

Crucial Questions

Can a Christian Be Depressed?

CONNECT:

- What would you say your primary emotion was in the past week - fear, sadness, anxiety, anger, joy, peace? Why?

PREPARE:

- Have you ever felt like a “bad christian” or that you aren’t trusting God enough when you have certain emotions? If so, which ones?
- This week’s question is so CRUCIAL to discuss in church, because it has been taboo for so long. The painful reality pointed out by Pastor Aaron Loy in his article entitled *Confessions of a Depressed Pastor is this*, “There are people in churches every week who are suffering. And if we’re not talking about depression in our churches, chances are very good those people are suffering alone.” What are your thoughts on that quote?

STUDY AND DISCUSS:

- Read 2 Timothy 3:16. This is becoming an important verse in this “Crucial Questions” series. Why is it referred to so often and why do you think we read it now to preface this topic?
- Read Psalm 13:1-2. How is this passage helpful for someone who struggles with depression? How does this passage help someone who may not struggle with depression understand others?
- Psalm 88 is one of two Psalms that does not include any positive or upswing, which is why Walter Brueggemann says, “Psalm 88 is an embarrassment to conventional faith.” Do you agree or disagree with that statement? If all Scripture is “God breathed” as we read in 2 Timothy, why is it important to recognize why this Psalm is in God’s word?

Community Group Discussion Questions

- Based on research and what we have observed that in the Bible, we can answer this crucial question as say that, yes a christian can be depressed. We can also say that depression is NOT your fault...your lack of faith...your disobedience...your weakness...
- Some causes for depression:
 - Biological factors, such as physical illness, injury, or brain chemistry
 - life experiences, such as trauma or a history of abuse
 - Family history of mental health problems
- How does this information give you grace to understand your own or someone else's depression?
- Read the following verses and discuss how those verses can encourage you: Psalm 34:18; Matthew 5:4; 1 Peter 5:7.
- Read the following quote and discuss your thoughts on it:

Aaron Loy writes, "Depression is more than just a spiritual issue. It is also a physiological one that can affect even spiritually healthy people in debilitating ways. If you are a Christian who struggles with depression, don't make the mistake of thinking if you just pray enough, claim enough, repent enough, or believe enough you will be cured. That may be part of the solution, but you may also find you need to treat the issue medicinally and therapeutically as well. Each is a gift and an expression of God's grace. Please ignore anyone who tries to shame you into thinking otherwise."

RESPONSE:

- Do you have trusted people in your life that you could share the honest truth about your mental health?
- How might you need to change your ideas about the stigma of mental health?

PRAY

Pray for one another that God's presence would comfort in a season of darkness. Even if you don't feel him beside you, pray that you keep calling out in the darkness. Pray that you take one step towards healing, like opening up with someone who you trust.

God is good. You are loved, and you are not alone.

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