

Do Christians Get Depressed?

Scripture Reading — Psalm 42

*Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God.
—Psalm 42:5—*

In a sermon, I commented on Psalm 42, saying that sometimes Christians get depressed. The next day someone called to tell me I was wrong. He said, “A Christian has no business being depressed.” He was sure that to be depressed showed a lack of faith.

Fortunately, the Bible does not share that view. It presents God’s people just the way they are: sometimes angry or confused, and sometimes bitter or depressed. According to 1 Kings 19, the prophet Elijah was so depressed that he asked God to let him die. And in our reading today the psalmist says, “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?”

When my mother died suddenly after a one-week illness, and when three years later one of my brothers was killed at age 24, my dad became very depressed. Throughout my years of ministry I have met many Christians who, like the psalmist, were “downcast” and “disturbed.” It is not something to be ashamed of or to feel guilty about. When we become depressed, we have to do what the psalmist did: we have to hope in God. He provides the help we need through others whom he equips with gifts of counseling and understanding.

Don’t be afraid to ask for help. Be assured that God cares about how you feel. Ask him to open your eyes to the provisions he makes available.

Prayer

Lord, today we pray for all who suffer from depression and for those who try to minister to them. Help them to know there is hope. Amen.

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