The Prophet Elijah
1 Kings 18:46-19:8
Elijah's Spiritual Depression

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

46 And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.
1 Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." 3 Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.
4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." 5 And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat." 6 And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. 7 And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." 8 And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God. (1 Kings 18:46 - 19:8)

Introduction

- If you've been with us for our study through the life of **Elijah** the **great prophet of the LORD**
- **and man of fervent prayer,** then the verses that _____ just read might seem a bit strange.
- From what we've seen so far in **chapters 17 & 18 of 1 Kings,**
- this is not what we'd expect from **Elijah**.

- The prophet has fallen into **the darkness of spiritual despair.**
- We've been to the **mountaintop** with Elijah to see **the fire of the presence of God.**
- But now we go with him **into the wilderness**, where he ***sits alone*** under **a tree and says**,

4 …"It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." (1 Kings 19:4)

- How Elijah came to this place of spiritual depression we'll **look at shortly**.
- But before we do, it's worth taking time to <u>review the faith and obedience</u> of this great man of God.

- Like God had called Moses to **confront Pharoah** and deliver his people from slavery in Egypt.
- God had called Elijah to **confront Ahab** and deliver his people from slavery to <u>the false god Baal</u>.
- And Elijah obeyed the Lord's call, boldly saying to **evil King Ahab**…

1 …"As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, <u>before whom I stand</u>…." (1 Kings 17:1)

- Elijah stood in the very presence of God.

- Therefore, he could **declare God's judgement** on Israel for their **idolatry**…

[1] …there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word. (1 Kings 17:1)

- Elijah then obeyed God's command to go to the **Cherith Ravine**, where he **was fed by ravens**.
- Then later, living with a widow and her son in **Zarephath**, he again trusted God **for daily bread.**
- **And the widow's jar of flour** was not used up and **her jug of oil** did not run dry.

- Elijah also had **faith in God's power to raise the dead,** he took the widow's dead son and…

[21] …stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life come into him again." (1 Kings 17:21)

- The LORD answered his prayer, **and the boy regained his life.**

- Ellijah also defeated the 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel.
- After allowing them to call on **their non-existent god**,
- Elijah rebuilt the altar of the LORD and placed a sacrifice on it,
- He then had it doused with water three times before he prayed…

[37] Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back."

- Elijah prayed kingdom prayer, **pleading for God's glory to be revealed**
- and the hearts of the people to be turned back to **their God.**
- And the LORD answered his prayer…

[38] Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. (1 Kings 18:38)

- Through Elijah God had won a great victory on Carmel.
- Elijah then commanded the people to **obey the law and slaughter prophets of Baal**.
- And to top it all off, he then **persistently prayed the promise of God**…
- Asking that rain would again fall on Israel.
- And again, the LORD answered Elijah's fervent prayer…

[45] And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. (1 Kings 18:45)

- **And that's where we left Elijah last week.**
- Everything we've seen so far points to the fact **that Elijah was a great man of God**.
- He was **among the greatest of prophets**; he was a man of prayer.
- He trusted and obeyed God, and God did great and mighty deeds through Elijah!

- And you might think this would lead **Elijah to become prideful.**
- But **1 Kings 18** ends with a powerful demonstration of **Elijah's humility**.

- Beginning in **verse 44** we read…

44 …And [Elijah] said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.'" 45 And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. 46 And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. (1 Kings 18:44-46)

- Now you might not immediately see **Elijah's humility** here, **so let me explain**.
- To save **King Ahab** from being caught in the rain,
- Elijah sent him to **Jezreel** where he had **a palace.**

- Then as **the great rain began to fall**, **the hand of the Lord was on Elijah**.
- And what this means is that **God was with him**, **directing and empowering him**.
- So, with the Lord's hand on him,
- Elijah pulled up his robes and ran **at least fifteen miles** to **Jezreel**.
- And notice the **text specifically says** he ran **before Ahab** who was in a **horse driven chariot**.

- And what's the **main point** of this story?
- Well, it's not that Elijah was a **great athlete**, although perhaps he was.
- Nor is it that **Elijah was empowered** by **the LORD**, which he certainly was.
- The point is not even that Elijah got to **Jezreel** first,
- as if the prophet and the king **were in some sort of race**.

- **The point is this:** Elijah humbled himself before King Ahab.
- **You see,** in the ancient Near East, kings were almost always preceded by a group of **foot servants** to **herald (proclaim)** their approach.
- So, when Elijah ran ahead of Ahab, he was identifying himself as one of **Ahab's servants.**

- And this is important because after Elijah's great victory on **Mount Carmel**,
- Some (including Ahab) might have expected him to **slaughter their Baal worshipping King,**
- as he had done with **Baal's prophets** and then set himself up as **prophet and KING**.
- But Elijah, by running ahead of Ahab to Jezreel, showed that he would humbly submit himself to the God ordained governing authority, King Ahab.

- In obedience to his heavenly King Elijah showed respect for his earthly King.
- This shows that for all his boldness, **Elijah was a man of deep humility**.
- In fact, **these two virtues (boldness and humility) are closely related**:
- Only one who is **humble before God…**
- has the courage to **boldly stand up for God in a hostile world.**

- So, throughout our study, we've seen Elijah at his best, he trusted and obeyed the Lord.
- He was a great prophet, a spiritual leader and a humble man of fervent prayer.

- Now having shown us Elijah at his best, **the Bible also shows the prophet at his worst**.

- And that takes us to **our first point…**

1. The Circumstances of Elijah's Spiritual Depression

- As the rain fell, **Ahab rode** in his Chariot **and** Elijah ran before him **all the way to Jezreel**.
- And shortly after they arrived…

[1] Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. (1 Kings 19:1)

- Notice how blind the king was,
- He had witnessed God sending both fire and rain from heaven.
- but apparently, he hadn't been paying very careful **spiritual attention**.
- He should have been telling Jezebel everything **God had done**, not everything Elijah had done.
- Remember on Mount Carmel Elijah had prayed…

[36] …"O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. (1 Kings 18:36)

- Elijah wanted everyone to understand that he was doing only what God told him to do.
- Yet the report Ahab gave to the queen focused **on human rather than divine action**.

- King Ahab was the ultimate politician.
- He stuck his finger in the air to see which way the wind was blowing and that's the way he went.
- When he was up on the mountain, **he was ready to believe in the God of Israel**,
- Remember, he made no protest when **Elijah slaughtered the 450** prophets of Baal,
- **he may have even joined in**.

- But now he's back home and he has to deal with **his foreign Baal worshipping wife Jezebel**,
- **who must have been pretty scary.**
- It certainly seems that **Ahab was afraid of her**,
- Because he was careful to blame **Elijah alone** for the death of **her prophets.**
- And the **queen** responded **swiftly and decisively…**

[2] Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them (the death prophets) by this time tomorrow." (1 Kings 19:2)

- Jezebel is basically saying, **it's either you or me Elijah,**
- if I don't kill you by this time tomorrow, **then may the gods kill me and worse**.
- **She is clearly upset about the death of her precious prophets.**

- Now it's not clear **why Jezebel** didn't try and kill Elijah on the spot.
- Maybe she realized that because of **Elijah's newfound popularity among the people**,
- the best way to **discredit** him and his God, **was to scare him off.**
- Maybe the subtext is**… "Get out of town by sundown or you're a dead man!"**

- If this was Jezebel's strategy, **then it worked even better than she hoped**.
- After everything else we've seen Elijah say and do, we are not prepared for what he did next:

3 Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. (1 Kings 19:3)

- Apparently, **Elijah was as afraid of Queen Jezebel as Ahab was**.
- So, he played right into her hands.
- He ran from **Jezreel even faster than he had run toward it**.
- Elijah's great faith had been chased out by sudden fear and he…

ran for his life.

- In fact, he ran at least **ninety miles**, all the way to **Beersheba**.
- He **ran** from **Jezreel,**
- which was part of the Northern Kingdom of Isreal where Ahab and Jezebel ruled.
- And he **ran** to **Beersheba** which was part of the **Southern Kingdom of Judah**.

- Elijah **ran** far from **Jezebel's** immediate grasp, but he still doesn't feel safe.
- So, when he arrived in Beersheba, ***he left his servant there…***

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree… (1 Kings 19:4)

- Elijah ran and ran; he threw himself down under a tree and then **he prayed.**
- After all, **Elijah was a man of prayer.** So, what do you think about this for a prayer?

And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." (1 Kings 19:4)

- Elijah's prayer under the **broom tree** was not exactly **kingdom prayer.**
- Yet even at the point of **absolute desperation**, he did manage to pray.
- **"I have had enough, LORD," he said.**
- He then ***"asked that he might die".***
- Elijah just wanted it all to end, he wanted to escape Jezebel and this world **permanently.**

- But even so, Elijah was unwilling to take his own life,
- He understood that because God is the creator and Lord of life, **only he has the right to take it**.
- So, he at least got that right.
- **Men or Women of God should never kill themselves.**

- But as Elijah makes clear, there are **circumstances** that will cause **even a Godly person to pray for their own death**.
- In the Bible, Elijah is only one example of this, there are others…

- **Moses** prayed…

15 …kill me at once, if I find favor in your sight, that I may not see my wretchedness." (Numbers 11:15)

- **Job** wished he had never been born, he prayed…

18 "Why did you bring me out from the womb? Would that I had died before any eye had seen me…" (Job 10:18)

- **Jeremiah** also regretted his birth…he prayed…

14 Cursed be the day on which I was born! (Jeremiah 20:14)

- **Jonah** prayed…

3 …O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live. (Jonah 4:3)

- And at times even the Apostle Paul…

8 …despaired of life itself. (2 Corinthians 1:8)

- Well, that was certainly encouraging pastor.
- That men of God, prophets all, **longed for death**
- or even like **George Baily** desired that **they had never been born**.

- But even though there can be times when great men or women of God long for death.
- **They do not kill themselves**.
- Instead, they take their despair to God and pray to the Lord of life.
- When Elijah prayed, he told God that…

he had had enough.

- His **spiritual despair** had reached the point of not wanting to live.
- In a very short period of time, Elijah had fallen from the heights of victory to the depths of defeat.

- And his experience of despair, **along with those of other godly people**,
- challenges us **not to get the wrong idea about the Christian life**.
- Many people think that if they trust in Jesus, **all their troubles will be over.**
- And if they really trust in Jesus, he will (with no effort on their part) give them a **big car**,
- or take care of their **weight problem**, or remove the **temptation to sexual sin**,
- or help them find a **great job or a great spouse**.

- And I'm not saying God can't do these things,
- I'm saying doing these things, giving us what we think we want and need is not God's purpose for our lives.

- People have these wrong ideas about Christianity in part because the American church gets big, unhealthy doses of **the health-and-wealth or prosperity gospel**.
- **Theologian Philip Ryken** humorously **says it goes something like this**:

Name it and claim it, that's what faith's all about!
You can have what you want if you just have no doubt.
So, make out your "wish list" and keep on believin'
And you will find yourself perpetually receivin'. (Philip Ryken)

- If this sounds like the gospel, then we need a **heavy dose of reality**.
- **Salvation** in Jesus Christ does not **bring an end to life's troubles**.
- **In fact,** sometimes the trouble **is just starting.**
- Sometimes Christians **have problems, get hurt, get sick.**
- Sometimes they **get discouraged and depressed**.
- Sometimes they are **afraid and run for their lives**.
- Sometimes they **quit in the middle of their jobs or abandon their callings**.
- Sometimes Christians are **suicidal**, **and not just run-of-the-mill Christians**, either.

- Sometimes **spiritual leaders** get afraid, quit, run away, and think about ending it all.
- In this respect, **as in so many others**, what **James said really is true**:

17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours… (James 5:17)

- When we see Elijah under the broom tree,
- we see what a **man of God** amounts to in **his own strength**.
- With the power of the Lord, **Elijah was the best and bravest of men**.
- He was like the **apostle Paul, who said**,

13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

- But without the **power of the Lord**, Elijah was powerless; <u>he was a complete coward</u>.
- And the same is true for us.
- If we give into fear, **if we run away from God's calling**.
- If we stop trusting and obeying God.
- Then we too **may** find ourselves at the end of our ropes, **falling into spiritual depression.**
- **Longing to leave this world.**

- And how do we recover from such depression?
- Well, we'll have to wait for the **third point**, where we discover how Elijah recovered.

- But first, after seeing **the circumstances of Elijah's spiritual depression.**
- Next, **we turn to its cause**….

2. The Cause of Elijah's Spiritual Depression

- The text doesn't list the specific cause or causes of Elijah's spiritual depression.
- But based on what it does say, and an understanding of **human psychology,**
- We can come up with a number of plausible reasons for **Elijah's depression.**

- First, there was **fatigue.**
- Elijah was certainly exhausted.
- After he defeated the prophets of Baal…

Elijah said to Ahab "Go up, eat and drink…" (1 Kings 18:41)

- But there was no rest for **God's weary prophet.**
- He spent his time on **the mountain in persistent prayer for rain**.
- Then he ran **15 miles to Jezreel.**
- After that, he **ran for his life**, some **90 miles down to Beersheba** in the south.
- And then **a day's journey into the wilderness**.

- Great athlete though he may have been,
- Elijah was likely on the verge of complete physical exhaustion,
- and a tired believer is a **vulnerable believer.**
- As **Winston Churchill** famously said, **Fatigue makes cowards of us all.**

- **Second**, Elijah was experiencing **isolation.**
- No believer can thrive or even survive without **the fellowship of the saints**.
- Yet Elijah had **run off by himself**.
- Notice that in **verse 3** it says that after coming to **Beersheba he**…

3 …left his servant there. (1 Kings 19:3)

- Elijah deliberately **cut himself off** from godly companionship.
- So, he finds himself tired and alone under a tree, **no wonder he's depressed**.

- And along with fatigue and isolation…
- **Elijah was definitely experiencing opposition and unmet expectations**.
- He had stood up against and overcome **all the prophets of Baal**.
- At this point he may have thought **the victory was complete**.
- Very likely Elijah went to **Jezreel** in confidence,
- knowing that the **Lord God had won the day,**
- and expecting that Israel would turn back to God.
- **It was all over but shoutin'**.

- But when he arrived, he was opposed **by Baal worshipping, Jezebel herself**.
- Don't forget that she had already killed many of the Lord's prophets, and now she threatens Elijah.

- Although he had won the battle on Carmel, **he had not yet won the war.**
- His expectations are shattered.
- And as he faces this physical as well as spiritual attack you can imagine a great discouragement, depression and fear coming upon him.
- In verse three we read, **when he received Jezabel's threat**…

3 Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life… (1 Kings 19:3)

- In that moment, filled with fear,
- Elijah's was no longer focused on the power and majesty of God that he had just experience.
- Instead**, his focus was on his own trouble**.
- And when we stop **focusing on the LORD** and **focus only on our troubles**,
- The result will be fear and depression.

- Then, on top of everything else, **Elijah was dealing with his guilt.**
- He had not only run away from Jezebel, but he had run out on Lord's calling.
- **He was AWOL absent without leave**.
- He had deserted his post in the middle of the battle.

- He had abandoned his divine calling at the crucial moment when the spiritual destiny of the whole nation was still hanging in the balance.
- Thus, Elijah had failed in the one area of his life that was his greatest spiritual strength: **bold faith**.
- And what followed was a failure in obedience, instead of by faith, obeying the Lord he ran in fear.
- The prophet's **self-condemnation** was just:

4 "…I am no better than my fathers." (1 Kings 19:4)

- When he referred to his "fathers,"
- Elijah was not speaking about his natural father and grandfather.
- Instead, he was referring to his **spiritual fathers, among the prophets of Israel.**
- Elijah was no better than **any of the rest of the prophets**.
- Like every last one of them, **he was a sinner**.

- This is probably the main **reason for Elijah's depression.**
- Apparently, he thought he **was better than his fathers**.
- That he was **in some way special**, I mean who could blame him.

- He's shut up the rain in the heavens and release it once more.
- He could raise the dead.
- He could pray down the glorious fire of God's presence.
- He could turn the hearts of God's people back to their God.

- But when he gave in to fear and ran away from his calling.
- The depressing reality stuck him, **I'm no better than my fathers**.
- This shows that although Elijah was a humble man, **he still struggled with pride**.
- **I am not who I thought I was.**
- **I'm not the man of God I thought I was.**

- Maybe you've experienced something similar, I certainly have.
- In the face of my own failures and sin, I've said (in my heart).
- I'm not the man of God (the missionary, the pastor) I thought I was,
- I am no better than anyone else. **and to be honest this is depressing**.

- But it is also freeing, because it's when we realize that **our pride is baseless**.
- That we are no better than our **fathers or mothers or brothers or sisters in Christ.**
- Then we can turn our focus away from ourselves and our own accomplishments,
- and put it back on the LORD.
- Back on **Jesus Christ** who is not only better than **our faithers and us.**
- But gives us **his grace and mercy and righteousness**…

- **But I'm getting ahead of myself.**
- We've seen the circumstances and cause of Elijah's Spiritual Depression,
- Now we turn to **the Cure**…

3. The Cure for Elijah's Spiritual Depression

- **And that cure,** like so much in the life of a believer, **came by the grace of God**.
- While he was sitting under the broom tree, Elijah received God's grace, **verse 5.**

5 And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat." (1 Kings 19:5)

- The man may have wanted to die, **but God still loved him:**
- **In his book Elijah, F. B. Meyer writes…**

[God's] eye followed with tender pity every step of [Elijah's] flight across the hills of Samaria. He did not love him less than when he stood, elated with victory, hard by the burning sacrifice. And His love assumed, if possible, a tenderer, gentler aspect, as He stooped over him, whilst he slept. As a shepherd tracks the wandering sheep, from the fold to the wild mountain pass, where eagles, sailing in narrowing circles, watch its faltering steps—so did the love of God come upon Elijah, as, worn in body by long fatigue, and in spirit by the fierce war of passion, he lay and slept under the juniper (or broom) tree. (F. B. Meyer)

- When Elijah had had enough, **he discovered that God's grace is more than enough.**
- In his grace, God sent an angel to **minister to his prophet.**
- When Elijah was **strong in faith and prayer**,
- It was enough for him to receive **food from the beaks of ravens**.
- But when he was **alone and afraid**, he needed more than enough.

- So, in the prophet's time of **depression and discouragement**,
- God sent an angel to minister to him **with a physical touch**, speak to him in an audible voice…
- And meet **his very practical needs**, **verse 6.**

6 And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. (1 Kings 19:6)

- **How is that for room service?**
- In his grace God gave Elijah the food and rest that he needed.
- God left his prophet with a full stomach to sleep under the broom tree.
- And then the angel of the Lord came back to **bring Elijah seconds**…

7 And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." (1 Kings 19:7)

- So, God in his grace and mercy provided Elijah with the sleep and food he needed **to strengthen his body**.
- He also provided him with **the touch of an angel**.
- This surely **contributed to curing** the part of **Elijah's spiritual depression** that was due to **fatigue and isolation.**

- And even though God doesn't **usually send angels to his people.**
- **If fatigue or isolation** are causing spiritual depression in our lives.
- We should get some good food and rest and **then spend time with fellow believers**.
- Go to church, go to your small group, **call up a Christian friend and fellowship together**.

- **But God's grace didn't stop with food, rest and an angel.**
- Best of all, it was God's grace to give Elijah all these things **and not to rebuke him**.
- **God treated Elijah with mercy rather than justice**.

- After Elijah had run away from his calling,
- he could not use his **great accomplishments** to make any claim on the love of God.
- **He knew that he was no better than his fathers**.
- He knew that he was a **sinner, deserving only death.**

- **Yet there is not one word of rebuke in this passage**.
- Later, when Elijah reaches Mount Horeb, God will straighten him out about a few things.
- But not yet.

- And certainly, Elijah had earned a rebuke of some kind.
- Because he seemed to forget that he served at the pleasure of **the sovereign LORD**.
- And in his **fear and then in his depression…**
- He took his eyes off the LORD and put them squarely on himself.
- And he tried to charge… dictating to God…

"It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, (1 Kings 19:4)

- Basically, Elijah was having an **egotistical little pity party.**
- He prayed not for the nation of Israel, not for the glory of God, but **for his life to be taken away**.
- Elijah did all this, **yet God in his grace and mercy and love,**
- Not only sent Elijah food, rest and an angel…
- Maybe more immortally, **God continued to call the prophet to service**…

"Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you

- This was God's grace for Elijah.
- Even though Elijah had failed, fallen and sinned, God called him to continue in service.

- When we fail when we sin, we like Elijah can decide for ourselves that's enough,
- We **may not be suicidal**, **but we just want to quit**.
- I've had enough, I've done enough, **I'm not the man of God I thought I was**,
- I'm old and tired and still sinful, **time for me to retire**.
- Time for me to quit serving the Lord.

- But by his grace God calls us to arise and eat because we have work to do.
- When we fail the LORD, **he does not fail us**.

- **He is always there for us.**
- He provides us, if not with angels, **with his people**.
- If you're experiencing depression.
- You should (with the help of others and even counsel if need) identify its cause or causes as clearly as you can and apply **the practical remedies God has provided**.
- I've already mentioned that if you are suffering from fatigue then get some rest.
- If isolation, then spend time with fellow believers.

- And to that I can add…
- If you're under spiritual attack, you should get others to join you in praying for <u>spiritual protection.</u>
- If you have fallen into sin, you should **both** confess your sins to God, receiving his forgiveness
- and seek out **trusted fellow believers** who can hold you accountable and pray for you.

- And I am not saying that if you do these things, you will move immediately from depression to joy.
- But these things, done consistently over time,
- will certainly aid you in overcoming any **spiritual depression** you might be facing.
- So, God in his grace and mercy has provided us with **fellow believers** who can help us in our times of need our times of **depression.**

- But most importantly he has provided HIMSELF, and he has promised…

5 …"I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" (Hebrews 13:5-6)

- This is **a promise that Elijah needed** to hear and believe.
- And it is a promise for every believer.
- We truly have nothing to fear, **because God will never leave us**, He is our helper.

- And therefore, no matter what the **cause of our spiritual depression might be**.
- **The cure will always include** taking our troubles, **ourselves,** to the LORD!
- Spending time in his word, spending time in personal prayer.
- Receiving his grace, his love, his mercy, his help.
- We must take our eyes off ourselves and our problems and fix them on Jesus Christ.

- In Jesus Christ we find rest for our **souls and recovery from the pain of this world**.
- Jesus says,

28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:28-29)

- Also, in Jesus Christ we receive living bread and living water.
- Jesus says,

35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. (John 6:35)

- In Jesus Christ we find forgiveness for our sins, **without any rebuke,** for…

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)

- In Jesus Christ we find a call to continue serving him, even after failure.
- To Peter who ran away and denied the Lord three times…
- The resurrected Christ called Peter back into service, three times, saying…

15 …"Feed my lambs." 16 …"Tend my sheep." 17…"Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-17)

- In Jesus Christ we find everything we need overcome spiritual depression.
- Because when we've had enough, **Jesus Christ is more than enough.**
- He has the same grace for us that he (God) had for Elijah under the broom tree.

- **He hears our prayers.** He knows our **discouragement and depression**.
- Yet he still **loves us and is reaching out to touch us**.
- He offers **rest for our souls,** forgiveness for our sins**, and restoration to ministry**.
- He does not condemn us, **but promises to be more than enough for us, forever**.

- And so, as Sean comes to lead us in communion.
- As we celebrate and remember what Christ has done to provide for our salvation,
- our sanctification and our eternal life.

- Know also that it is because Jesus offered his broken body and spilt blood as a sacrifice for our sins.
- That he can and now does offer **himself**, his grace, his love and his mercy,
- **to enter our lives and overcome any spiritual depression we face in this world.**
- **Pray**