

3. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 calls God, "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles". The solution to depression is not removing all our troubles, it is knowing and experiencing the comfort of God. How do we connect with that comfort? Paul says that we share the comfort we have received from God with one another (2 Cor 1:4). Have you experienced someone sharing their comfort with you? How did they do it?

4. Research and statistics suggest that depression is a highly treatable condition. 80-90% of occurrences can be treated but almost exactly the same percentage go completely unaddressed. Why don't people seek help or find some plan to deal with the times of depression they experience? What makes depression a particularly isolating condition?

5. We can be oppressed by our circumstances, by our own bad choices, by the opposition of the enemy, by the brokenness of our world, or by our own broken history. In every case our real answer lies outside ourselves in our re-engagement with the one who saves us and has come into our world "to release the oppressed" (Luke 4:18). Jesus' life and teaching, His sacrificial death and resurrection, His Lordship and leading answer the depth of our need from the inside out. How do we put ourselves in a position to truly engage with Christ even when we feel so down or dark? How do we find the perseverance we need to hang in there with the real source of our help until we find the freedom we need?

Pastor David's notes for 5/8-9/2010

Pushing Back The Darkness

Returning From Depression

I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?" My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, "Where is your God? Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me?"

Psalm 42:9-11

"Why then did you bring me out of the womb? I wish I had died before any eye saw me. If only I had never come into being, or had been carried straight from the womb to the grave! --- I go to the place of no return, to the land of gloom and deep shadow, to the land of deepest night, of deep shadow and disorder, where even the light is like darkness."

Job 10:18-19/21-22

"For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn - conflicts on the outside, fears within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him."

2 Corinthians 7:5-7

"The idols speak deceit, diviners see visions that lie; they tell dreams that are false, they give comfort in vain. Therefore the people wander like sheep oppressed for lack of a shepherd."

Zechariah 10:2

Depression can be experienced on a wide spectrum of effect from seasonal sadness, to prolonged melancholy, to all-encompassing, even life-threatening gloom. It has become epidemic in 21st century culture, family life, and personal experience through the accumulation of:

- 1. false and empty visions
- 2. broken life experiences
- 3. profound spiritual disconnection

We recover from times of depression with a plan that includes:

- 1. specific action
- 2. enduring community
- 3. spiritual comfort

next weekend: Pushing Back The Darkness - "Deceit"



CONNECTION QUESTIONS

for personal study & individual reflection,
and small group discussion & comment

"Returning From Depression" - Psalm 42:1-11; Job 10:1-22;
2 Corinthians 7:5-7; 2 Corinthians 1:1-11; Zechariah 10:2

1. What has been your experience of depression, either in your own life, in your family, or in the world around you? How common would you say depression is in our day? What are people doing about it? Do you think people are finding the relief and help they need?

2. Psalm 42 asks the question, "Why are you downcast, o my soul?" What reasons do people have for being depressed? Are some of those reasons understandable? Are some of them beyond our understanding? How about Job, did he have reasons for wishing he had never been born (Job 10:18-19)? What about Paul and his team "despairing even of life" (2 Cor 1:8)?
