

Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cures by Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones
Chapter 7: Fear of the Future
II Tim 1:7

Depression is discouragement in a tailspin. Depression can flow from a number of corrupt fountains. It can rise from a physical condition, a disease of the body that affects the spirit. It can rise from a predisposition in the personality that has a ready bent to looking on the downside of things. It can arise from forgetfulness of who Christ is and a forgetfulness or ignorance of what He has accomplished for us and what He promises us based upon His Work on the cross. Finally, depression is fueled by our adversary who seeks to keep us from the task at hand while we are mired in a depressed self-absorbed state.

We are to put on the armor of God each day. If we will make sure that we are wearing the breastplate of righteousness, we will be remembering that we are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to make sure that we are wearing the belt of truth, bearing in mind all that the Lord has done for us in washing away our sins, providing for our adoption and eternal life. We need to be preaching to ourselves these things instead of listening to ourselves.

In the previous two lessons, we have sought to dismantle the depressions that can come from sins of the past and vain regrets formed through the years.

This lesson we will be considering how fear of the future can give rise to depression and deprive us of the present realities that we possess in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 7: Fear of the Future

2Ti 1:6-7 NKJV Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. (7) For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

1. If the adversary cannot foil us with our past by having us ruminate over our sins, or by casting us down with the burden of vain regrets, he will seek to turn our eyes away from our current blessings in Christ and supplant them with a repressing fear of the future.

2. What is the foremost cause depression associated with the fear of the future?

3. What are concerns one may have about the future that could lead to depression?

4. What is the difference between legitimate forethought and paralyzing forethought?

5. What does the Lord mean when He says in Matt 6:34, "Do not worry about tomorrow"?
6. What is the reprimand that Paul brings to Timothy in II Tim 1:7?
7. In what three ways is the Christian to face fear of the future?
8. Give an example from Scripture of how we have been given the "Spirit of power," to overcome fear?
9. How can the "Spirit of love" help us to overcome fear?
10. Finally, discuss how the "Spirit of a sound mind" helps us to defeat fear?
11. Note some of the verses in Scripture regarding how we are to deal with fear:

Jos 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go."

Deu 31:7-8 Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. And the LORD, He *is* the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

Deu 20:1 "When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses and chariots *and* people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God *is* with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

Psa 27:1-5 A Psalm of David. The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD *is* the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? (2) When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell. (3) Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I *will be* confident. (4) One *thing* I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple. (5) For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

Pro 3:25-26 Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it

comes; (26) For the LORD will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught.

Isa 41:10-14 Fear not, for I *am* with you; Be not dismayed, for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.' (11) "Behold, all those who were incensed against you Shall be ashamed and disgraced; They shall be as nothing, And those who strive with you shall perish. (12) You shall seek them and not find them— Those who contended with you. Those who war against you Shall be as nothing, As a nonexistent thing. (13) For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.' (14) "Fear not, you worm Jacob, You men of Israel! I will help you," says the LORD And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Isa 44:2 Thus says the LORD who made you And formed you from the womb, *who* will help you: 'Fear not, O Jacob My servant; And you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.

Luk 12:4 "And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

Joh 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Act 27:24-25 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' (25) Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.

1Pe 3:14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, *you are* blessed. "AND DO NOT BE AFRAID OF THEIR THREATS, NOR BE TROUBLED."

12. The greatest fear of the future must come from a lack of assurance of our salvation. How do you deal with any lack of assurance that you have? Note that William Bridge has a complete chapter on this in his book, *A Lifting Up for the Downcast*, a Banner of Truth Puritan paperback book.