



The Despair Road, Luke 24:13-35

The Despair Road

- Habakkuk was a prophet in the Old Testament that had some questions for God when life didn't make sense to him, when the God he served didn't answer him
 - **Habakkuk 1:2 NIV**, “How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save?”
 - **Habakkuk 1:13 NIV**, “Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?”
 - What do you hear in Habakkuk's complaints?

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- Habakkuk was a prophet in the Old Testament that had some questions for God when life didn't make sense to him, when the God he served didn't answer him
 - What do you hear in Habakkuk's complaints?
 - Despair - the complete loss or absence of hope, the feeling that there is no hope and that you can do nothing to improve a difficult or worrying situation

The Despair Road

- Psalm 42 most likely was written by King David when he was in a time of great desperation in his life
 - **Psalm 42:1-4 NIV**, 1 As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? 3 My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, “Where is your God?” 4 These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng.

The Despair Road

- Psalm 42 most likely was written by King David when he was in a time of great desperation in his life
 - **Psalm 42:5a NIV**, “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?”
 - **NASB**, “Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me?”
 - Disturbed in Hebrew - afflicted beyond measure, deeply grieved, very sad, deeply distressed, profoundly sorrowful – plus
 - Thrown into complete confusion, profoundly disturbed, agitated like a glass of water sharply jarred, causing inward commotion, made restless

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- Psalm 42 most likely was written by King David when he was in a time of great desperation in his life
 - **Psalm 42:5b NIV**, “Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.”
 - Clearly, the author’s confidence was at war with his uncertainty
 - His strength feuding with his exhaustion
 - His hope at odds with his sorrow

The Despair Road

- We know God has promised hope, but man is it difficult to get our minds lined up with promises and keep them there
 - **Psalm 27:13-14 NIV**, “13 I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. 14 Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.”

The Despair Road

- God's Scripture doesn't just give us bullet points in how to live or work through issues of life – they show us with real world examples
- **Hebrews 12:1** tell us we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses
 - They struggled just like we do, they had doubts and fears just like we do, their despair was written down for us to see and use as an example
 - Our example this morning is two men walking the despair road returning to Emmaus after the crucifixion of Jesus in Luke 24

Jesus walks the despair road with us

- **Luke 24:13-19 NIV**, 13 Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. 14 They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. 15 As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; 16 but they were kept from recognizing him.
 - 17 He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?” They stood still, their faces downcast. 18 One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” 19 “What things?” he asked.

Jesus walks the despair road with us

- This was a very busy day for Jesus, but He had time for these two disciples walking the despair road
 - Notice, Jesus came to them, where they were at, in their present condition
 - These two had been just simple everyday disciples of Jesus, nothing you would see as special about them

Jesus walks the despair road with us

- This was a very busy day for Jesus, but He had time for these two disciples walking the despair road
 - As busy as Jesus would have been, He had time for them
 - To walk with them, listen to them, respond to them where they were at
 - Jesus was not unconcerned or frustrated with them
 - Jesus was interested and understood how they felt and the war going on inside of them

Jesus gives us the opportunity to be honest with Him in what we are experiencing

- **Luke 24:19-24 NIV**, “About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22 In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24 Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

Jesus gives us the opportunity to be honest with Him in what we are experiencing

- Jesus gave them the opportunity to empty their hearts, minds, and emotions to Him without interruption
 - **Vs. 21** but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.
 - And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.
 - **Vs. 24** but they did not see Jesus

Jesus gives us the opportunity to be honest with Him in what we are experiencing

- They knew Scripture and the promise of a Messiah, but they had preconceived ideas of what the Messiah would do
- They knew and experienced Jesus, believed He was the promised Messiah
 - They knew and experienced Jesus' teachings and promises
- There were just too many variables in their minds for them to fully believe in the resurrection of Jesus even though Jesus said He would
 - Their focus was on the variables and not on the variable solver, Jesus

Jesus tells us the despair road exit runs through the truth of Scripture

- **Luke 24:25-27 NIV**, 25 He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.
 - Hear Jesus tell them they don’t have to walk the despair road
 - You are here because you are slow to accept and believe God’s Word, all of it

Jesus tells us the despair road exit runs through the truth of Scripture

- There is an element of reluctance in fully believing the actions and words of Jesus
 - There was an unwillingness to simply believe, to let go and let God
- Notice, Jesus did not show them Himself at first
 - **Luke 24:32 NIV**, 32 They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”
 - **MSG**, “Didn’t we feel on fire as he conversed with us on the road, as he opened up the Scriptures for us?”

Jesus tells us the despair road exit runs through the truth of Scripture

- They became convinced of the resurrection of Jesus not with their eyes or emotions but with a heart of trust and faith in the Word of God
- Jesus wanted their faith to be in God's Word and not their eyes
 - **2nd Corinthians 5:7 NIV**, "For we live by faith, not by sight."
 - Not blind faith, but faith in the Word, Character, Love, and Provision of God through Jesus Christ our Savior
 - Miracles fade over time, but the Word of the Lord endures forever
(1st Peter 1:25)

Jesus is our example of using God's truth when the despair road calls us

- The despair of life
 - **Matthew 4:3-4 NIV**, 3 The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” 4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Jesus is our example of using God's truth when the despair road calls us

- The despair of getting it all done
 - **Matthew 4:5-7 NIV**, 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. 7 Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Jesus is our example of using God's truth when the despair road calls us

- The despair of what lies ahead
 - **Matthew 4:8-11 NIV**, 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” 10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

Jesus is our example of using God's truth when the despair road calls us

- Only after standing on the Word of God consistently was Jesus relieved from the pull of the despair road
 - **Matthew 4:11 NIV**, Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Jesus is compassionate and calls us to Himself when we find ourselves struggling on the despair road

- **Matthew 11:28-30 MSG**, “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Jesus is compassionate and calls us to Himself when we find ourselves struggling on the despair road

- **Isaiah 53:4 NIV**, Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering
 - **MSG**, Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows
 - Jesus has already carried your griefs and sorrow away
 - Leave them with Him, He can handle them
- “Take My hand and let’s go. Lead me on down the road.”

Jesus is compassionate and calls us to Himself when we find ourselves struggling on the despair road

- **Habakkuk 3:7-19 MSG**, “17-19 Though the cherry trees don’t blossom and the strawberries don’t ripen, Though the apples are worm-eaten and the wheat fields stunted, Though the sheep pens are sheepless and the cattle barns empty,
 - I’m singing joyful praise to God. I’m turning cartwheels of joy to my Savior God. Counting on God’s Rule to prevail, I take heart and gain strength. I run like a deer. I feel like I’m king of the mountain!



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