**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | How to Deal with Depression |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Psalm 42 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #1871 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. Psalm 42 deals with depression and what to do when a person feels depressed.
   2. In the history of the Christian church, some of God’s greatest saints have gone through a dark, deep night of depression.
   3. Americans are spending billions of dollars a year trying to do something about depression.
      1. They are so depressed that they cannot cope.
         1. They miss work.
         2. They drop out of society.
   4. It does not do much good to tell a depressed person to simply cheer up.
      1. There’s nothing they would like to do more than to cheer up.
   5. Depression is a passive, listless feeling and an overwhelming sadness.
      1. It is when nothing feels good, and nothing is worth feeling good about.
      2. It is a state of hopelessness.
      3. It is when a person has the idea that they do not care, that no one else cares, and that no one understands or accepts them.
      4. It is being filled with worry and anxiety.
      5. It is the loss of all initiative.
      6. A person may experience crying spells.
      7. You can’t sleep and may feel fatigued even after a night’s sleep.
      8. A person becomes neutralized and cannot make decisions.
         1. It is as though they cannot trust their own wisdom or anyone else’s.
      9. Often time they become irritable and grouchy.
      10. It is when a person cannot be enthusiastic about anything.
      11. A person just wishes the world would stop and let them off.
   6. Our Scripture today will take a look at both the severe problem and the spiritual provision for depression.
2. The severe problem of depression
   1. Depression can be a killer disease.
      1. It has been one of the leading causes of death in some age groups.
   2. It is not uncommon to see a spouse die shortly after his or her mate dies.
   3. David wrote this Psalm.
      1. David was the sweet singer of Israel and a man after God’s own heart.
         1. And he says, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?”
            1. David is speaking to himself.
   4. Many Biblical saints suffered from depression.
      1. Moses got so depressed that he asked God to kill him.
         1. Numbers 11:15
      2. Elijah, a mighty prophet of God, in a time of extreme physical turmoil and mental anguish, requested that he might die.
         1. 1 Kings 19:4
      3. The prophet Jeremiah wished that he had died in his mother’s womb.
         1. Jeremiah 20:17
      4. Paul, the mighty apostle, despaired even of life.
         1. 2 Corinthians 1:8
      5. Jonah, who preached the city-wide crusade in Nineveh, asked God to take his life.
         1. Jonah 4:3
      6. John the Baptist, whom Jesus said that there was not a greater man born of woman, got so depressed that he even doubted that Jesus Christ was the Messiah.
         1. Matthew 11:11
         2. Luke 7:19-20
   5. Great leaders in the secular world have experienced depression.
      1. Sir Winston Churchill had severe bouts of depression.
         1. He called it a black dog that hounded him.
      2. The great preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon would get into deep fits of despondency and depression.
      3. Martin Luther, the mighty reformer, also experienced depression.
   6. David had plenty of reasons to be depressed.
      1. His son Absalom, whom he loved with all his heart, rebelled against him.
      2. Absalom was killed, and David was deposed as the king.
      3. David had to flee for his life.
         1. He was hunted and had no power or possessions.
      4. He sinned against God and lost a child by death.
      5. David had a daughter who was raped by one of his sons.
      6. David also had a wife who was raped.
      7. Another son is killed.
      8. The nation was in turmoil.
      9. Outwardly, David had several reasons to be depressed.
   7. As we study this Psalm, we see that the author gives almost a clinical case of severe depression.
      1. Spiritual dryness
         1. Psalm 42:1-2
            1. He is thirsty for God but cannot find Him.
         2. Psalm 42:9
            1. God had not forgotten him, but he felt like God had forgotten him.
      2. Continual crying jags
         1. Psalm 42:3
         2. We all cry, have sorrows and heartaches.
            1. The normal tears that we all shed are like a thunderstorm.
            2. But the tears of a person in depression are like a continual drizzle.
      3. A sense of shame and defeat
         1. Psalm 42:3
         2. There’s a feeling that he’s let God down, that he’s a miserable example of a Christian.
         3. He feels so ashamed.
         4. He has no witness and no testimony.
            1. What a sense of guilt he has over this.
      4. Lingering memories
         1. Psalm 42:4
            1. He looks backward to a better time when he had joy, peace, satisfaction, friends, fellowship, and worship.

He thinks that it can never be that way again.

The sadness of the present is made worse when set against the background of these memories.

* + 1. Overwhelming circumstances
       1. Psalm 42:6-7
          1. In this passage, David is having thoughts of death.
          2. In Bible typology, Jordan speaks of death.

The Jordan River runs down from Mt. Hermon to the Dead Sea, where it buries itself never to rise again.

The Dead Sea – 1,300 feet below sea level at the surface and 1,300 feet deep.

The lowest spot on the face of the Earth.

* + - * 1. The word “waterspouts” in this passage refers to waterfalls.
        2. David is stating that this river of death has come over him.
      1. When a person gets despondent enough, they think that maybe death would be a welcome release.

1. the spiritual provision for depression
   1. Do we have to be depressed?
      1. No.
   2. Is there no hope?
      1. There is hope.
   3. Look inward with a firm look.
      1. Psalm 42:5-6
         1. David is beginning to look inward.
         2. He is beginning to talk to himself.
            1. The soul is the mind, the emotion, and the will.
      2. There is someone in us who is always talking to us.
         1. It is the old flesh nature who is constantly talking, and that is where negative thinking comes from.
            1. This is the mindset that we inherited from Adam.
            2. It tells us that we deserve this and that we can never be better.
         2. We need to talk back.
            1. This is what David does.
            2. Psalm 42:5

David talks back to himself.

* + 1. David takes a firm inward look and does a spiritual analysis.
       1. He asks himself why he is depressed.
          1. We need to ask ourselves this question.

We can answer it perhaps better than anyone else can because no one knows ourselves like we do.

* + - * 1. 1 Corinthians 2:11
        2. Be honest with the answer.

You might be depressed due to the death of a loved one.

You might be depressed because you are brokenhearted.

You might have lost something very valuable to you.

It could be your health, a job or maybe your reputation; and you don’t see how you will ever get it back.

Perhaps you’re depressed because you feel guilty.

* + - * 1. Sometimes poor health can cause depression.

If someone has severe clinical depression, they need to have a medical checkup.

* + - 1. Look yourself straight in the eye, and ask your soul, “*Why art thou cast down, O my soul*?”
  1. Look upward with a faith look.
     1. Psalm 42:7-9
        1. “Deep calleth unto deep” refers to the deepest emotions of the heart crying out to God.
     2. Whether we understand it or not, whether we have analyzed it correctly or not, we need to look to God because He will never fail us.
     3. We have a friend in Jesus; He is our rock.
        1. Look to Him.
        2. The only true lasting cure for depression is to put our eyes upon God.
     4. Psalm 42:8-9
        1. He is our life and our rock.
        2. One verse in this passage speaks of God’s tenderness and lovingkindness, and the next verse speaks of His strength.
           1. He is a tender rock.
           2. Psalm 147:3-4

The Psalmist here is talking about God and juxtaposes tenderness and strength.

The one who has given a name to every star in the universe is the same one who binds up our wounds.

Everything big is made up of something little.

Our material world is made up of atoms.

The God of bigness is also the God of smallness.

The God who runs the universe is the God who knows when the sparrow falls.

Matthew 10:29

Do not get the idea that God does not care about you.

The very hairs of your head are numbered.

Matthew 10:30

He is your God.

If no one else understands you and you cannot see a solution, He will not fail you.

* + 1. Our hope is in God, and we need to look to Him in faith.
       1. If we put our faith anywhere else, we will fail.
       2. We need to tie our life to something that can stand.
          1. There is a rock, and that rock is God Himself.

He cannot and will not be moved.

* + 1. When we go to God in our troubles, it does not mean that He will explain it to us and we will understand.
       1. We may not understand.
       2. Psalm 42:9-10
          1. David is telling the Lord in this passage that he doesn’t understand.
          2. David asks the Lord why He has left him like this.
       3. There is one question people ask over and over again when troubles and depression come, and that question is, “Why?”
          1. Why did my loved one die?
          2. Why did I lose my job?
       4. But “Why?” is not our question; it is “How?”
          1. “Why?” is God’s question.
          2. “How am I going to react?” is our question.
    2. God’s ways are not our ways.
       1. Many of God’s choicest of saints have gone through periods of deep darkness, and they could not understand why.
          1. David was one of them.

In the very verse where he tells God that God is his rock, he also says that he doesn’t understand.

* + - 1. “Life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived.”
      2. Warren Wiersbe stated that we do not live by explanations but by promises.
    1. Many people think that if there is a God, then He has let them down.
       1. He has not let them down.
       2. If something happens in our lives that we cannot understand, then it becomes an incredible opportunity for trust.
          1. Robert Frost said, “It was in the essence of the trial that you should not understand it; it had to have un-meaning to have meaning.”

If God explains everything to us, then it ceases to be a trial.

But if we don’t understand yet choose to trust Him, then we are coming to the place Job came to when he said, “*Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him*.”

Job 13:15

* + 1. According to Andrew Murray, in times of trouble we must trust God and say:
       1. I am here by God’s appointment.
       2. I am in His keeping.
       3. I am under His training.
       4. For His time.
          1. In His good time, He can bring me out again.
    2. God is too good to be unkind and too wise to make a mistake.
    3. When we cannot trace His hand, we can trust His heart.
       1. Psalm 42:9
  1. Take a focused onward look.
     1. Psalm 42:11
        1. David is looking to the future.
        2. He will hope in God no matter how bleak it is, no matter how dark it is, and no matter how despairing it is.
     2. There are only two places where there is no hope:
        1. One is in Heaven, where we don’t need it because faith has turned to reality.
        2. The other is in Hell, where people have no hope.
     3. As long as there is a God, there is hope.
     4. If anyone is depressed, hope in God.
        1. He is our rock, and we will praise Him.
     5. By His grace and in His time, He will turn every hurt to a hallelujah, every tear to a pearl, every midnight to a sunrise and every Calvary to an Easter.
        1. Don’t lose hope.
     6. It may be that God is taking everything else away so that we can trust in Him and hope in Him alone to bring us to Psalm 42:11.

1. CONCLUSION
   1. God is not really finished with us until our chief delight is in Him alone.
      1. When God alone is our chief desire, then we can say that no matter what happens, He is God; and we will yet praise Him and seek His face.
   2. We need to take a firm inward look, take a faith upward look, and then take a focused future look.
   3. If you are depressed, don’t let Satan blow out the light of hope in your heart and in your life.
      1. Jesus is not finished with you.
   4. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   5. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16