

Peace of Mind Battling Depression

TALK IT OVER

Note to leaders:

GC Started 3 weeks into this series. Feel free to explore meaningful content, passages, and lessons from prior messages. Even feel free to repeat and drive home lessons from the series that were very helpful to you, that you think will be helpful to your GC.

Key Scriptures

Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad. Proverbs 12:25 NKJV

I am the man who has seen affliction by the rod of the LORD's wrath. He has driven me away and made me walk in darkness rather than light ... He has besieged me and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship. He has made me dwell in darkness like those long dead. He has walled me in so I cannot escape; he has weighed me down with chains. Even when I call out or cry for help, he shuts out my prayer. ... I have been deprived of peace; I have forgotten what prosperity is. So I say, "My splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the LORD." I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me.

Lamentations 3:1-2, 5-8, 17-20 NIV

Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lamentations 3:21-23 NIV

I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

Lamentations 3:24-26 NIV

Psalm 30:5 Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning.

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Talk about things that bring you hope.

Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Which part of this message was most impactful for you and why?
- The four root causes of depression are biological, relational, circumstantial, and spiritual. Is there one cause that resonates with you the most in this season? How could you start addressing that issue with God's truth?
- Read **Lamentations 3:21-23**. What are some things that help you remember God's love and goodness in the midst of difficult seasons?

Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- How do you typically handle negative or depressing thoughts and feelings? What would it look like to validate your emotions and label your feelings while also remembering they aren't permanent?
- Talk about a time when God brought you hope and help in a difficult moment. What did you learn about Him through that experience?

Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

Father, thank You for giving us emotions. Please help us name our emotions so we can change our emotions. Remind us that even when we feel hopeless, You are near, and You are our source of hope. In Jesus' name, amen.

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Remember the tarantula study from Sunday? Practice naming the specific emotions behind your anxiety, depression, etc. If you can name it, you can battle it in prayer!
- Next Level: If you want to go deeper (applying Lamentations 3:21-23 & 3:24-26), spend a few hours with a friend (you can do it alone, but it's more fun with a friend), and list some of the negative emotions you feel often. Pre-decide what you do to respond to each of them so that you do have greater flexibility to cope righteously to those emotions. Have fun with it.

Example:

"Anxiety is my common negative emotion. I tend to dwell on the issue causing my anxiety, focusing on what may go wrong instead of what may go right. Now, whenever I feel anxiety, instead of dwelling on the anxiety's cause, I will dwell on my God and His goodness and his ability to overcome."

- I will pray for 3 minutes whenever I feel anxiety.
- I will ask God for wisdom and pause and listen for 3 minutes.
- I will praise God for 3 minutes