



Overwhelmed

Discovering Strength in Depression (Daniel 10:1-19)

By Charlie Lehardy, 19 May 2013

BIG IDEA: When darkness envelops us and hope seems like a distant memory, the God of light and hope stands faithfully beside us, unshaken by events, sharing our sorrows, ready to help us bear our trials.

The Lord never says he will inoculate us from the sadness and pain of life. Instead, he promises to walk beside us as we endure hardship. God understands our suffering because he experienced the pain of the death of his only son, Jesus. But he makes us this promise:

The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. (Deuteronomy 31:8)

In this chapter, Daniel has a vision so disturbing that it sends him into a long period of mourning. He seeks God's help in prayer and God answers, sending comfort, strength, and reassurance of his love.

The Bible teaches us to expect sadness, grief, hardship and trials of all kinds.

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. (James 1:12)

All of creation, including our bodies and minds, has been damaged by sin. If cancer can ravage an otherwise healthy life, it should be no surprise that our brains are subject to disease as well. Depression is a disease of the mind, and since our brains control so much of our lives, it can have crippling effects on our whole body. It can steal the desire to enjoy life, it can cover us in despair, it can rob us of hope. Depression is not an indictment of our (lack of) faith, but a consequence of the fall manifested in our own bodies.

God, the healer, is the author of life and hope. Depression can be cured with the prayers and encouragement of the church, godly counseling, and medication. If you suspect someone you know is suffering from depression, talk to one of the church leaders to find help. You can learn more about the signs and treatments for depression at some of the following websites:

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml>

<http://psychcentral.com/disorders/depression/>