
Finding God in Spiritual Depression

Psalm 42,43

Have you ever felt depressed in your life? The National Institute of Mental Health says that 1 out of 8 adults in the U.S. gets treated for depression. About 5.3% of Americans (nearly 18 million) are seriously depressed. Depression is not only the feeling of being down, it is also the state of being out. David himself experienced such depression and loneliness (Psalm 25:16-18, 31:9). Even our Lord Jesus Himself felt depressed (Matt. 26:38; 27:46). The Psalmist shows us his experience of depression and how the Lord delivers him from that experience so that in the end he is able say that ***God is his exceeding joy***.

1. The _____ of Depression

The Psalmist compares himself to a deer that is panting for water (a deer panting for water describes a deer that is fighting for its life). The Psalmist desperately longs for God's presence, yet could not find it (v. 2). Men of God do experience depression (i.e. Elijah in 1 Kings 19:4, Isaiah in Isaiah 6, Jeremiah, Job, etc.). Reasons for the Psalmist depression:

- a. Because of _____
The Psalmist feels separated from God (v.2,4, 6). He is experiencing physical, spiritual and social isolation. Christians get easily depressed because they neglect their fellowship in the church (consider the experience of Thomas in John 20:24-29).
- b. Because of _____
The Psalmist spoke of his enemies taunting him oppressing him (Psa. 42:3b, 9-10; Psalm 43:1-2). Sometimes, depression comes when we experience opposition from people around us, especially if those people are the ones close to us (cf. 2 Tim. 4:10-14). Other causes of depression are unconfessed and unresolved sin (Psalm 32:3-4 and some drastic and traumatic changes in our situation (a serious sickness, unexpected death in the family, loss of job, serious trouble with children, etc.).

2. The _____ for Depression

The Psalmist finds remedy for his depression through the following stages:

- a. *Stage 1 - He _____ his condition*
The psalmist admits that he is lonely and discouraged and depressed (Psa. 42:5,10; 43:5). In times of depression, acknowledge your situation. Be honest about your feelings.
- b. *Stage 2 - He _____ in the Lord*
The Psalmist talks to himself and encourages himself (cf. 1 Sam. 30:6).
- c. *Stage 3 - He _____ the sovereignty of God*
The Psalmist uses the metaphor of waves and billows to describe the chaos and restlessness that he is experiencing inside his soul. But he attributes these "waves and billows" as coming from God. He was able to see the hand of God even in his depressing situation (cf. Jonah 2:2-3).

God is able to deliver us from depression because He knows exactly how we feel. God gave His own Son to be afflicted for us (John 1:11, Psalm 118:22, Isa. 53:3) so that in conquering all these experiences, we who are joined with Him in faith may also experience His resurrection power.