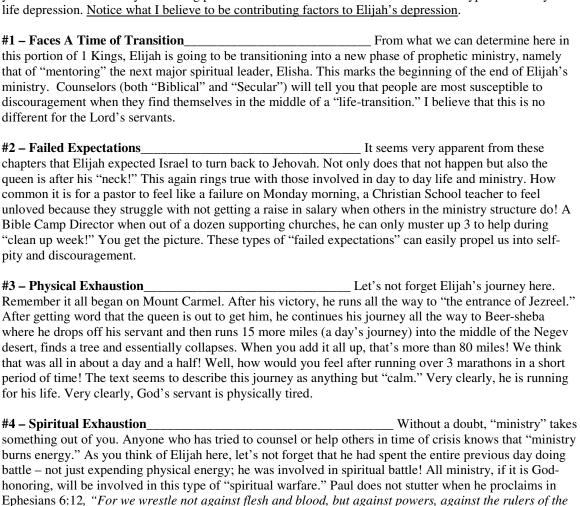
"Defeating Discouragement and Depression In Life and Ministry: Lessons learned from the life and ministry of Elijah"

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Over the decades of pastoral ministry, I have noticed an alarming rate of the Lord's servants suffering from major discouragement and depression. What has been especially difficult and alarming is the number of presentations I have listened to that seem to indicate that this discouragement comes to those who are in some way, "weak" and "sinful." Often times the listener goes away with the sense that if only I were "more holy," or perhaps "more disciplined" I would be able to "break free" from these feelings of discouragement.

You will remember that in 1 Kings, chapter 18, Elijah experiences a great victory on Mount Carmel. After this victory, including the execution of the prophets of Baal, God sends rain and helps Elijah win a "foot race," against the chariot of Ahab to Jezreel. I believe it would be obvious to say that Elijah has a full day in chapter 18. It also seems clear from the text, that Elijah was experiencing victory in life and ministry. However, when you come to the next chapter (chp 19) you will notice a major change in demeanor. Our victorious, triumphant Elijah becomes fearful, depressed, and despondent. Wow, what a change! The reason I mention this portion of the OT is because it is very instructive for God's servants today. I believe you will notice some very interesting parallels as to the cause and then solution of this type of ministry and life depression. Notice what I believe to be contributing factors to Elijah's depression.



darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in there is a spiritual and I believe emotional drain that ta	
#5 – Isolated Himself here is all alone. You will remember that back in Beer- alone. We really don't need to be surprised that Elijah That is a normal feeling when you've isolated yourself to remind Elijah that, "no son, you're not alone, I have	actually thinks that he's all that's left for Jehovah. from everyone else! God was good later in the text
#6 – Overtaken by Fear	that God's servant is taken over with fear. This is the chp 18), is feed at the brook Cherith (chp 17) and th to, "Fear not" concerning enough food for was no spiritual wimp. He has seen first hand God's point out that "panic," and "depression" are not tacks believer's who for years have faithfully and
Well, What's the answer? Notice with me that God hel several issues. First, God allows Elijah to have victory spiritual spere. And last, the relational sphere.	1 3
A. Attacking depression from thePhysical Sp	here Vv. 5-8
1Healthy Sleep	
2Healthy Eating	
3Healthy Drinking	
4Healthy Life Balance	
B. Attacking depression from theSpiritual Spi	nere Vv. 9-18
1Spends Time in Prayer	
2Listening to the Word of God	
C. Attacking depression from theSphere of	Relationships
1	<u> </u>
2	
By way of conclusion, when you're tired and feel	like Elijah in 1 Kings 19, remember the words of

By way of conclusion, when you're tired and feel like Elijah in 1 Kings 19, remember the words of Elisha (to his fearful servant in Dothan) in 2 Kings 6, "Fear not; for they who are with us are more than they who are with them." Praise God we serve a Lord who says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee (Heb 13:5)."