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Depression Due To Life's Changes

In the life of each individual, the development from babyhood to maturity, there necessitates many decisions. Some are made for us, others are minor, and others very important, i.e. who should I marry or what profession should I pursue?

At times, perhaps when the individual is contrasted to another, there begins thoughts such as, "Am I of any importance?" I remember as a child (under 10 years of age) being told, "If you are half as good as your father you will be all right." These statements and thoughts can be self fulfilling and one can slip into a life of being unconcerned.

Because the saint has triple foes enroute to his final abode, those being the world, the flesh and Satan, the struggle can become very intense. At times saints do get depressed. This is not an indication of poor spirituality for David knew depression when he said, "Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? (Psa. 42:5). Elijah knew depression when sitting under the juniper tree and requested to die (1 Kgs. 19:4). In those dark periods of life is when Satan will seek to depress us even more. It is very hard to see any light.

Being a believer does not shield one from the degrading and behind door criticism of other saints. Saints can be made very inferior by being sidelined or unjustly treated (1 Cor. 12:21). Paul wants the saints of God to be assured each one is vital, each is a part of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:3-15) and each one has a role to play. It might not be a big role, but every function from God to each individual is vital. One Sunday night I met a woman who was just walking around giving out English and Arabic tracts.

No saint should ever lose the confidence that God's grace toward the individual in salvation was not to have them be nothing. In grace, there has been given to every saint a work whether they are male or female. In the building of the Tabernacle the women, as well as the men, were involved in the construction (Ex. 35:22, 25). So with the local church, each saint has been given a task. Some are public and others private; some are fitted for a platform and some for personal; some for the mission field others to stay at home; some make clothing for babies etc. in mission outposts; others at mission stations assist the people with the clothes which assists in the reception of the gospel.

Again, due to the changing of our bodies through the years, there may come a time when we can no longer do that which we once did. Paul was imprisoned for two years (Acts 28:30-31) and one may ask, "How could that have been a blessing?" Yet it was, for surely it was such for those who came to visit hear him. In prison he wrote the epistles of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. What a loss if Paul had been out ministering and never written those books. Life had changed, God had different work for him to do, a work that would outlast his life and have eternal blessings to countless others.

Life changes, and with it our work for God. It can be very hard to accept the change and even harder to be grateful to God for it. At times it could be the death of a spouse, a child, a mum or dad and life is never the same. One of the hardest decisions to make is the full-hearted cheerful acceptance of the movings of God. It is easy to sing, "His way is the right way, His way is the best way" when things are going our way, but in reality, it can be very difficult to accept His loving wisdom without inward strife and follow the Shepherd to the still waters and green pastures.

In the progress of time or the failing of the body a door wide open for years closes. It can be difficult to take heart and stop reminiscing about the former days. It may be already open but we have not recognized it as such. It may not open for a time because we are not ready to make the decision or it may be moving out of our comfort zone. I think of Peter in the boat. It a not exactly a comfort zone but it was better than being without cover on the troubled sea. The Lord tells Peter, "Come". Had that been me I would have called for a prayer meeting with the disciples and watched to see if the waves and winds had subsided a little. I would have thought of the news in the Jerusalem Tattler of my foolishness walking on the sea. If I did get out of the boat, I would have been holding on

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with one hand just to be safe. It meant leaving a comfort zone, but the Lord had called him. The door of the ship was closing and a new door was opening when Peter would, in the storm, learn a lesson he would never forget.

Even in advancing years, even as dementia beclouds our minds, we can still pray. In our hearts we can sing to the Lord and rejoice in His salvation, we can have joy in the Lord. Praise can ascend to Him while this present tabernacle is a crumbling tent. We can sing the hymn of Rusty Goodman.

This old house I'm livin' in is needing repair,
The windows and the shutters are letting in the cold cold air,
I say to myself I'm gonna fix them when I can get the time,
But all I've been getting lately is leavin' on my mind.

Lately all I've got is leavin' on my mind,
Seems that's all I'm thinkin' about
Most of the time, soon and very soon I'll
Leave my troubles far behind, lately I've got leavin'
Leavin' on my mind.

I guess I should be looking for a better place to live,,
I can't seem to get excited about this world and what it can give,
I couldn't care less if I could buy it all with a solitary dime,
What good would a world down here do with leaving on my mind.

Take heart dear saints of God, no matter what damage others have done to you, no matter how they have slighted you, the race is nearly over and then rest in eternal bliss and yearn to hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:23). That will be glory and be worth every curve on the road.

. . . . *Rowan Jennings*