

FAITH AND DEPRESSION

HOLDING FAITH IN DARKNESS

"He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old."

~ Lamentations 3:6

1. Depression as a Spiritual Problem

- a. 8% of adults and 15% of young people report facing depression annually.
- b. Depression ~*def.* A persistent feeling of sadness and lack of interest (Mayo)
- c. Is depression spiritual problem or physical? It can be both. Always pressing your spirit.
- d. Sunken spirit, vanity, disheartened, discouraged, dejected, desolate, down, darkness.
- e. Spiritual problems can be treated with God's word, faith, Jesus Christ.
- f. God can quicken spirits, strengthen (comfort), encourage, lift up, give light and hope.

2. WARNING → For your safety.

- a. We have a psychotropic drug problem in America (25% are *prescribed*)
- b. Do NOT change, stop, start depression treating medication w/o talking to your doctor
- c. Scientists struggle with the cause of depression. (So do pastors – not always sin/devil)
- d. Depression of the mind can be a result of body, circumstances, choices, weakness, sin.
- e. Depression part of a broken world. God delivers us from this world → Ga 1:5, Col 1:13

3. Christian Depression

- a. Christians not guaranteed permanent smiles this side of eternity. We may be depressed
- b. The night he knew he would be betrayed Jesus said this → Matt 26:38
- c. Scripture is filled with depressing statements - Psa 88:6, Psa 116:3-4
- d. There is a time to mourn, weep, and be sad - Job, Ecc 3:4, Heb 12:11 (but not forever)
- e. The apostle of grace and hope said, Rom 7:24, 2 Cor 7:5-6, and 2 Cor 1:9, 2 Tim 4:18.
- f. Believers face trouble, sorrow, sadness, unhappiness, and yet not as those w/o hope.
- g. We are given spiritual comfort, truth, hope - 1Th 5:14, Ro 12:15, Pro 25:20
- h. Depression brings down, low, to hell. Humbled can be a good posture before the Lord.

4. Sinful Depression

- a. Depression can be sinful. Cain's countenance a result of his sin - Gen 4:6-7
- b. If your guilt, regret, focus on sin/evil is causing depression, look elsewhere - Phi 4:4-9
- c. Sin is still sin, even if done when depressed – pride, selfishness, "unfair", envy, grudge.
- d. Depression is sinful when it is the result or cause of corrupted truth in you. Job 34:35
- e. After being tired and worried, Elijah was wrongly depressed - 1 Kings 19:2-6,14
- f. When depression blinds you to your own sin/guilt it is a dark veil the Bible can pierce.
- g. The Bible speaks hope when humility, sin, or guilt are acknowledged.
- h. The depressed are still responsible for behavior and can benefit from Biblical ministry.

5. Addressing Depression

- a. Consistent lack of joy, peace, hope is not God's will - Rom 15:13, 1 Th 5:13-18
- b. The ministry of the word gives enlightenment, encouragement, exhortation, evangelism
- c. Repentance and faith results from hearing the word of God and believing - Rom 10:17
- d. Depression gives us natural humility which should lead us to plead for God's mercy.
- e. The mercy of the Lord endures forever, he fails not (we do) - Lam 3:17-33
- f. Be grateful for what the Lord has done - Psa 116:3-10 (see also 2 Cor 4:13-7)

- g. God wants us to glory in tribulations and boast in infirmities - Rom 5:2, 2 Cor 12:9-10
- h. We will suffer. It is not good. God's help is by grace to strengthen you to get thru it.
- i. It is given to us to know suffering as our Lord did - Phi 3:10, Col 1:24
- j. When persistent faith meets persistent sorrow, the result is of Christ - Rom 8:17-18
- k. Our God humbled himself unto death, made sin for us, what you feel is what Christ felt.
- l. The word of God does not remove darkness, but it strengthens faith and gives light.
- m. Right and true faith is extremely helpful in navigating the darkness of depression.