

ADJUSTING TO LIFE'S CHANGES AND FACING DISAPPOINTMENTS

From a sermon by Brother Daniel Good. Date and place unknown

I greet each one this afternoon in Jesus precious name, glad we have one like Him to look to in the difficult times of life, maybe this subject would be easier to not have and to forget about. Recently I was made aware that the two subjects that the brethren have already talked about can be disappointments.

We were ready for baptism not too long ago and one young man as he thought about the responsibilities that were coming upon him because he was to be baptised decided to wait a little while, but we are thankful that with some counsel he changed his opinion after we found out that he was ready but he was just afraid or just a little bit shy of responsibility.

Then I had to think about the older brother who maybe it is time he hands his drivers license over, that can be a time of disappointment.

Disappointments are hard spots, maybe failures, frustrations, all those kind of things that come into a life, we think everything is going well and we have a plan in mind and it is going to work and all of a sudden something happens.

Turn to Psalm 46, I would like to read a few verses there:

[Psalm 46:1-7](#):

“God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ²Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; ³*Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. ⁴*There is* a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the most High. ⁵God *is* in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, *and that* right early. ⁶The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. ⁷The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.”

I have been thankful many times that God is a very present help in trouble in disappointment, and because of that the word “therefore” in verse 2,

because of that fact we can face a lot of things. I thought about Paul in his life when he faced many hardships, he tells us about some of those and then he makes this statement he said: “But none of these things move me.” [Acts 20:24] The only way it moved him I think is that it moved him closer to God and that is my burden this afternoon that the disappointments in life that we face will always every time have the right effect upon us.

I'm thinking this afternoon of my brother's wife's, I don't know how to say this, sister-in-law's sister, her husband was a very good swimmer and he decided to go swimming one day and no one knows to this day what happened but while he was out in the middle of a body of water all of a sudden he went under and drowned and today, unless something has changed that I don't know about, his wife lost her faith over that situation.

I know of a young couple in the community who had a small baby that died and today they are very bitter people at God that He allowed that to happen to them. We need to understand like someone said; “That it is not so much what happens to us, the most important thing is what we do ourselves, what we allow to happen here. How we think about that is where we come out.”

Someone told me one time that the things that we face in life, the hardships we face in life will do one of two things; They will make us either a better person or a bitter person, and I think we need to choose and to choose wisely what we are going to allow to happen to us. Someone said that life is made up of 10% of what happens and 90% of how we react to that, and I think there is a lot of truth to that and I'm glad this afternoon that we have a God that is very close in those times and will help us, He is ready to help us and will help us to respond right to the disappointments in life.

I met a man some time ago who was an auctioneer. When I first learnt to know him he was the kind of auctioneer you didn't like to go to to much, he always had some jokes about the coloured people and just one right after another, it really messed up his options. But something happened to the man and he stopped all that and he was a very good auctioneer. But I heard a number of years ago that he had cancer and I wondered how he would take that. I have met him one time afterward and I just decided that I am going to ask him about that and I talked to him and I said: “I understand

you faced cancer in your body?” He said: “I did and I'd like to tell you a little bit about it. He said at first it just about got the best of me, then he said: I thought a little bit and I wondered, the Lord helped me to think this way: “Why could it not be me, am I better, do I think the Lord should always give that to someone else and never touch my body?”

And he said: “I thought about that and it helped me to accept it and to be just open to whatever God has for me.” I very much appreciated his attitude that way.

This afternoon you and I, all of us that are here are serving a God who is sovereign and infinite.

Sometime ago one of the young men from your churches was at our place Sunday morning for devotions and he made this statement, I have never heard it before, he said: “God is the only know-it-all.” And that is a true statement, nobody else does, but God does, He knows it all He knows everything. He is an infinite God. He is not limited in any way, His knowledge is not limited. He knows us much better than we know ourselves and He is in full control and the small things that happen in our life or even the great things God can easily change one way or the other. One of our friends that attended our congregation for a while a little while ago said that God attends every sparrow's funeral. A great and Almighty God but He is that personal that even the sparrow He knows when they fall to the ground. He knows the number of our hair on our head, [\[Luke 12:7\]](#) He knows what happens to us, in fact He allows it to happen He is in charge of all that.

One person said it this way; “Our disappointments are God's appointments.” We don't understand all that, we don't know for sure why the things happen that happen, we don't need to know, all we need to know is that there is a sovereign God in control who knows all things. He is a God of purpose, the things that come to us in life are for a reason, we may not see it, we may not understand it but a He knows what He is doing. What we need to do is submit, accept it and again allow it to make us a better person. Learn what we can from it.

I always appreciate the scripture, I didn't look it up this time but it says in one place in Lamentations, that God does not afflict willingly. [\[Lamentations 3:33\]](#) He doesn't put something in your life just to be mean or ugly or

for no reason. There is a reason for the things that happen in our lives and we don't need to understand, we don't need to see it because God knows, He knows what He is doing.

Another thing I think we ought to think about and I have already referred to it maybe, but the thought of being humble and broken before God. See ourselves the way we ought to see ourselves, Romans 12 says it this way: that we should not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. [\[Rom.12:3\]](#) And I think that would help us to accept some of the hard things in life sometimes. Job had that thought I believe when he told his wife; Should we expect good from the hand of God and not evil? [\[Job 2:10\]](#) It seemed to me he was saying do you think that we are that kind of the person we are so good that God should never do anything wrong or, not wrong but make it hard for us? We aren't, and if we are of a humble and a broken heart this afternoon I think is going to be a big help I think for us to accept the things that we don't understand and we would rather not have but they come our way. Let's submit, let's accept.

There was a man down in Farmington, New Mexico one time attending church in the community and the Ministry needed to work with him from time to time about a few things, I am told that he would hear with the ministry said, sit there and think for just a few minutes and he would usually say: "I accept." That is a good pattern for us when the disappointments happen in life, we go to the Lord and accept. I believe it was Dan Byler and his wife one time with travelling and they had a number of things happen right in the road. His wife was driving and all of a sudden they found themselves off the road in the ditch and they couldn't get out and Brother Dan looked at his wife and said: "Let's just accept our whipping." He didn't know what it all meant but he was ready to accept what the Lord had for them at that point.

One of the keys it seems to me in facing disappointments is, and a brother has already referred to that in the devotional meditation that the Lord is my shepherd and what it says there, [\[Psalm 23\]](#) but it is to live close to God, keep a up-to-date relationship with God. I heard one time when a person was talking about victory he said: "One of the things that

we need to do if we want to live in victory is plan for victory, it won't happen automatically we have to plan for it.”

And I think the same thing applies here for disappointments, we don't know when they are coming, we don't know how they are coming, we don't know what's going to happen but we ought to plan that they will happen and live close to God so that when it does happen we have a place to go, that we are familiar with God. We know what He has done in the past, we know what He can do and we lean heavily upon Him. Live close to God. The phrases there in [John 15](#) it talks about abiding in Christ, I like that word abiding, stay, dwell. Live close to the Lord everyday and He will be there to help us in the times when we face difficulty.

Prayer. I'm speaking to myself first of all but I think sometimes how much more we could pray, it is one of the greatest power source, the greatest power in the world, we are in contact with the Almighty God and we need to know about prayer when we face disappointments, we need to know what prayer is all about, we need to have an up-to-date relationship with God in prayer so that we can turn to Him right away in the hard spots of life and find Him ready, He is ready to help if we are ready to look to Him.

I was touched some time ago by Brother Paul Landis when his wife was sick and ailing, a couple who had been very close in their life shared many things together, you could sense it when you were with them, I heard from the family that they thought when his wife passed away that he would pretty well just collapse. That is not what happened. Brother Paul knew the Lord and he turned to the Lord and I don't believe that he missed a beat the way I see, he was right there, he was in the church services, it was hard but he found a place to go and he was steady.

One of the Bishop brethren came to visit him some time ago and they were amazed at all the things he was doing and he told him he said: “Brother Paul while you are still able I think it would be well for you to write a few books that would be good for the church, good for the people coming on behind.” You know what he told me a few days later? He said: “I already have 20 some titles in my computer with some thoughts there and two or three of them are close to being completed.” Disappointment did not take much of the toll on him and I really don't think it has to on us

if we are abiding in Christ and we know the Lord and know that we can go there and He is very present help in trouble.

Another scripture in the Old Testament says something like this: I will be with you in trouble, I will be with you in trouble. (See Psalms 9:9, 27:5, 86:7, Ps107 and 138:7) Our God does not leave in the difficult times. Psalm 23 says that He will prepare a table for us in the presence of our enemies.

Turn to second Corinthians 4 and verses eight and nine, Paul's experience again he says:

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; [2 Cor. 4:8-9]

I like those phrases, “yet not distressed”, “but not in despair” and “but not destroyed”. That can be us this afternoon even in the time of disappointment if we stay close to God. There are things going to happen, there will be trouble, there will be disappointments but God can help us through and it can help us to be a better person. I think the thought of disappointments according to the dictionary has quite a bit to say or infers about other people disappointing us. I don't know exactly what the committee had in mind but as I looked up the definition in the dictionary it seemed like that was the thought. Other people foiling our plans or messing up the things that we want to do and that is another thing we ought to think about this afternoon. What do we do, what do we think when those things happen? When we have things all put together and all of a sudden they fall apart and we pretty well know it is another person that caused that to happen. There is a time when we need to really forgive and love our brother or sister. Nor let it upset us, nor let it cause us to lose sleep and not to make us think ill of those people. That is why the Bible talks about forgiveness and long-suffering and kindness and patience and forbearance and all those things. We need those at times in our Christian life when we are disappointed about someone else. Let us be careful about our attitudes.

May the Lord help us to face the disappointments of life with His help and sense that we need His help very much in those times very much and let's make those times help us be a better person.

The Lord bless.