

MY JOURNEY THROUGH DEPRESSION

(Gareth Paul Taylor)

My hope in writing and publishing this article is that it will encourage any sufferers or friends/ family of sufferers who have experienced or are currently going through depression. I would also like to think that plenty of readers with no knowledge of or personal association with the illness will also benefit from reading this. May your patience pay dividends as you read this, leaving you encouraged and better informed! Having suffered with depression over four episodes in my own life, from my student days to the present, I want to share something of my own encounters with it, and hope in the process to give you a helpful overview of my understanding of the illness.

Depression is a condition which affects far more people than is generally acknowledged, though it is not as universal as 'the blues' which we all go through from time to time. No-one is exempt from the wilderness times or the occasional bout of 'the blues', but for many the wilderness experience becomes far more than the hot burning sands before reaching the oasis; it becomes more like quicksand which swallows the person whole, engulfing a person with feelings of despair and hopelessness, preventing the journey from continuing and threatening life itself.

For those whose experience like mine is closer to the quicksand analogy, the prognosis is not a simple bout of 'the blues' which will quickly pass like the common cold- it is a serious illness called depression. When we catch cold we can keep ourselves warm, alleviate the symptoms and relax in the knowledge that it will eventually pass; with depression it is not that simple. In fact it is quite the opposite: the best efforts of my closest soul-mates with their 'warm blanket' comments feel like cold comfort; my favourite comedy show which normally induces belly laughter in me fails to lift the heaviness; and the affected sensitive organ of my mind is left believing the cruel illusion that while it may get worse it will not get better, that this is a tunnel with no light at the end and no way back to the entrance, except for a weak sense of nostalgia. The old adage "as I think so I am" is true, and if my thought processes are displaced by the onset of depression then it is not long before my whole being, my thinking and behaviour, is cruelly consumed.

In my own experience with depression, my normally social outlook changed and I not only preferred my own company but found it difficult being around people (even though they say company is the best thing when depressed). At best I felt for others being around me, considering myself the killjoy in the party that they would be better off without; at worst I found I was projecting my self-loathing onto others, finding fault where normally I would be inclined to celebrate their virtues in my eyes. (I think the Biblical command “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18) is as much a truism as an imperative. When I get on with myself I find it fairly easy to get on with people; when I loathe myself I find it hard to avoid judging them, focusing on all their faults.) I truly became like a different person – in fact people who know “the real me” are often astonished to discover my history of depression, seeing me as a bubbly, sanguine, effusive kind of person, the last person they would expect to suffer from depression. If you can excuse the morbidity of this comment I think it goes to show that depression, like death, is no respecter of persons!

What causes depression? It would be so wonderful if there was a simple answer to this, as then it would be easy to pre-empt, never mind diagnose! Some people recognize they have a more melancholic disposition, and they have the unenviable task of staying constantly vigilant to keep the wolf at bay. I don't fit that pattern and could never understand why I fell into depression, seeing myself as others tend to do, as a more sanguine personality enjoying life and company. That said I know I *do* have a serious side and perhaps a tendency to engage the brain *too* much in cerebral analysis and letting the creative juices flow or be stimulated. I love all sorts of good music but still tend to gravitate towards songs and singers with a melancholy which I find intensely beautiful but *others* find depressing! At school I think I was seen as a bit too serious and academic by my peers, a bit too old for my age, which is probably why my classmates playfully changed my Christian name to “Gaffer”! They found it just as alien trying to understand my thought processes and interests as I did trying to understand what was so good about night-clubbing (a problem which confounds me to this day!) I felt fairly confident and self-possessed in my mind and probably suffered from being too independent of others. Maybe for me depression was a necessary life experience to teach me how to deal with perceived weakness and failure.

Returning to the question of “cause”, or I should say “trigger”, when I look back on my own episodes of depression the general pattern seems to be that they were precipitated by change. After an industrious first year studying music at university I was amongst the top of the year; but I fell into my first depression very soon after returning home for the long inactive summer holiday – (I personally seem to thrive in a structured timetable) - and was affected for the rest of my university life, eventually coming out with a Class III honours degree. It was enough to take me on to my postgraduate studies in music education, and I can even look back on my whole university experience with a degree of thankfulness and nostalgia. However at the time it was hard dealing with the knowledge that I could have done so much better, and having only recently received medication for it I still hadn't really engaged with the understanding that depression is an illness and not a character defect.

Depression affects the mind, and the brain which largely constitutes my mind is a physical organ; indeed other physical conditions may affect it, so maybe a course of medication will be needed to restore it to its 'normal' state; but it is also the fountain of my thought processes which form a great part of my identity, so reasoning and my very sense of 'self' is thus affected by its wellbeing. Therefore counselling may also be important in helping the sufferer to take action, correcting the accumulating negative thought processes with or without accompanying medication to help achieve restoration. I will clarify my own personal experience later, but first a note of caution. Like I said earlier depression is no respecter of persons and we are all different personalities with different world-views according to our hereditary, dispositional and nurtured outlooks; therefore as the mind is a great part of the make-up of our varied personalities, and it is the mind which is most severely affected by depression, every sufferer's experience and subsequent prognosis is going to be unique.

The quicksand metaphor is no exaggeration. Depression at best saps a person's quality of life, removing all energy, momentum and productivity; at worst it convinces the sufferer that death is better than this living hell, to the point where suicide will be seriously considered. In this extreme state of mind loved ones are either forgotten or believed to be better off without the sufferer, who genuinely cannot

understand that suicide would cause their friends and family far more pain. Personally, although I thought about it (at points during the darkest stages of my latter two bouts of depression even believing it my *duty* to take myself from the world to make life better for those around me, such was the intensity of the state of delusion induced by depression) I could thankfully never muster the momentum or courage to do so. Nevertheless I hated the way depression altered both my self-perception and the way I perceived others, affecting my behaviour towards them and exacerbating my concern that I was pulling folk into the quicksand with me.

If this article does nothing else for you I hope it will at least help you differentiate between depression and 'the blues'. The well-meaning sympathetic friend, family member or colleague should not mistake a depression sufferer's condition for 'the blues' with a glib remark to the sufferer that they should weather the storm and just "get over it" or "cheer up"; neither should they apply the equally glib remark "I know how you feel-we all go through it at some time or other." More than likely such comments betray a *lack* of understanding, suggesting what seems an insurmountable condition to the sufferer is more like the common cold hinted at earlier. Whether intended or not, the overwhelming unspoken message to the sufferer from such comments is "Everyone else goes through it- why are you kicking up such a fuss? Get your head down, weather the storm like everyone else does and stop being such a cry-baby." The sufferer can be left with the feeling there is something patently wrong with them when everyone else going through the 'same' doldrums seems to be able to pick themselves up and carry on walking through life with a smile. It is a woefully dangerous approach to wrongly diagnose this condition and expect the sufferer to simply change their attitude and "get on with it."

Not so long ago a visiting preacher to the church congregation I belong to in Barnsley began his sermon with a couple of memorable statements; the first point was one with which I passionately agreed, but the second one I disagreed with just as passionately! His first statement was that thankfulness should be a chief hallmark of the Christian, rather than the miserable negativity we so often encounter in the Church; his second was that it is impossible to be a thankful person and to be a depressive at the same time. After vigorously

assenting to his first statement I was immediately switched off by his second! The clear inference of what he said was that *in his opinion* depression is a manifest symptom of wrongful thinking rather than its root. It may sound like a subtle mistake put in that way, but it showed a lamentable misunderstanding of what depression is, and I shivered at the thought that this man was a pastor entrusted with a group of people who would look to him for guidance. Could this man really have engaged with the emotions of real people? Did he *know* any real people? Surely every pastor acts as a counsellor to those in distress, and depression is no modern or even rare condition; could it really have escaped his attention through all his years of pastoring that depression is an *illness*?! I wondered if he ever considered rebuking any of his own congregation for catching a sickness bug, or silently rolled his eyes up to heaven because yet another lamentable sinner had contracted cancer? Unfortunately such extreme and hopefully fictional viewpoints are the logical conclusion of a form of “prosperity gospel” which some preachers peddle, implying as in the superstitious climate of first century Palestine that any illness, condition, grief or tragedy is a judgment sent from God, indicative of sin. Thankfully I am surrounded by better people and after that meeting quite a few who knew my history, including my pastor, came up to me to say they were sorry about some of the things said in the sermon and clearly disagreed with them as passionately as me. In fact my pastor said that in his experience perhaps the most thankful and positive people to be around were those who had suffered with depression; without him needing to name names I immediately thought of quite a few people in our church who are very dear to me and I feel just the same way about.

As I said, my experience of depression began at university, where I suffered with it for the last two years of my degree course and failed to understand it was a remedial illness until the last stages of this episode. Eventually I went to see the doctor who first put me in touch with an educational psychologist. Whereas counselling is often an effective remedy, I personally found the psychology sessions to be unfruitful in the final equation, although I did find the process interesting. However when I returned to my doctor and was prescribed a course of anti-depressants the transformation was overwhelming. Within a fortnight my sleep pattern had been restored so I could sleep deeply through the night and wake up refreshed, and

my daylight hours became re-charged with energy; I had returned to my old optimistic self. At the time I was sharing a house with two medical students, who were delighted on interrogating me to find that I was a text-book case, unwittingly quoting “surreal dreams” as one of the symptoms of the medication I was on! I was astonished to find in the final equation that a condition which had affected me for two years could be cleared up in two weeks by a simple course of tablets! This is a classic verification of the point I mentioned earlier, that the brain is a physical organ and sometimes its restoration can come through biochemical means.

We are all aware of the iconic cartoon image of a light-bulb flashing when someone has an inspired thought. This is a pretty appropriate analogy; what physically happens in our brain and nervous system, in the process of sustaining thought and translating it into physical action, is that there is a bio-electrical discharge, literally an electric current that finds a pathway through the complex arrangement of neurons in the brain and nervous system. One of the chief factors allowing the flow of electric current through the brain and the nervous system is a chemical known as serotonin; in cases such as mine the onset of depression can be traced to a chemical imbalance in the brain by which much of the serotonin produced in the brain becomes “reabsorbed”, and the bio-electrical signals find their pathway considerably impaired, struggling to reach their destination, taking a long time about it or not making it at all - maybe even getting re-routed! This is why in my experience depression leaves one feeling literally drained of mental and physical energy, sluggish and inert.

However we must also remember the more mysterious equation of the physical mind with the spiritual or “soul-ish” self. Even now I struggle to equate this bio-chemical analysis with the way in which my whole personality and world-view got turned upside down, and I inhabited a nightmare world of perception for a while. I am often astonished looking back and vividly remembering the emotional force of my displaced thinking, while at the same time wondering how I could have believed the thoughts I had. The best analogy I can think of is that moment of waking up from a dream; the rational mind slowly kicks in and I *understand* that it was merely the *illusion* of reality, but the emotions induced by the dream are still fresh and no less real than they were during those last few moments of sleep.

Most of the courses of anti-depressants I have been prescribed over the years belong to the class correctly known as “serotonin re-uptake inhibitors”, which as the name suggests prevent the re-absorption of the serotonin and thus restore healthy brain function. Happily the tablets work simply as a restorative and after the apportioned time can be successfully stopped with no sense of drug dependency. Everyone is different though and for some certain tablets will be ineffective or at worst counter-productive and even addictive if inappropriately prescribed. It is therefore vital for the sufferer on prescription tablets to remain under the GP’s scrutiny, making regular (usually monthly) return trips for ongoing assessment.

Since my university experience I have had two further short but more intense periods of depression, prior to my fourth and final bout which lasted two years - in fact it ended during the spring and summer of the year just gone as I write, 2008. As well as recognizing how depression differs from person to person, I have to say that in my case it even differed from episode to episode with as many uncommon factors as common ones.

My second depressive episode came fairly predictably after a period of intensive change. I finished my NQT year teaching music at a secondary school in North Featherstone, took on a new job as a travelling music technology advisor for schools, proposed to my girlfriend while feeling financially stable, and then was promptly made redundant! For me the remainder of our engagement, instead of being the joyful time of preparation, became a miserable slide into depression. I initially tried holding off the wedding as I felt suddenly unready to take on a wife (my sense of chivalry being shot by entering marriage on the dole!), but the machinery of preparation was already in full swing. Thankfully another job as a peripatetic piano teacher came along closer to our wedding and, after the shaky run-up, the happiness of my marriage worked far more effectively than any medication would have done, so I came out of depression without needing the doctor! Rather less predictably, when the rug was suddenly pulled from under my feet on discovering my wife wanted to leave the marriage three years into it, I found I was still standing; although I grieved for my wife I managed to readjust to the single life without succumbing to depression, thanks to faithful friends who looked out for me and even took me into their homes for a while.

Even more significantly for me I felt a closeness to God I had never known before, a sense of His being my Father who loved me and commended me.

My third experience with depression came a good year after leaving the local music service to concentrate on building a new role I had started to fulfil as a schools pianist rather than peripatetic teacher. I remember telling a good friend I could feel myself slipping under, and being told with genuine but uncomprehending concern that it wasn't right for me to be thinking like that. Unfortunately I felt it was out of my control; I began slipping once more into a place where all my usual securities were turned on their head, while again I became rather clingy and unnaturally dependent rather than strong in my friendships (to the extent I freaked out and nearly lost my good friend at the time, making me feel even worse.) My abiding memory of this short but intense period was of being put on a new slow-burning, low dosage prescription after my second visit to the doctor. Regulations newly introduced at the time to reduce the risks of suicidal patients overdosing meant GPs were avoiding prescribing higher dosages such as the 75mg Prothiadin I had successfully taken at university, so I was now on an initial 10mg of Citalopram which also belonged to a slightly different class of medication along the lines of Prozac. As pre-empted in the accompanying leaflet (which you should always read!) the symptoms got rather worse for a time as the medication kicked in, before getting better. I could physically feel the heat inside my head as the make-up of my brain adapted, while sensing a strange sulphuric taste in my mouth as I lay awake for many a night, and my strange intensifying thoughts convinced me for a while that the flames of hell were claiming my head before the rest of me. (Although my second bout of depression had felt surreal and other-worldly at times it was only in my latter two episodes that I really began to suffer spiritually, as I will go on to document below.)

By this point my parents had come over to stay with me for a while so they could look after me and make sure I ate, etc. Amazingly I managed to keep working without respite during this time, thanks to their help. I remember at times trying to explain some of the mad thoughts that were taking me into their reality, whilst trying not to go so far that I would upset them. All the way along I was met with uncomprehending looks and the question "What do you mean?"

which came up countless times, but I could only explain so much and felt very isolated in my thoughts. At other times I believed my parents knew exactly what I meant and understood that my spiritual condition was as bad as I was hinting, but were just saying it wasn't so as a cover in order to shield me from reality (such was my delusional state at the time).

You can see why it's so hard to break the depressive mindset, either for the sufferer or for the person trying to engage with them. A professional correspondence counsellor I encountered in the early stages of my recent depression got it just right when he said that depression should be viewed as the enemy of the mind and we do well to arm ourselves with strategies against it. Personally I have come to the conclusion that at its worst, depression is rather like O' Brien and the Thought Police in George Orwell's famous novel "1984". It manages to discover your own worst fears and take you into your own personal Room 101 where it proceeds to break you by manifesting those fears as reality. (Of course in TV culture the term Room 101 has been borrowed and misused so it now implies a friendly place where you can throw things you intensely dislike down a chute, rather than a torture chamber where things you intensely fear are thrown down the chute at you!) I think if I could summarize the over-arching mental themes of my depression I would say that the first two times it was a fear that time was running away from me, that I had lost all productivity and was doomed to exist rather than truly live from now on; the last two times it was far worse, a true Room 101 nightmare that I had somehow cut the cord of grace with God through my recurrent sinfulness and was irrevocably destined for hell – which leads on to the important part of the journey through my fourth and final battle with depression.

So far I have focused on some more general aspects of depression, as well as some details of my own experience which I believe most people could at least understand and maybe even identify with. However I need to go on to explain more of the *spiritual* aspects of my journey. I resisted the urge to (more accurately) call this article "My Journey **With God** Through Depression" suspecting that many more would be put off reading about God than about depression (such is the current climate!) but I have to say that without God none of my experience would make sense, nor would it be as complete and

accurate a picture as a subjective account could be. In fact, despite the protestations of all who would choose to see “God” as nothing more than a concept projected onto the screen of life by way of convenient explanation, or a vehicle for very human political ends, I would go so far as to say that without putting God in the frame, nobody can hope to talk about any matter with anything even closely resembling true objectivity. Besides for me I could hardly view God as a convenient psychological crutch; as I have already hinted, there were points in the journey where I felt life would be far easier if I *didn't* believe in God, though ultimately I have found this to be untrue!

The Bible, believe it or not (!), has much to say about depression and how God is a vital presence even within this seemingly lonely experience. The writer of Lamentations even suggests, with absolute honesty regarding his own suffering thoughts and emotions, that God Himself has brought this depression on him! (I wonder if, like Job, he had encountered some *pre-Christian* form of prosperity gospel preaching?!) Yet he goes on to say:-

“I'll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness,
the taste of ashes, the poison I've swallowed.
I remember it all—oh, how well I remember—
the feeling of hitting the bottom.
But there's one other thing I remember,
and remembering, I keep a grip on hope:
God's loyal love couldn't have run out,
his merciful love couldn't have dried up.
They're created new every morning.
How great your faithfulness!
I'm sticking with God (I say it over and over).
He's all I've got left.

God proves to be good to the man who passionately waits,
to the woman who diligently seeks.
It's a good thing to quietly hope,
quietly hope for help from God.
It's a good thing when you're young
to stick it out through the hard times.”

(Lamentations 3:19-26, The Message version of the Bible)

I have to say that while I never personally reached the point of blaming God (which may have felt psychologically better!) I did spend a lot of time feeling condemned by myself and God for my sinfulness. In so doing I entertained a false, negative image of myself and of God, even though both the Bible and my renewed mind make it clear that God has completely dealt with and done away with my sin in Jesus! I was about eight when I first realized I had to make my own choice about God and decided to say yes to Him, and yet nearly thirty years later, while depressed, I stood up at a meeting during August Bank Holiday 2007 to acknowledge my sin and say I wanted to become a Christian! By the way, I don't think the desire to become a Christian is at all deluded, but in this case it was a bit like deciding as a lifelong indigenous Brit that I suddenly needed to swear allegiance to the Queen! (I realize here that some may also take issue with the concept of sin and suggest I was suffering from "Catholic guilt" but I must point out that like God, sin is very much an objective reality we all need to face. We're self-deluded if we think we're intrinsically good just because we're not in prison. The writer Solzhenitsyn, who could have entertained righteous indignation at being *wrongfully* imprisoned simply for being a Christian, famously had the wisdom to point out that the line dividing good and evil runs directly through the centre of the human heart. My mistake was not in perceiving sin in my life, but rather in forgetting the good news of salvation through Jesus, and allowing that sin to condemn me.)

Cold comfort it may be if you are going through depression, but you are among good company; the Bible tells of men like Jeremiah (who wrote Lamentations), Job and even the prophet Elijah who fled from Jezebel in fear of his life after proving God on the top of Mount Carmel, lamenting that he was the only one left of God's prophets and he would rather die in the desert! There is the blind George Matheson who wrote the beautiful hymn "O Love That Will Not Let Me Go" in a five minute fit of inspiration amidst a state of mental torment. (For me depression tended to close the doors of inspiration at the time, yet it furnished me with plenty in hind-sight, which has led me to wonder if suffering and inspiration are in fact the inseparable opposite faces of the same coin.) Or think of some of our contemporary culture's celebrities who struggle with depression, like Stephen Fry and John Cleese – brilliant people skilled at making others laugh yet prone to deep melancholy themselves.

In spite of my feeling of despair during this last encounter with depression, God spoke many words to me during this time. The words that impacted me most were delivered to me early on by a church friend, who told me I would soon enter the darkest period of my life but assured me God would bring me through it, and that in conjunction with my delivery I would experience a release, an outpouring of my ministry that would result in a much wider sphere of influence, with thousands of people being reached through my words and music! My natural reaction was one of dismay at the thought that life would get darker for a while, as I was already deep in depression at the time, but I also took comfort from the promise of joy to follow, a hope which seemed more sustainable because of this word's realistic honesty in projecting difficulty as well as hope.

I cannot quantify how significant people's prayers for me have been during this last depressive episode, as well as the words they spoke into my life. I will give two examples that readers will probably appreciate in that they involve guys who are well known internationally. I was attending the UK Worship Academy at the time, and was aware that one of its main leaders, Chris Bowater who I have known for about 14 years, was faithfully praying for me sometimes through the night, prior to speaking words into my life—such is the faithful concern I enjoyed from my friends. Another faithful servant of God who spoke encouragement to me was the Texan prophet and pastor Duane White. Despite personal doubts about my spiritual standing and acceptability before God, which I put down to my depression, I was “keeping on keeping on” through my illness in line with my pastor's encouragement; accordingly I was given the task of leading worship at a regional Ground Level meeting at my church in Barnsley, where Duane was speaking. I don't know whether my body language betrayed my inner state as I led, but Duane is widely recognized for his prophetic anointing and he saw straight through to my spirit. He told me publicly during the meeting that the colour of the shirt I was wearing (my favourite, purple!) was no accident, that God saw me as a royal priest in kingly robes before Him, and so should I instead of beating myself up! I remember how that word from a respected man of God truly lifted me out of depression for a few days; such was its emotional impact. It was as if I had found the eye in the middle of my storm!

My depression continued for a good while after this and I kept taking my prescription, despite this brief interlude, but God was true to His word; He had already begun lifting me from my depression, when out of the blue an invitation came for me to play in the main-stage band for the evening meetings at GRAPEVINE 2008. This marked the next stage of God fulfilling His word to me, as I would be playing to congregations of up to 5000 each night! Furthermore, true to the saying that after a long wait three buses come at once, I was then asked in quick succession if I would be happy for one of my songs to be included in the set-list, and also if I would be willing to help in notating the new songs for the songbook. By the time the rehearsals started I was well out of my depression.

Through my closer involvement with GRAPEVINE I have already met many new friends and colleagues. I'm so grateful to God for demonstrably holding my life in His hands, bringing His plans for me to fruition. In the process He has given me faith that I need not worry about depression after this last episode. I meant what I said when I referred to that bout as "the fourth and final" one; the word God spoke into my life through my church friend, having already so clearly begun to bear fruit, came with the promise that this time I would experience full healing with no recurrence of depression, and I am holding on to that promise!

I know my testimony may sound a little dramatic, especially regarding the resolution of my depression, and I hope the reader isn't dismayed because of this. As I keep emphasizing, everyone's experience is different. I realize how fortunate I am to have such a wealth of people praying for me and speaking into my life, but I am sure the people I named would be the first to say with me that there is no such thing as someone of 'greater significance'. I mention them by name not in order to celebrate their significance or to consequently make my story appear any more significant, but because I know their names will mean something to a wider readership and I want to honour the input of these people into my life. Equally I have to point out that the input of my church friend, who would be embarrassed to be named, was if anything all the more significant to me, especially as this friend is someone who doesn't normally "do this sort of thing", hearing a specific word from God for someone and passing it on.

If anything I realize that my areas of *gifting* as a writer and musician may give me a higher profile than most, that I have been gifted and that the “gift-er” is God, but the *calling* is no greater or lesser than yours. My ethos is that my gifting brings responsibility, and responsibility demands a response! As Jesus says in Luke 12:48, “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”(The NIV Bible). Along with the belief that no experience is meaningless in God, for “we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28, The NIV Bible), this requirement seems to me to involve sharing my life and my life story in God so that others will benefit.

I hope you will see through any perceived disparity between my story and yours to the fundamental hope for *all* our stories. Although this is inevitably *my* story and not yours, I pray you will see that there are universal truths within it, and that there is a universal hope for all reading, especially any fellow-sufferers. The highest truth and hope of all is that God does not change despite my changeability and my changing circumstances, and though it may be easier to see this with hindsight, God’s love for us is a constant and He is constantly moving in the greater and smaller details of our lives to bring us closer to Himself “for I am convinced that neither death nor life, ...nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38, The NIV Bible)

As I believe my testimony proves, you can rightly trust that God is holding you in His hands, just like in the well-known “footprints in the sand” analogy. Depression is a particularly lonely illness, alienating the sufferer even from close friends and family, and it can create the illusion of “going it alone” with only one visible set of footprints in the wilderness sands. But the fact is that God is actually carrying you through this wilderness time, and it is His set of footprints you will see especially as you look back on this time with the benefit of hindsight. Don’t let the terrible illusion of stasis created by depression fool you into believing it all ends here. Even when you feel stuck in the quicksand, the only thing hemming you in is God’s arms – and God never stands still. See you on the other side of the desert my friend.