

Defeating Depression



Getting Started

What is depression? Is it just feeling a little sad? Or is it more serious?

Doctors say that depression is a serious disease. Today we have many different kinds of medicine to take for depression, but the problem seems to be growing.

Doctors say there are more depressed people in the world today than 50 years ago. Why do you think this is true? What causes depression?

On the other hand, what gives us happiness? What gives us hope?



Improving Your Vocabulary

depression (n) — a condition of feeling sad or hopeless

disease (n) — a very bad sickness

depressed (adj) — low in spirits; downhearted; feeling hopeless

mercy (n) — kindness shown to someone who is hurt or in trouble

sorrow (n) — very great sadness

grace (n) — kindness shown to someone who does not deserve it

insult (n) — hurtful or offensive words

persecution (n) — harm or bad treatment given to people because of their culture, faith, or race

abandon (v) — to leave someone who needs help or support

Reading God's Word

Lamentations 3:19-24; 32-33

19 The thought of my pain, my homelessness, is bitter poison. **20** I think of it constantly, and my spirit is depressed. **21** Yet hope returns when I remember this one thing: **22** The Lord's unfailing love and mercy still continue, **23** Fresh as the morning, as sure as the sunrise. **24** The Lord is all I have, and so in him I put my hope . . . **32** He may bring us sorrow, but his love for us is sure and strong. **33** He takes no pleasure in causing us grief or pain.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

9 But his answer was: "My grace is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak." I am most happy, then, to be proud of my weaknesses, in order to feel the protection of Christ's power over me. **10** I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Isaiah 49:13-15

13 Sing, heavens! Shout for joy, earth! Let the mountains burst into song! The Lord will comfort his people; he will have pity on his suffering people. **14** But the people of Jerusalem said, "The Lord has abandoned us! He has forgotten us." **15** So the Lord answers, "Can a woman forget her own baby and not love the child she bore? Even if a mother should forget her child, I will never forget you."

Philippians 4:12-13

12 I know what it is to be in need and what it is to have more than enough. I have learned this secret, so that anywhere, at any time, I am content, whether I am full or hungry, whether I have too much or too little. **13** I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me.

Deuteronomy 31:8

8 The Lord himself will lead you and be with you. He will not fail you or abandon you, so do not lose courage or be afraid.

For further study, the Bible gives many examples of people fighting depression.

You can read the book of Job or 1 Kings 19 - two stories of men who were depressed and found comfort from God. You can also read Matthew 5:3-12, Nehemiah 8:10, and Psalm 42.

Taking a Closer Look

1. Does God enjoy giving us sorrow or pain? (Lamentations 3:33)

2. Where can we find hope? (Lamentations 3:21-24)

3. Why do you think God chooses to give us hardship sometimes?

4. When is God's power strongest? (2 Corinthians 12:9)

5. What do you think the writer means: "For when I am weak, then I am strong"? Have you ever experienced this? (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

6. Why should the heavens sing? Why should the earth shout for joy? (Isaiah 49:13)

7. How do we know God will never abandon us? (Isaiah 49:15; Deuteronomy 31:8)

8. What is the "secret" to being happy in any situation? (Philippians 4:12-13)

Taking Action

1. Have you ever been depressed, or are you depressed right now? God tells us that he will "lead you and be with you" through depression. We know God is helping us, but what are some things we can do to help ourselves? Make a list of some things we can do to fight depression.
2. Often if a person is depressed, they have a very low opinion of themselves, or even hate themselves. What are some ways we can encourage each other, and try to make each other feel better about who we are?

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 5:7

Leave all your worries with him, because he cares for you.

Reviewing the Vocabulary

Fill in the blanks using one of the new vocabulary words from today's lesson.

1. Most people experience _____ at some time in their lives.
2. Even if we are going through a bad time, we know that God will never _____ us.
3. We should try to encourage others, rather than _____ them.
4. Cancer is a terrible _____.
5. We should try to show _____ to people, even if they do not deserve it. (Two possible answers!)



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