

# God's Healing Words for Your Depression

Depression hurts. The TV commercials say it hurts not only the person suffering from depression but also the people around that person. That is painfully true. They offer their drug of choice to relieve the symptoms of depression, but what of the real cause? Where is the healing for the soul that is plunged into the awful darkness of depression?

Symptoms of depression vary from one person to another. But professionals agree that a state of depression exceeds normal sadness that is a result of life's struggles, setbacks and disappointments. Some describe depression as "living in a black hole" or having a feeling of impending doom. Others don't feel sad; they feel lifeless, empty and apathetic.

You can Google depression to access the lists of causes, symptoms and treatments available. Although this information may be helpful, our focus is to understand the healing that our Savior offers to the despondent soul. The Bible is candid, if anything, concerning the lows the human personality can suffer. And it gives hope to those who turn to God for relief. Consider the dilemma of the psalmist:

"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Ps. 27:13-14, KJV).

As in many of his psalms, here, David utters his honest, dismal state of mind. Then he concludes that his hope is to be found in God. His God will strengthen his heart and deliver him from his sense of doom. Listen again to his woeful cry and his prayer for help:

"Turn to me, and be gracious to me, for I am isolated and

afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses. Look on my pain and misery, and forgive all my sins. ... Watch over my life, and deliver me! Let me not suffer shame, for I seek refuge in you" (Ps. 25:16-18, 20, MEV).

It is extremely difficult to look up when you feel hopeless, despairing and are filled with dread of the future. Yet it is in crying out in all honesty to the Lord that you are promised the wonderful relief and healing that you so desperately need. God has promised to hear your cry.

Remember, it is the pride of our hearts that keeps us from seeking God (see Ps. 10:4). As we allow God to heal our pride, we will be able to call on Him to help us when there seems to be no way out. Take a moment and pray as the psalmist did for help to come to you now: "Lord, I cry unto You; make haste to me; give ear to my voice, when I cry unto You. Let my prayer be set forth before You as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice" (Ps. 141:1-2).

Corrie ten Boom, a Dutch Christian Holocaust survivor, was no stranger to despair. For their crime of helping Jews, the ten Boom family was sent to prison. Corrie's elderly father died within 10 days of his arrest. He had said it would be a privilege to give his life for the Jews. Her brother Willem and his son Christiaan also died due to their imprisonments. Corrie and her sister Betsie spent a total of 10 months in three different prisons. The last was Ravensbruck Concentration Camp, located near Berlin, Germany. Betsie died there, but through a clerical error (God's miracle), Corrie was released.

Starting at age 53, she spent the next 33 years sharing what she and Betsie had learned in Ravensbruck: "There is no pit so deep that He is not deeper still." She also declared, "Joy runs deeper than despair."

Corrie ten Boom had found her only source of light in the face of unbelievable loss and despicable treatment at the hands of her enemies. She said simply, "Let God's promises shine on your problems."

As an inspirational speaker famous for her colorful descriptions, she made this analogy regarding dark times: "When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer."

It is difficult to overestimate the security and hope that we have when we look away from our depressing situation and choose to seek our solace in God Himself. Again, the psalmist pushed the envelope of extreme situations to declare ultimate victory for the person who decides to put his trust in God:

*You put Yourself behind and before me, and keep Your hand on me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is lofty, and I cannot fathom it. Where shall I go from Your spirit, or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell at the end of the sea, even there Your hand shall guide me, and Your right hand shall take hold of me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light shall be as night about me," even the darkness is not dark to You, but the night shines as the day, for the darkness is like light to You (Ps. 139:5-12).*

According to this psalm, even if you tried, you could not lose God's watchful presence in your life. There is no darkness in God. No devastating, overwhelming, catastrophic event can for one moment dim the light of God's love that yearns to draw you close and comfort your aching heart.

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