

Protection Against Discouragement and Depression



Where to Find Security (Part 9)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, as we continue with our theme for this week: Where to Find Security.

In my talk yesterday I dealt with security in the realm of the mind and the emotions. I pointed out that two of our main enemies in this area are fear and worry, and that our main protection against these enemies is trust.

I shared with you two steps to achieving trust. The first, be renewed in the spirit of your mind. The Bible makes it clear that our minds are ultimately controlled by spiritual forces, what we think, what we think about, our mental images and patterns are controlled by spiritual forces and in order to find real security, we have to change the spirit that's been controlling our minds. The spirit of this world does not impart peace, but when we let the Holy Spirit in, He's the Spirit of power, of love, and of self-control. When that spirit controls our mind, then He imparts to us peace.

Then the second step to achieving trust is to focus on the positive. In Philippians, chapter 4, verses 6 through 8, Paul says:

> "Don't be anxious, don't worry; in everything by prayer with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. [In other words, when you start to worry, stop worrying, start to pray. Then he says:] The peace of God will keep you hearts and minds, the peace of God which transcends all understanding. [We can't reduce it to the level of our mere reason. And then he goes on to say:] Think about the good things, the pure, the lovely, the beautiful, the good, the honest, the truth."

Don't feed your mind on carrion. Feed your mind on that which is good and healthy and upbuilding, and above all, in times of stress, turn to God. Reaffirm your trust in God and in His Word because the Word of God will always give you the answer to your problem, to your worry, to your fear.

Today I'm going to speak about protection against two other enemies that commonly keep us from true emotional security. They are discouragement and depression. So I'm going to show you the remedy to discouragement and depression.

As a preacher, I've learned by asking congregations all around the world and I've discovered that discouragement and depression are two of the commonest enemies of God's people. Once again, in dealing with discouragement and depression, it's a question of the spirit that controls our mind. I want to read you the words of Jesus in John, chapter 14, verses 16 and 17. Jesus says to His disciples as he's about to leave them:

> "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth." (NIV)

That word counselor has a number of different English translations. It's also translated, helper, or comforter, and my translation, my favorite one is encourager because the word that's translated to comfort really means in modern English to encourage. I want to say one thing very clearly and firmly to you; the Holy Spirit never discourages the people of God. He is the encourager, not the discourager. And if any spirit is at work in your mind, maybe right now, that's discouraging you, I want you to know, it's not the Holy Spirit and you need to be renewed in the spirit of your mind. You need to make room for the encourager. Now Jesus says the Holy Spirit, the encourager, is the Spirit of truth. So, the Holy Spirit encourages us by bringing to us the truth. Satan is a liar and he discourages us by bringing to us lies and that's why some Christians find themselves in a state of mental confusion because at one time they listen to the Holy Spirit bringing the truth, then another time, they're caught off guard and they begin to listen to the enemy bringing his lies and his discouragement. One good way to discern the difference is that which I've already pointed out and I want to emphasize it: The Holy Spirit never discourages the people of God. He may rebuke us; He may convict us, but He never discourages us. The ultimate input from the Holy Spirit is always positive, never negative. So if there is in your mind, maybe right now, some force that's telling you it's no good, you'll never make it, you can't do it, you're a failure, God has given up on you, just let me assure you, that is not the Holy Spirit and it's not the truth. It's a lie. The Holy Spirit comes with the truth; the devil comes with lies.

A little further on in John's Gospel, John 17, verse 17, Jesus is praying to the Father and He says:

> "Your word is truth." (KJV)

Put those two together and you see that the Holy Spirit encourages us by bringing to our minds the truth of God's Word, and the truth of God's Word for a child of God is ultimately always positive, always encouraging. In particular, the Holy Spirit shows us where to find protection when we're assailed by discouragement and depression. He shows it to us of course, in the Word of God.

There's one beautiful passage that's very precious to me and I'll tell you why a little later. In Isaiah 61, verse 3, where the Scripture says that God will give us:

> "The garment of praise in place of the spirit of heaviness…"

You know what the spirit of heaviness is, that's depression. That's exactly what it is. But when the spirit of heaviness, when depression assails us, God has provided something to keep that spirit away from us, the garment of praise. And when we put on the garment of praise, and begin to praise God and worship him, then that spirit of heaviness (of depression) just can't get at us. He's defeated. The garment of praise surrounds us, protects our whole being, our whole personality against that spirit of heaviness. So, that's one of the remedies that the Holy Spirit shows us in Scripture against discouragement and depression, the garment of praise. Any time the spirit of heaviness comes, put on the garment of praise. In fact, the real thing to do is live with that garment on because a person who's always praising God doesn't have time to be discouraged or depressed.

And then there's another protection that shown us in the New Testament, in 1 Thessalonians 5:8. Paul says this:

> "But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, [and notice that that's one of the aspects of the operation of the Holy Spirit in our minds; He makes us self-controlled] putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet." (NIV)

There are two items of protection there. The breast, the area of the heart, is protected by faith and love. But the mind, the head, is protected by the helmet and the helmet is hope. So when our minds are being assailed, we need to put on that helmet of hope. We refuse to give way to despair. We refuse to entertain the negative. We let the Holy Spirit show us all the glorious and positive truths of the Word of God upon which we can base a strong, steadfast, confident hope. And

when our minds are filled with hope, there is no room for depression or discouragement.

For many years, when I was a young preacher, I had a tremendous battle against depression. In various ways I was quite successful but I never succeeded in dealing with this problem of depression. It was something that would seem to come over me almost like a dark gray mist and it would seem to enshroud me and come down over my head and my shoulders. It would seem to shut me off from my wife and my family, from the members of my congregation. I would feel I was shut in this gray mist and I would get this sense of hopelessness, this sense that I would never make it. It was like something was saying to me, "The others can but you can't, and you've come as far as you can come and you'll never get any further." And I struggled against this thing many, many hours. I did everything I knew to do; I prayed, I fasted, I read the Bible, but somehow I never got permanent victory over it. And then one day, as I was reading the Bible, and thank God I was reading the Bible, I came to that passage in Isaiah 61, verse 3 that I've already quoted, where it says, "God will give us the garment of praise in place of the spirit of heaviness." And when I read those words, the spirit of heaviness, something jumped inside me and said, "That's your problem!" And I realized in that moment, by revelation out of Scripture, that I was not dealing with just a mental attitude, with something psychological, but that I had a personal enemy, an invisible person in the spirit world, a spirit of heaviness, of depression that was systematically assailing my mind. And when I realized that I was dealing with this invisible person, this spirit of heaviness, I was eighty percent of the way to the solution to my problem. I only needed one other scripture and I found it in Joel 2:32:

> "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered." (KJV)

I called upon the name of the Lord and God set me free from that spirit of heaviness. I was delivered. And then God showed me, that to stay free, I had to do those things which I've just been recommending to you, that I had to put on the garment of praise, that I had to stop using negative talk, being a grumbler, expressing fears and worries and anxieties; that I had to turn to the Scripture and every time I was confronted with a problem I had to find the solution to that problem in the Scripture and quote that boldly and then praise and thank God for it; that I could no longer afford to be a pessimist, that that was a sure way to defeat and so I learned to put on the helmet of hope on my mind. And wearing the garment of praise and the helmet of hope, I came to a place of total security against those evil forces of depression and discouragement.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll continue with this theme of security. I'll be sharing on our protection against two other main enemies of emotional security: "Criticism and Misrepresentation."

Radio Program

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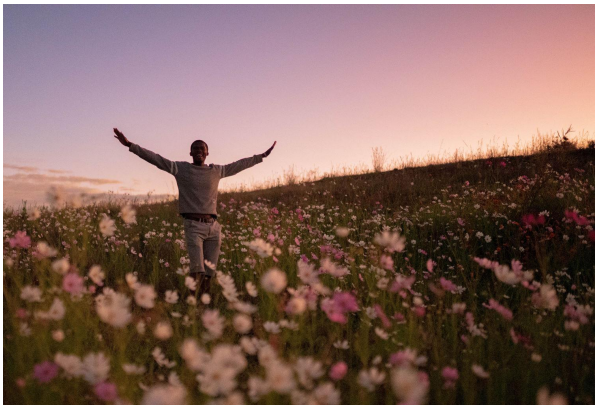

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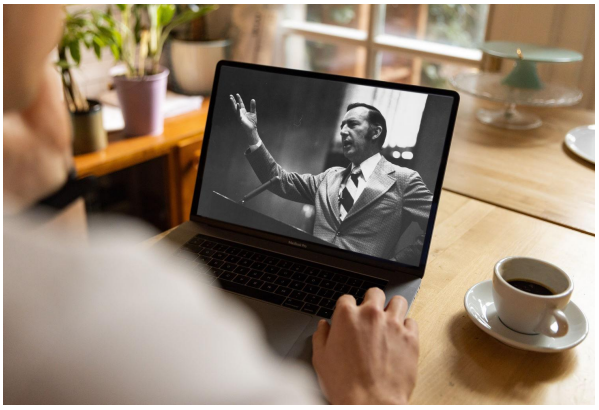

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