

## Depression & the Disciples

Matthew 14:22-33

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Sometimes we are overwhelmed by life. The crushing waves of disappointment, endless debt, debilitating illness, or trouble with people can cause hopelessness, depression, or despair. It happened to Jesus' disciples. And it has happened to me. Three statements by the Lord beginning with the words "*It is . . .*" offer us comfort, reassurance, and hope that Jesus is enough.

- The first is in Matthew 4 and is repeated three times: "*It is written*" (v.4,7,10). In responding to the three temptations of Satan, Jesus gave us proof enough that the Word of God is true and overcomes the most powerful forms of temptation and pressure.

- The second statement, "*It is I*" (Matt. 14:27), was spoken when Jesus told His terrified disciples that He Himself was presence enough to stop the howling storm and calm the raging seas.

- Jesus spoke the third "*It is*" from the cross: "*It is finished!*" (John 19:30). He assured us that His death was provision enough to pay the debt for our sins and set us free. Whatever our circumstances, Jesus is present with His love, compassion, and grace. He is proof, presence, and provision enough to carry us safely through. - by David C. Egner (Our Daily Bread)

What does the Bible say regarding where we can find God during our difficult times?

Look up: Deuteronomy 31:8, Psalm 145:18

When feelings of depression arise the reflex is to close ourselves off from others. How can we combat this? Why should we?

Look up: 1 Thessalonians 3:7, Proverbs 27:17

A doctor can splint a broken bone, but not until you go to the doctor's office. Our loving heavenly Father is the great physician, capable of healing even the most broken of hearts, but we must go to Him.

Look up: Jeremiah 33: 6, Matthew 11:28

Look up: Philippians 4:4, John 10:10

The Bible tells us to be filled with joy and praise; God intends for us to live joyful lives. This is not easy when feeling down, but it can be remedied through God's gifts of prayer, Bible study and application, fellowship among believers, confession of sin in our lives, and forgiveness of others. We must make the conscious effort to not be absorbed in ourselves, but to turn our efforts outward. Feelings of depression can often be solved when those suffering move the focus from themselves to Christ and others.

Are there any parts of your spiritual armor that might be a little rusty? How can you strengthen them for your battle with Satan for your healing from a state of depression? Look up: Ephesians 6:10-18

After Jesus had healed a man suffering with his own "demons", the Lord told him to "*Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you*" (Mark 5:18-19). It is always helpful to hear how someone else has gotten through a similarly difficult time in their life. Consider sharing; is there a time when you struggled with feelings of depression and the Lord lifted you out from that dark place?

Finally, remember to follow these steps when you feel you might be struggling with feelings of depression:

- (1) Study God's Word - Psalm 1:1-3, Luke 11:28, (2) Acknowledge and deal with sin - Psalm 32:1-2, 5
- (3) Pray - James 5:13, Ephesians 6:18 (4) Be thankful and praise the Lord in all things - Psalm 40:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
- (5) Do something for someone else - John 13:14-17 (6) Study Biblical examples of those who were in despair:  
David – Psalms / Hannah - 1 Samuel 1 & 2 / Elijah - 1 Kings 19 / Hagar - Genesis: 21:15-16 / Saul - I Samuel 28

Additional Verses:

Psalm 147:3, Psalm 32:1, Psalm 119:28, Psalm 51:7-9, 12, Psalm 55:22,  
Psalm 69:29, Ephesians 6:13, Galatians 6:9, Isaiah 40:31, 2 Thessalonians 3:13