

Community Group Discussion Questions

“Beyond Blue” 1 Samuel 22:1-2. Psalm 142, Psalm 42,43 July 22/23

Leaders,

This message will deal with depression, so it is likely to stir up quite a lot of discussion in your groups. I have reached out to our Care & Support department to get some advice for you on how we can lovingly and sensitively guide our groups through this discussion.

As you start your group, it would be helpful to say, “It’s very important to listen and validate feelings before trying to offer advice.”

Do not be afraid to ask the question “Have you thought about ending your life or made plans to end your life?” if someone is having thoughts of hurting or killing themselves, especially if someone has made comments about wanting to “give up” or about life being hopeless. Please be sure they know they can call 911 if someone’s life is in imminent danger to get assistance from the police or an ambulance. There is also a self-assessment for suicide on the CBC webpage communitybible.com (search term: counseling). This site will also have professional referrals if they want to seek help outside CBC.

For anyone who wants to talk to a counselor, please give them our Care & Support phone number: 210-253-5971

Getting Started

There is a cave of depression that is inevitable for all,
where darkness abounds and the walls are so tall.
You sit in the shadows of sorrow
with no hope for tomorrow.
There is a light in the distance
drawing near with persistence,
bringing comfort in pain.
He’s familiar with the darkness of the cave,
for there once His body was laid,
but on the 3rd day He was raised
to give you a promise that this giant you face
has already been slain.

What did God say to you during this sermon on depression?
What struck you as especially meaningful?

Going Deeper

- I. Defining Depression: 1 Samuel 22:1-2 “Cave of Adullam”-
Sealed off Place

Why do you think depression makes a person feel like they are in a sealed-off place? (possible answer: no one understands how I feel...)

- A. Confession: “A feeling of helplessness and hopelessness that leads to sadness”- Dr. Adrian Rogers
- Who was IN Distress: “pressure or under stress”
 - Who was IN Debt: “couldn’t pay bills”
 - Who was IN Discontent: “bitterness of soul due to being wronged”
- B. Clarification: “A sense of personal powerlessness and a loss of meaning in and enthusiasm for life”- Bible Dictionary
- Storm: “A dark situation”
 - Squall: “A dismal struggle”
 - Season: “A debilitating sorrow”

According to 1 Samuel 22:2, the 400 men who gathered with David in the cave had many reasons to feel depressed. What are some reasons you think people might suffer from depression?

II. Deciphering Depression: Psalm 142

A. Clinical: A biological/physiological Disruption

If a friend seemed clinically depressed and they couldn’t point to any reason why they felt this way, who would you encourage them to see? (possible answer: a doctor. They might need a check-up)

B. Circumstantial: Sequence of events that are Damaging

If a friend seemed depressed because of their circumstances (job loss, marriage struggle, or something else), what advice would you give? Who would you point them to? (possible answers: a wise, mature Christian, a Pastor, or a Christian counselor.) *Note:*

sometimes, circumstantial depression can lead to clinical depression.

III. Defeating Depression: Psalm 42-Psalm 43

A. Traditional Response: Behavior Modification

- Superficial: (You shouldn't feel that way. You have lots to be happy about)
- Symptomatic: (Just try doing something different and you'll feel better)

These 'treatments' are not helpful.

B. Tactical Response: Life Transformation

- Reject Isolation: God Sent People who can Relate (1 Sam. 22:2)
- Receive the Invitation: God Sent a Friend who can Reinforce (1 Sam. 23:16)
- Recognize the Impossible: God Sent His Son who can Resurrect (Job 19:25)

For many people, their depression is a result of realizing that their life makes no sense, has no purpose, and is selfishly destructive. Or it may be that their expectations for work, relationships, and health have not turned out like they wanted. Or they could feel far from God, cannot hear His voice, don't feel like reading the Bible. Nothing satisfies and they have no motivation. Look over the three truths above. How can you lovingly intervene in someone's life to remind them of these truths? What 'spiritual' medicine can you give them to treat their suffering?

Prayer Requests

Leaders, this message is likely to stir up and reveal that many of our people struggle with depression. (Anti-depressants are a 15.5 billion dollar industry). Please listen, lean-in, and love those in your group, but don't try to go beyond your training. If you sense anyone needs to visit with a counselor, please encourage them privately to call the

Care & Support department at CBC. (210) 253-5971.