

The Four D's

Today's Message: "Depression"

Message Study Guide

Introduction

In today's society, it is not uncommon for people to be depressed. In fact, anyone with common sense will realize that being depressed or feeling down is a normal part of life. Amazingly, Christians are not immune from feeling depressed. In fact, spiritual depression seems to be the order of the day for many, including pastors. Spiritual depression has been described as the "dark night of the soul". It is a malaise that seems to be upon people when they feel "cut off" or "far away from God". When depressed, people have little if any enthusiasm for the things of God. To add insult to injury, they end up neglecting the very things that they need to overcome it.

The problem of spiritual depression is interesting in light of the fact that Christians have more encouragements to prop them up and to help them along the way today than at any time in our history. Great churches, great worship, great music, great teaching and preaching, small groups, accountability partners, bible studies, men's and ladies seminars, books, and a myriad of other things. When you add in the technology factor- iPods, iTunes, Bible software programs, laptop and desktop computers, web sites, and a million other things now available, it would seem like there should be few, if any, excuses for being depressed today. Yet, depressed we are!

Discussion Points

We must individually determine to fight back the heaviness of spiritual depression on a daily basis with these simple, yet profound words in Psalm 42 - "Hope in God" if we are going to be all that we should be as Christians.

Discussion Questions

1. Think back to the last time when you were spiritually depressed. Try to identify the external or internal factors that seemed to be the cause for you being depressed.
2. What brought you out of your spiritual depression? People? Family? God's Word? Explain.
3. What verse or verses of scripture has God used throughout your life to help restore your joy and hope in God during difficult times? Read these verses now. It would also be a tremendous advantage to memorize them.

Think About It

Christians have the responsibility to "reflect" God and His sufficiency to those we come in contact with every day. Can you see how being spiritually depressed on a regular basis would blur another person's view of God? How serious is that?

Do Something About It!

Take personal responsibility! Talk to yourself the way the psalmist did! Take hold of yourself! Fight for joy! It is always worth the fight!

Be Willing To Change

"Why are you cast down, O my inner self? And why should you moan over me and be disquieted within me? Hope in God and wait expectantly for him, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God. Psalm 42:11 (Amplified Bible)

Notes: _____
