

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Kings 19:1-4**.
- B. Depression is very common, maybe even epidemic in America. Some of our most affluence cities and neighborhoods are also the places where the most Prosaic is consumed (according to P. Harvey).
- C. Millions suffer from misery and sadness; suicide is all to frequent. Depression is especially acute during the holiday season.
- D. This morning's lesson deals with some examples of Bible people who suffered, some causes of depression, and then what we can do about it.

## I. SOME BIBLE PEOPLE WITH DEPRESSION.

- A. **Job** opened his mouth and cursed the day he was born. He was more than sad; he was dejected and depressed (Job 3:1-11ff).
- B. **Moses** felt the great burden of caring for Israel in the wilderness and was depressed to the point of death (Num. 10:11-15).
- C. **Jonah** was depressed over the state of affairs of a gourd plant that died; as well as God not bringing destruction on Nineveh (Jonah 4:1-3,8).
- D. The **Israelites** were despondent and depressed as they endured the Egyptian bondage. Jehovah told them that He would deliver but they did not believe it (Ex. 6:9).
- E. **Peter**, must have had some feelings of depression after denying the Lord (Mt. 26:75).
- F. **Jesus**, himself felt depression and despair. As He prepared for the beatings, and crucifixion; He was deeply grieved (Mt. 26:37-38).

## II. SOME CAUSES OF DEPRESSION.

- A. There are various causes of depression:
  - 1. **Physical (genetic) causes.** From lack of sleep, a poor diet, drugs, low blood sugar, etc.
  - 2. **Background causes.** Growing up in an environment where too much was expected. Goals were too numerous and too high, while achievement was too low.
  - 3. **Learned helplessness.** There are times in life where we have little or no control. Age, illness, death of a loved one, financial ruin, etc., may be others' fault but still affects us.
  - 4. **Negative thinking.** Those who only remember the bad of the past, see the problems of the present and gloom and doom in the future. To be in this thinking rut, means depression.
  - 5. **Life stresses.** Problems associated w/job, family, in-laws, house, kids, school, etc., can bring on depression if we allow these problems to consume us.
  - 6. **Anger.** There seems to be a progression of emotions that cause depression:
    - a. First we are hurt, and express anger to cover the pain.
    - b. If the anger is not dealt with properly it can give way to revenge.
    - c. Feelings of vengeance hide the hurt and anger, but keep the issue unresolved.
    - d. All of this adds up to deep depression.
  - 7. **Guilt.** The feeling of failing or being failure brings thoughts of uselessness/depression.
- B. Successfully dealing with depression means dealing w/those things that cause it.

## III. PREVENTING DEPRESSION.

- A. May I suggest 8 things you can do to prevent depression.
- B. **Encourage physical fitness.**  
A healthy body is less susceptible to mental illnesses. Physical activity becomes a catharsis for the soul. There is an adrenaline rush following a good work-out that helps the mental outlook (2Cor. 7:1).

- C. **Expect discouragement.**  
It is terrible misnomer to think that you will never have any problems, anytime. Xians have as many problems as do non-Xians, but the Bible tells us how to deal with those problems (Jas. 1:2-4; 1Pet. 4:12-19).
- D. **Develop a deep trust in God.**  
Paul knew how to live in good times as well as bad. Doubt is of the devil--we are to be people of faith (Phil. 4:11-13).
- E. **Learn to handle anger and guilt.**  
Anger is not a sin, if we handle it correctly (Eph. 4:26-27). Jesus can help us with guilt by His forgiveness (Col. 1:13).
- F. **Challenge your own thinking.**  
Instead of ruminating, talk to yourself in a positive way each day. If we think you are a failure, ask yourself, "Why am I a failure?" "On what basis am I incapable?" What your mind dwells on is what you will become (Prov. 23:7; Mt. 12:34b; Phil. 4:8).
- G. **Learn coping techniques.**  
When family, friends, in-laws, death, and illness get you down find ways to cope and work through it. Sometimes simple things can work wonders. Ex.: do more listening than arguing.
- H. **Reach out to others with similar problems.**  
The NT teaches that we are to "bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the Law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). AA says those who are helped the most are those who help others (Ac. 20:35).
- I. **Be part of a support group.**  
People who are integrated into groups are less lonely, isolated, and less inclined to get depressed or commit suicide (Heb. 10:24-25).

#### **CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**

- A. God helped Elijah through his depression by staying active, renewing his relationship with God, admit his limitations, and get help (1Kgs. 19:5-8, 11-13).
- B. We serve and worship a omnipotent Father, with unique and inexhaustible resources to help us (Eph. 3:20-21).
- C. We can be on the road out of depression by obeying JC.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.