

Depression Dealing with the Darkness

Who ever thought that hopelessness could be so painful! But if you are wrestling with the darkness of depression you know exactly what I am talking about. Depression hurts!

During the course of my ministry, I have had many opportunities to come alongside of folks who have lived in the deepest of darkness. I am also aware that there are many more of you scattered throughout this Ohio Valley. I am praying for you. I do not know who you are but I know you are there. My prayer is this pamphlet will make it into your hands and our dear Lord will use it to bring some comfort and hope to you.

With this pamphlet I do not intend to provide you with a series of ‘how-tos’ or a five, seven, or ten-step way to alleviate depression. This pamphlet is an attempt to talk with you one on one and perhaps offer some of the insights that I have gained along the way as I have counseled folks who were right where you are now. Again, I do not know who you are so this is the

everything in the midst of the horrible darkness. Because of Jesus Christ’s work on the cross you and I can have hope.

Well our time is about out and there is so much more to share. I pray that we may get another opportunity. Lord willing I hope to produce more pamphlets on this subject. If you are interested in obtaining copies, or simply want to talk, email me at andersonr06@comcast.net (do not forget the r before 06), visit us for a Bible Study or worship service (see time and place below), or call me (my number is below). Until then, may God richly bless you.

Pastor Rick Anderson

Tri-State Community Church

If you have benefited from this pamphlet please come and visit us at Tri-State Community Church.

We meet for worship and Bible study at the Chester City Building, 600 Indiana Ave., Chester WV. Our Sunday service time is 10 AM. Thursday bible study is 7 PM. Feel free to contact Pastor Anderson at 304-387-3882. For more information visit us at www.tri-statecommunitychurch.org

Our feelings are like everything else in our lives, they are fallen and broken. We cannot trust our feelings. This is why God has gone to so much trouble to give us His Word. The Psalmists who wrote the passages we looked at earlier found comfort by trusting in God’s promises. At times strong feelings can accompany this trust but our feelings must never be our guide or our security.

Let me share something else with you. One day Jesus will personally wipe away the tears of those who trust Him. How do I know this? I know this because God has promised this in His word. Listen to this great promise for yourself: *“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.* (Revelation 21:4).

Feelings are poor guides but God’s Word produces hope. Trust in God’s Word cracks the darkness with a bolt of light. God’s Word fills the hearts of all those who believe with the realization that their current darkness is temporary—yes temporary. Knowing that it will not always be like it is right now means

only way I can minister to you. May God add His blessing to this humble attempt.

So how are you feeling? If you are like many others your description of your feelings will probably include the word “hell.” Listen how others have described their depression: The poet Robert Lowell wrote, “I myself am hell.” One scholar described his bout with depression as “Hellish torments.” Does your description sound similar?

I encourage you to attempt to describe your feelings. But let me explain why. Describing your feelings can often reveal a lot about your depression. Often, these descriptions expose broken relationships, hidden fear, losses whose effects have been underestimated, and failures that you may or may not have been responsible for.

Let me share a few biblical descriptions of depression. “*My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me continually, ‘Where is your God?’*” (Psalm 42:3). “*How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?*” (Psalm 13:1). Listen to these verses: “*My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of*

death have fallen upon me. ⁵ Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me. ⁶ And I say, ‘Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest; ⁷ yes, I would wander far away; I would lodge in the wilderness (Psalm 55:4-7). Another reads: “*² I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me. ³ I am weary with my crying out; my throat is parched. My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God* (Psalm 69:2-3). If we were meeting over a cup of coffee I would have you look at Psalm 88. If you have a Bible, look it up read it through carefully. Notice that it ends with the chilling words: “*My companions have become darkness.*”

Let me now ask you a question. What do you suppose brought comfort to these souls? Let me help you. Faith brought comfort to these souls. Now you might be thinking, “I do not feel as though God is really there; I do not feel like I have any faith.” Well look back to the verses that I have shared with you. These folks confessed that God seemed far away.

Listen to me carefully.
Faith is not feeling like God is there,
faith is trusting that God is there even
when He feels far away.

God does not call you to feel like you are right with Him. He calls you to believe that through what Christ has done on the cross you can be right with Him. You are undoubtedly familiar with John 3:16: “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*” There is nothing said about feelings in this verse.

Let me share something else with you. As a pastor I do not always feel as though God is right beside me. No, no, there are times when I can relate with the verses we have already looked at. I cannot live by how I feel or I will be in the tank! I do not always feel as though Christ is walking with me. But I trust that He is. How can I trust that He is walking with me? Because He has promised to in His Word: “*I am with you always to the end of the age*” (Matthew 28:20).