

Sermon Title: The Battle of Depression

Sermon Text: Psalm 42:1-11; 43:5

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to a biblical view of the root of depression.

Sermon Proposition: There are 3 biblical viewpoints of the root of depression.

- I. The concept of depression in the battle.
- II. The cause of depression in the battle.
- III. The cure of depression in the battle.

I. The concept of depression in the battle.

1. Depressant – Lowering functional or vital activity.
2. Depressed – Pressed down; hence dejected; dispirited.
3. Depression – Act of depressing; or state of being depressed.
[Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary; A Merriam-Webster. P.223]
4. Despair – To be hopeless; to give up hope.
[ibid. p.225]

Depression is not just of the mind but experienced throughout the body.

A. Definition of Depression

Depression is the most complicated of all our emotions and yet one of the most common psychological problems a person can experience. Someone has called it the “common cold” of the emotions. It’s a feeling of gloom or sadness that is usually accompanied by a slowing down of the body. It’s in the stomach as much as the head. We are designed to experience depression. At some time in their lives, probably two of every ten people will experience depression seriously enough to hinder their normal way of life. [www.hopefamilyministries.com]

B. Signs or Symptoms of Depression

1. Changes in eating habits
 2. Sleep too much or can’t sleep at night
 3. Loss of interest in things once enjoyed
 4. Loss of energy or fatigue
 5. Using alcohol or drugs to feel better
 6. Feelings of worthlessness, guilt
 7. Recurring thoughts of death or suicide, wishing to die
 8. Overwhelming feeling of sadness or hopelessness, uncontrolled crying
 9. Chronic negativism irritable
 10. Trouble concentrating or making decisions
- [www.hopefamilyministries.com]

The psalmist was speaking to himself (lit “my soul”) in an attempt to bring comfort and security. In an attempt to answer the question written while focusing on his depression, he commands himself to hope in God. The psalmist’s situation was intense and greatly upsetting.

Men like Moses, Jeremiah, Elijah, Paul, Jesus

II. The cause of depression in the battle.

- A. Frustration with the predetermined will of God in the events of life. (**Ecclesiastes 3:1-9**)
- B. Frustration with the predetermined will of God on the conditions of life. (**Ecclesiastes 3:10-15**)
- C. Frustration with the predetermined will of God as the Judge of life. (**Ecclesiastes 3:16-22**)
Therefore, many refuse to “hope in God” which means waiting on God during a time of crisis, life difficulties, or testing. The confidence of hope is that He will answer related to His predetermined will. The point the psalmist makes is there is no reason for his depression or despair to paralyze him, if God is his Savior. The fact that he repeats this truth several times in the passage shows the difficulty of internalizing this truth.

III. The cure of depression in the battle.

- A. Focus on worship of God. (**Psalms 42:1-11**)
- B. Focus on the Word of God. (**Philippians 4:6-9**)

“We forget that the Bible is not an encyclopedia (or answer book), but a story/revelation of God’s plan to rescue hopeless and helpless humanity. It’s a story/revelation about people who are rescued from their own self-suffering and wisdom and transported to a kingdom where Jesus is central and true hope and healing is alive.” [**Paul David Trent; Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hand: People in Need of Change, Helping People in Need of Change, pp.8-9**]

“We cannot treat the Bible as a collection of therapeutic insights. To do so distorts its message and will not lead to lasting change. If a system could give us what we need, Jesus would never have come, (nor would He have needed to die on a cross). He came because what is wrong with (humanity) could not be fixed any other way. Jesus is the only answer, so we (must reflect that answer) and must never offer a message or solution that is less than the good news. We don’t offer people a system; we MUST point them to a Redeemer. He is hope and healing for the soul.”

Many so called Pastors and Christians seem to view the Word of God as little more than a spiritual cut-and-paste strategy for life. This kind of ministry and view focus on self as the center of life, personal needs being satisfied is the focus, and happiness is the goal.

But a truly Bible centered ministry of the Word of God must and will confront the self-absorbed and self-centered, self-supporting root that so easily dominates the American landscape and churches. Trent remarks: “Unless this happens, we will tend to use the promises, principles and commands of the Word of God to serve the thing we really love: ourselves.” [**ibid. 25**]

“In order to follow Jesus, you will have to unfollow the world, your feelings, your passions, yourself.” [**quote from Facebook**]

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed. (**Isaiah 41:10**)

The strength to overcome temptation comes from God alone, and the conquering name is the name of Jesus Christ; therefore, go forward in that strength and in that name against all your temptations. [**CH Spurgeon**]

Conclusion: (Ecclesiastes 1:2; 12:8)

Six Biblical responses to depression:

1. Respond by asking why am I depressed. (Psalm 42:5)
2. Affirm God's sovereign love for you. (Psalm 42:5, 7, 11)
3. Sing to the Lord in the dark hours.
4. Quench your thirst for God in Worship and the Word.
5. Be confident in the sufficiency of God's grace.
2 Corinthians 12:9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
6. Stand fast in the faithfulness of God.
1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.