

Pro 15:13 A joyful heart makes a cheerful face,  
But when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.

Johannes Hofer described a young man in 1688 who was sick. “The young man ‘fell victim to this disease’. He didn’t eat. He was anxious, agitated and feverish. His symptoms grew worse. The members of the household, suspecting death’s approach in a short time had already taken to uttering public prayers for him.”

“An apothecary ... pointed out that he was homesick, and dying or not, it would be best to send him home. At the mention of home, the student perked up. When the servants started to pack, his breathing became easier. By the time the traveling party set out, he was much calmer. ‘He was scarcely some few miles from our city, when all the symptoms already abated to such a great extent, they really relaxed altogether, and he was restored to his whole sane self before he entered Berne,’ related Hofer.”

This young man was literally dying to go home.

Hofer called this disease “nostalgia”. He theorized that “Constantly thinking of home triggered a surge of animal spirits to this part of the brain. The more you thought of home, the more the spirits flowed”.

Constant thinking about a place, a desire or an unmet expectation can generate sadness. It may not be so extreme that it will bring us to death but each of us are sad from time to time.

Recently we have seen a number of our loved ones pass from this life and it brings us sorrow.

Some have seen loved ones get sick or have physical problems we hoped would not occur for many years.

We miss them now and for perhaps many years in the future.

1Th 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.

I was asked about whether we will know our loved ones in heaven.

If that were the case, we would continue to grieve over our loved ones who have died.

Joh 11:21 Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. (22) But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” (23) Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” (24) Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” (25) Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, (26) and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (27) She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”

Martha had watched her brother die and she wanted to have him with her.

Jesus told her she would have him for if we believe in Jesus, though we die, yet shall we live.

Today, this extreme sadness Hofer described might be called depression or nervous breakdown. As we think about dealing with sadness, let's go to the Scriptures.

1Sam 1:7 It happened year after year, as often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she would provoke her; so she wept and would not eat. 8 Then Elkanah her husband said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep and why do you not eat and why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?" 9 Then Hannah rose after eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. 10 She, greatly distressed, prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. 11 She made a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life

Sadness because of an unfulfilled desire for a son.

Her husband's love could not overcome the sadness in Hannah's heart.

She asked for God's help.

She was sure He could help.

She was given hope.

1Sa 1:18 She said, "Let your maidservant find favor in your sight." So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

Most of all, she no longer dwelled on the lack of a son.

Hofer might say, “She had a plan and she started on her journey home.”

Sadness because of an unfilled desire to rebuild  
God's house.

Neh 2:1 And it came about in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, that wine was before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. 2 So the king said to me, "Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart." Then I was very much afraid. 3 I said to the king, "Let the king live forever. Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?"

4 Then the king said to me, "What would you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5 I said to the king, "If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it." 6 Then the king said to me, the queen sitting beside him, "How long will your journey be, and when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time.

Nehemiah asked for help from one who could give it.

Neh 1:4 When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven. (5) I said, "I beseech You, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments,

Nehemiah asked God for help and it came through Artaxerxes.

Hofer might say, "He had a plan and he started on his journey home."

Sadness because of God's requirements.

Lk 18: 20 "You know the commandments, 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" 21

And he said, "All these things I have kept from [my] youth." 22 When Jesus heard [this], He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 23 But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. 24 And Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!

Here is someone who refused to ask God for help.

Here is someone who did not follow through with  
Jesus' advice.

Hofer might say, "He had no plan and no way to  
start home."

Sadness because of unmet expectations.

Lk 24:17 And He said to them, "What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 One of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, "Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?" 19 And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, 20 and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to the sentence of death, and crucified Him.

21 "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. 22 "But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, 23 and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. 24 "Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see." 25 And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"

These disciples had all their greatest desires and hopes smashed because of Jesus' death.

They would not believe the women nor did they understand the Scriptures.

Luk 24:27 Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

There are lessons that we can learn when we are sad.

Take it to the Lord in prayer.

1Pe 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, (7) casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

Search the Scriptures for God's answer.

2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (17) so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Think on good things.

Phi 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. (9) The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

If we practice these things we have a path to relieve our sadness and we can have the greatest hope given to man.

1Ti 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope,

Psa 27:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?

There is but one problem – what if we are unwilling to do as Jesus says?

"One thing you still lack; ... But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for \_\_\_\_??\_\_\_\_

The rich young ruler had a problem – other things kept him from giving Jesus his life.

What about you?

Act 22:16 'And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'