

**INTRO**

- What is the saddest movie you've watched?
- What do you do when you are sad?

In this series, we're looking to start conversations surrounding mental health and see the spiritual connection and what wisdom and hope Jesus & Scripture offers us.

**READ**

Prov 13:12, Psalm 42:10-11

**REFLECT**

Whilst depression is a sensitive topic, it is in fact quite normal for us to experience it at some point.

*Qu: how would you describe depression?*

**DEFINITIONS**

Depression is not grief or sadness. We can experience grief or sadness and not be depressed. Some definitions:

- Feelings of severe despondency and dejection;
- Anger turned inward;
- An emotional commitment to what is not;
- Persistent hopelessness: *Hope deferred makes the heart sick.*

Nor is it about a lack of willpower or positivity. In fact, depression is a form of honesty. (Rd Job 3:24-26)

*Qu: how is depression a form of honesty?*

**CHALLENGES**

The challenge in dealing with depression is that there is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Anything from medication, counselling and prayer is necessary. Types include:

- Biological/Chemical/Hormonal
- Historical/Family of Origin
- Situational (PTSD, Grief or Guilt induced)
- Spiritual (demonic attack and oppression)

The reality is, when we are suffering with depression, we are both a passive *victim* and active *participant* to varying degrees.

Rd Ps 42:10-11. David experiences legitimate oppression and makes internal choices.

*Qu: how is it helpful and necessary to see we are not 100% victims when it comes to depression?*

**APPROACH**

**As victims, we receive love from God/others.**

What people suffering with depression need from us is not a pep talk or advice. Rather, they need empathy (=suffering together; see Rom 12:15). True hope is not circumstantial.

*Qu: Read Rom 8:38-39. What does Paul say will not separate us from God's love?*

**As participants, we give love.** Hope deferred is an opportunity for us to love God, which builds hope!

*Qu: In Rom 5:4 what are we told to do in our suffering? Why?*

*Qu: In 1 Peter 1:13 what are we told to set our hope on?*

**Conclusion:** The truth is, our hearts ultimately hope for heaven. We don't fix our depression; we let it purify our receiving and giving of God's love for *He* is our hope.

**We wait in hope for the Lord. — Ps 33:20 NIV**

**RESPOND & PRAY**

- What was most encouraging/challenging?
- How will you apply this to your life?
- Who is God showing you to empathize with?