



What Can Believers Do About Depression And Mental Illness?

February 26, 2023 Message Notes

TEXT: JOHN 14:27

Depression and mental health struggles can dominate much of our lives or ones we love. The word of God is our sword of the Spirit, the primary weapon we use in spiritual battles of the mind. Jesus can meet you in the crisis with new hope.



NOTES

The word of God is our sword of the Spirit, the primary weapon we use in spiritual battles of the mind.

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

John 14:27 NIV

“I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33 NLT

“...peace of mind. Calmness. A request on how to regain who I am. I felt hopeless and helpless.”
(Prayer request)

“If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within you'll be depressed. If you look at God you'll be at rest.” – Corrie Ten Boom

What Can Believers Do About Depression and Mental Health Issues?

Christ will meet us in the crisis with new hope to cope.

“When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind...”

Mark 5:15

Jesus can help us with our mental health issues.

“Many people have mental health concerns from time to time. But a mental health concern becomes a mental illness when ongoing signs and symptoms cause frequent stress and affect your ability to function.” – Mayo Clinic Online

Good mental health means you feel you have hope to cope and function well in the world.

Jesus says mental stress and distress works on us all. “Here on earth you have trouble, trials and sorrows.”

John 16:33

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Pastoral observations about mental health matters:



- “Normal” anxiety and depression
- Stressors and scenarios we all deal with on a day-to-day basis
- Increased stressors, “circumstantial” depression
- Death of a spouse or child, divorce, marital separation, imprisonment, and the death of a close family member
- “Medical” need, clinical depression
- Signs may include feelings of sadness, emptiness, anger, loss of interest in normal activities, hobbies, sex, trouble sleeping, feelings of worthlessness, self-blame, thoughts of doing self-harm.

Some of the great Bible stories are about people dealing with tremendous mental health challenges.

Job, who was so discouraged that he feels it would have been better if he’d never been born (Job 3:11)

Moses, who was completely exasperated with the Israelites he’d led to the Promised Land.

“I can’t carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me. If this is how you’re going to treat me, please go ahead and kill me right now – if I have found favor in your eyes – don’t let me face my own ruin.”

Numbers 11:15 NIV

Elijah, who was seized by such tremendous depression and self-doubt after one of the greatest successes of his life.

“...he prayed that he might die. ‘I’ve had enough, Lord. Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.’”

1 Kings 19:4 NIV

Moses and Elijah were later on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus!

Paul and Silas intervened and stopped their jailer from suicidal behavior.

“Don’t harm yourself. We’re all here.”

Acts 16:28 NIV

Sometimes what we need is:

- Rest and nourishment
- Spiritual healing and renewed strength
- Individualized care and treatment



There's no shame in that.

“Is anyone among you ill? Let them call for the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.”

James 5:14 NIV

“*Pray and take your medicine.*” – Dr. J. Vernon McGee

Stay connected to God and His people.

Don't do it alone, hide out, or wait for someone who cares. Make the call. Let your group know, let your pastors know. Share your burden. Pray for each other. Present your body to God in worship.

“*So come on, O my soul. Don't you get shy on me. Lift up your song 'cuz you've got a lion inside of those lungs. Get up and praise the Lord!*” – Gratitude by Brandon Lake

“Before, I sought peace through controlling things. But I found there is no greater peace and comfort than to be in the moment where God is all you've got. Trusting him to be in control. The devil tried to bring fear..... So I let go and I let God be God to do what God can do. As I completely surrendered to him - I'm yours Lord - the fear went away.” – Arlene Castellanos

Sometimes we find ourselves in the scariest places of our lives with no miracle in sight. What can you do?

First and always, trust Christ as your Savior and Healer. He knows you. He made you. He loves you.

Christ will meet you in the crisis with new hope to cope.

What Can Believers Do About Depression and Mental Health Issues?

Remember that Jesus said it's part of life and he gives peace for when it comes. Even Jesus faced it.

“Jesus began to be deeply distressed and troubled. He said, ‘My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.’”

Mark 14:33-34

What can you do?

- Take care of the basics: eat healthy, stay hydrated, be active, get rest and sleep.
- Don't isolate: communicate, stay relationally connected. Go to a group, go to church. Don't try to go it alone.



- Stay active in worship: sing, pray, give voice to your heart.
- Open up to a trusted and trustworthy other: talk it through with a friend, a loved one, a pastor.
- If it seems like the dark is closing in, connect with a therapist, a counselor.
- Check in with your doctor: get a physical, talk about your medications, pray and take your medicine.
- Lean on the Lord with your whole self: release yourself, your control, everything you know about you. Give it to everything you know about Him and let Him cause you to feel.

“In my anguish I cried to the Lord, and he answered me by setting me free.”

Psalms 118:5

If you see some of these signs in a friend, ask them: You know I care about you. Will you let me in? You're not alone.

