all the struggles we have mentally and emotionally, depression, listen, is the one you cannot successfully navigate alone.

Can I say that again? You cannot successfully navigate the kind of thing we're talking about today and anyone you care about. You cannot successfully navigate it alone. You need an outside voice.

You need someone who will help you in those low moments. And so where are you this morning internalizing what needs to be verbalized, not just in rage against a random stranger when you blow up, but intentionally to those God has placed in your life to help you during those downturns of life.

All right, the next picture there is a picture of the Garden of Gethsemane. And this is a picture of an olive tree. I was standing by this tree a couple years ago pre all the unrest that's there in the region right now.

And the picture you see in front of you is likely a tree of about a thousand years old. So an olive tree will live about a thousand years. And you can kind of see if you look at the picture closely in the left there is like a prop.

[ 24 : 01 ] So they're kind of trying to keep the tree upright. And from what I understand, most olive trees, when one dies in the same root structure in the same ball will sprout a new tree.

So if you think about that, if that tree is a thousand years old and nearing the end, it's possible that the previous tree in that spot was there when Jesus was there, at least close. And I can't tell you what it feels like to be in the Garden of Gethsemane and just kind of think about what we're studying today with Jesus.

But can you see a little word there at the bottom if you can make it out with the let? I didn't quite get all of it. Can you see the word there? What's the word? Peace, right? It was rainy the day we were there and I just remember we all kind of peeled off and prayed by an olive tree.

I wasn't near this one but it was still in my mind as I was doing so. And the thing I was most convicted by was standing in a place where Jesus owned how he felt and what he was going through and has secured for me peace and joy and how often I don't fully avail myself of what he has provided for me.

Can I encourage you today, if you admit your depression to God, his gospel is robust enough to carry you through that. His peace, his joy is just as available today as it's ever been.

[ 25 : 14 ] And that's only possible because Jesus admitted where he was. And because he was willing to admit and acknowledge we must do the same and as we do so his gospel floods, his grace floods our hearts.

Alright, number two. So we admit our depression. Number two, we submit our depression to the Lord. We submit our depression to the Lord. My wife, excuse me, Heidi, I hope you'll be back tonight ladies for her session.

It'll probably be the best session all weekend for obvious reasons. But she teaches and the school she's in, she teaches fourth grade right now. She's taught English for a number of years.

They had a local pastor who was speaking in chapel and this was either on Valentine's Day or close to Valentine's Day. So this is not me. Okay, it was not me that's preaching in chapel.

He pulls out his phone and he holds up to all these elementary kids. He says, kids, this is my Valentine and he shows it to the kids. And all of a sudden one of the first graders goes, hey, that's Mrs. Snowed.

[ 26 : 14 ] That's Mrs. Snowed. And there was like kind of this, which is my wife, not married to him. Okay. And there was kind of this awkward pause and he just, the speaker just kept going like what do I do with that?

Okay. Can I say to you today as it relates to our relationship with God, we're not submitting to a stranger what we struggle with. We are submitting to him what he already knows about us.

Here it is. Don't give in to depression. Give it, give your depression unto God. Right? So the temptation is to let it cave in on us for it to discourage us instead of allowing God to be the one who leads us and guides us in the midst of our depression.

Because if we give in to it, it distorts our view of God or instead it should enhance our view of him. So how do we do that? Look at Jesus' example here in verse 39. So he owns where he's at.

He's decisive with his words and his feelings. Notice verse 39. He went a little farther, fell on his face and prayed saying, Oh my father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me.

[ 27 : 14 ] Go down to verse 41. I'm sorry, verse 42. He went away again the second time and prayed saying, Oh my father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it.

Number one, jot this down. First of all, we submit with decisive prayer. So we submit our depression with decisive. First of all, needs to be honest prayer. Jesus told God what he actually felt.



I remember recently being in a counseling session. I do a lot of counseling over Zoom with missionaries and church leaders and I said to a younger ministry leader, I said, Have you ever told God how you actually feel?

He was telling me how he was discouraged. I just couldn't get over this mood that he was, this funk that he was in. And he said to me, You mean I actually can tell God how I really feel?

There's almost this look of relief on his face. Some of you have never told God how you actually feel. The struggle, the mood, the downturn. God, his shoulders are broad enough to handle the burdens that weigh upon you this morning.

[ 28 : 15 ] Because if we don't tell him in prayer, we're going to grow in bitterness and resentment and hold that against God where God invites us to tell him how we actually feel. Notice then, before you get nervous with that, notice the end of verse 39, he yields to God, nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

The end of verse 42, thy will be done. So our prayers are honest prayers. Number two, our prayers are purposeful prayers. Purposeful prayers.

Did Jesus really think he was going to opt out of what they had ordained since the beginning of time? No, it was a way rhetorically for Jesus to show this is the only way. If there were another way, the Godhead would have figured this out, but instead he surrenders to the plan, he surrenders to the purpose of God in the midst of the difficulty that was facing him.

May I say to you today, depression is rarely the result of only pain. It is almost always the result of feeling like the pain has no purpose. The thing that holds you down and keeps you down this morning is not senseless.

It's not random. It's not circumstantial. It's a part of God's plan. And Jesus weathered the storm emotionally and he pushed through it by reaffirming and committing himself anew and afresh to the purpose of God.

[ 29 : 34 ] If I were to ask you today in your mind, likeonyms, opposites, if I said to you, what is the opposite of fast? What's the first word that comes to your mind? Slow. Hopefully it went in somebody's name.

Okay, that would be mean. Okay, maybe you thought it, but don't say it. Fast, opposite, slow. If I were to ask you, what is the opposite of depression? What's the first word that comes to your mind?

Happiness, joy, right? Can I tell you today what actually is the opposite of depression? It's purpose. It's purpose. So it's not about life is hunky-dory, life is perfect, life is glowy and bright and perky.

It's about the fact that God, his purpose is always being worked out in our lives and through prayer, we remind ourselves of that. We remind others around us God is accomplishing his purpose.

If we are talking about our depression, I found we tend to talk to everybody but God about it. We post passive-aggressive things on social. We kind of indirectly let others know that we're down, but we're not talking to God.

[ 30 : 42 ] And as a result of that, we have lost sight of the purpose of God, that he's always in control. He's always using and redeeming the worst thing, the most discouraging thing that's happening in our lives.

Maybe jot down this statement to help you recalibrate on this if you're like me. Stop listening to your depression. Start talking to your depression in the presence and in the purpose of God.

Stop listening to your depression. Instead, start talking to your depression in the presence and within the constraints and the context of the purpose of God.

Psalm 42, 11, Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why are you disquieted within me? Hope thou in God. Speak to your depression with the presence and the purpose of God.

All right, lastly, look at verse 40. He cometh unto his disciples, as he's working through this, and findeth them asleep and saith to Peter, What could you not watch with me one hour?

[ 31 : 40 ] Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Number two, submit with decisive spirituality.

Submit with decisive spirituality. I was preaching at Pensacola Christian, I guess it's been maybe a year and a half ago, my son Ian was with me and we were watching a collegiate soccer game.

A few boys that we knew were playing and it was zero to zero as every exciting soccer game is with two minutes left, okay? No offense to you football or soccer people out there and so there's, it's intense, there's a few minutes left, this is the end of the season and there was kind of a scrum right in front of one of the goals and all of a sudden you heard this huge yelp, everybody stopped and there's just a kid writhing in pain on the ground and you could see I was sitting at midfield so however many yards away that is and you could see his foot was turned 90 degrees from where it should have been, just tore, shredded everything below his knee and in that moment we did not say, hey would you just be a little quiet, we're trying to finish the game and we played around him, right?

In that moment everything stops and we wait for that what felt like two hours, 15 minutes until the medical staff could get there and take care of him. That was the priority, that was the emphasis, that's what needed to be addressed.

You know what depression does? Is it moves our eyes and heart and mind off of what is God's plan and purpose and we begin to think about and to ruminate and to be consumed with things that are not focused on that which is spiritual.

[ 33 : 20 ] I'm not saying we don't deal with the physical as we just talked about but the focus, the context is always the spiritual purpose and plan that God is seeking to accomplish.

And so you notice two things Jesus models well here for us. First of all, there's a vigilant spirituality. His disciples are sleeping and Jesus is awake. He's awake, he's alert, he's engaged in what God has called him to do and you see in verse 41 he says at the end of the verse the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.

Man's regenerated spirit may have the best of intentions but it must control his body in order to gain spiritual victory. So we have to let the spiritual versus the other way around we've got to let the spiritual help us focus on what is the priority what is reality what does matter and allow that to provide context for everything else that we are navigating.

The best way I can tell you to do this is this you know you're going to have a downturn if you struggle in this area establish beforehand who you're going to reach out to when you get discouraged or down. Number two establish what you will never do when you're depressed and thirdly establish what you will always do.

Be intentional be focused make sure that God is glorified in the midst of the things that you struggle with in depression. Alright and then lastly verse 43 he comes again after just confronting their sleeping dozing off found them asleep again for their eyes were heavy and I love this in verse 43 and he left them and went away again and prayed the third time saying the same words.

[ 34 : 57 ] Vigilant spirituality lastly focused spirituality Christ stayed on mission despite those that disappointed him around him. One of the biggest struggles with depression is it being misunderstood others letting you down Jesus focused on God he focused on God's provision and faithfulness in the midst of those disappointments.

I don't know if you've noticed but someone is missing this weekend that I know rather well it's my brother Travis you guys probably recognize the least vocal similarities I don't know why he's not here I guess like I said last night I guess we have issues I'm not aware of oh you're coming yes we feel led to go back to the UK for a few days and so anyway but we were with them a couple of years ago and this picture the next picture is a picture of Chartwell which would be the country estate of Winston Churchill and Winston Churchill as some of you know or most of you've read about him he struggled big time with depression and the art studio that you see there is a picture of where he painted dozens and dozens of paintings that to me looked decent he wasn't an artist in the truest sense of the word but the reason he painted was because he struggled with what he called the black dog of depression and he would use painting to here was his analogy to cage the black dog and based upon the number of paintings on his estate which are hundreds of them they're everywhere it didn't work okay no offense to him you know if we're not careful we're using gimmicks and gadgetry and kind of stop gaps to address things that really need a broader perspective the perspective that Jesus gives us in the text this morning we cannot cope with it we cannot suppress it we cannot solve it with only physical related things in view we must allow this stubborn darkness of the soul to be resolved by God's provision the recommended resource there if you pull that next slide up there guys is a great little book

I use this all the time in my counseling depression the sun always rises by Margaret Ashmore it's about 30 pages 40 pages be a great book for you to go through if you know someone who's struggling with depression as well as maybe to share with them very gospel centric would definitely affirm the value and significance of God's word but also deal with some of the other issues that are a part of this struggle so maybe that would be a help to you as we finish today so I want to share just a little excerpt from that book and then we will finish with a word of prayer today appreciate your kind attention from that book the author the sun always rises she said this listen to this story so my parents had just begun to build their dream home in the country and they were so excited to watch the progress that they moved into an old trailer next to the building site but before one nail was driven my mom had a fatal heart attack dad loved mom so much that he would have been terminally dispirited without someone occupying her chair so she said

I moved in with him I left my home my job my friends to live in the middle of nowhere in a trailer which seemed porous to every creeping crawling species of insect native to Texas worse the shadow of my mother's death was like the sky it spread over everything it blighted any vestige of joy and left me wondering whether the heavy cloak of depression that seemed to swallow me whole would ever lift but then God used my little dog Baxter to show me that it would sounds like our dog on the night of a new moon when a swath of clouds masked the steering stars Baxter ran from the trailer into the woods after some varmint that proved too tantalizing for his terrier instincts I was away visiting friends so my dad took his flashlight and went to find my beloved dog well into his search the flashlight battery died there he was in the pitch black surrounded by a thick overgrowth of scrub trees ravines and old barbed wire fences without a heavenly body for light or compass she said when I came home the next morning

I found dad sitting in his easy chair drinking a cup of coffee in perfect peace with one sheepish little dog at his feet after regaling me with his harrowing tale I asked him what did you do he looked at me almost quizzically and said I just sat down you just sat down she said I asked or sat down I asked yes Margaret I knew the sun would come up in the morning and here's my encouragement to you based on Revelation chapter 21 there is coming a day where all of this that we deal with and everybody we care for will be gone right the sun will come up as we just heard in song in the morning never to set again don't let your feelings don't let the narratives that come out of those feelings convince you otherwise the future listen is truly as bright as the promises of God let that shine hope and healing and direction don't ever forget it don't let the mood you're in or the mood someday you're in convince you otherwise the sun will come up in the morning last thought today is we put the quote up this morning about our decisions when you're born you look like your parents right we're stuck with that right and they're stuck with that as well but here's the sobering thought when you die you look like your decisions that's both encouraging and also challenging right when we finish this life it's what we decide to do with all of the brokenness inside each of us and threats and challenges and wounds and trauma of our past at the end of this all we look like our decisions that's not to discourage you that's to give you hope decide today to admit when it's you and number two choose to submit to those resources and relationships

[ 40 : 46 ] God has given you to see you through that season be that person for another as his gospel provides everything that we need let's pray together father thank you for your word today lord you know how often when we lord it's almost as if our mind shuts off or our mind begins to conclude certain things in a way that's not true that's not aligned with your word what you've clearly inspired and preserved for us in your word and I pray father today that you would be with those some in the room have never experienced this at least at any length or intensity I pray you give them greater empathy for those who do but for those of us who have that downturn that have that despondency of soul that plagues us and is constantly nipping at our heels God would you convince us that you're worthy of our trust our faith our obedience that Lord we can admit to you how we actually feel your gospel is vibrant enough and eternal enough and robust enough to bear up under that burden help us to be willing to admit to you today where we've allowed our moods our emotions our discouragement to truly be

Lord to be the thing that everything revolves around may we put you back at the center of our thoughts and of our emotions and Lord I pray as well secondly that we would not give in to depression but instead we would give it to you we would submit it this to accomplish your purpose as you did through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Lord it's only because of this moment and Jesus navigating it the way you desired him to do that we have salvation today thank you for his perseverance thank you for his example thank you for your spirit and your word that sustain us and guide us no matter what we're facing Father we pray that you would help the sun will come up in the morning Lord may that tone and that tenor not just be a part of our hearts and lives but may it carry over to others as you give us influence and testimony for you bless now this moment of reflection and response moving work in our hearts as only you can we pray in

Christ name amen