

Dive! FBCD Women's Ministry
Dwell Differently by Natalie Abbott and Vera Schmitz
Chapter 7 (Truth When You're Depressed)
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"Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God" (Psalm 42:5).

"As a deer pants for flowing streams,
so pants my soul for you, O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?

My tears have been my food day and night,
while they say to me all the day long, 'Where is your God?'

These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:
how I would go with the throng
and lead them in procession to the house of God
with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival.

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from
the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls;
all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.

By day the LORD commands his steadfast love,
and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

I say to God, my rock: 'Why have you forgotten me?
Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?'

As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me all the day long, 'Where is your God?'

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God" (Psalm 42).

ANALYZE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS WITH HONESTY

1. Voice Negative Thoughts and Feelings

- The psalmist takes an honest look at his situation and his feelings and honestly voices them to the Lord. He tells God exactly how he feels but still keeps a reverent tone.
- We are not alone. God never leaves us (Psalm 139:7-12; Hebrews 13:5), and he wants us to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).

2. Get to the Root of Negative Thoughts and Feelings

- Why are we drowning?
 - 1) Sometimes we're drowning because we purposefully swam out to sea chasing sinful desires.
 - 2) Sometimes we're lost at sea because we carelessly drifted by not keeping our eyes focused on the Lord.
 - 3) Sometimes the crashing waves have nothing at all to do with our own sin or carelessness but are instead simply part of living in a fallen world with fallen people.
- Whether the answer is confession and repentance, more intentionality in our walk with the Lord, or clinging tightly to the rock through the storm, each episode of drowning is meant to grow our relationship with God.
- "I have learned to kiss the wave that throws me against the Rock of Ages" (Charles Spurgeon). Every single wave is meant to bring us closer to God, and sometimes that process hurts because it involves being thrown into him.

FIGHT NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS WITH TRUTH

1. Choose to Remember

- The psalmist remembers former times of joyful praise in God's house, and he remembers who God is and what he has done.
- Remembering is a choice. "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope" (Lamentations 3:21). Jeremiah had every reason to be depressed as he looked at everything around him, but he fought his negative thoughts and feelings by choosing to remember four important truths.
- Lamentations 3:22-24
 - Remember the steadfast love of the Lord.
 - Remember that God's mercies are new every morning.
 - Remember the great faithfulness of the Lord.
 - Remember that God is enough.

2. Trust in God's Sovereignty

- "Blessed is the darkness which encurtains my God; if I may not see him, it is sweet to know that he is working in secret for my eternal good. Even fools can believe that God is abroad in the sunshine and the calm, but faith is wise, and discerns him in the terrible darkness and threatening storm" (Spurgeon).
- "It would be a very sharp and trying experience to me to think that I have an affliction which God never sent me, that the bitter cup was never filled by his hand, that my trials were never measured out by him, nor sent to me by his arrangement of their weight and quantity" (Spurgeon).

3. Repeat, Repeat, Repeat

- The psalmist not only gives us words to express our depressed thoughts, but he models how to fight consistently for truth through repetition.
 - Psalm 42:5, 11; 43:5
- All of us have words on repeat. What are we saying to ourselves on a regular basis? What are our default words to ourselves when we're down? Are we immersing ourselves in the truths of the Bible so that *those* words can be on repeat? Or are we immersing ourselves in the ways of the world, adding to the noise in unhelpful ways? Are we praying without ceasing? Are we training ourselves to respond in the right ways? *We can* forge new mental pathways, but it takes work and consistency. The psalmist repeats himself three times, and these words are written in songs that were meant to be sung corporately over and over again. Sing these words, say these words, shout these words as many times as you need to.

TRUST THAT NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ARE ONLY TEMPORARY

1. This World Is Not Our Home

- "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:3-4).

2. Eternal Comfort Should Be Partially Experienced Right Now

- We cannot expect to behold the glory of Christ by sight in eternity if we do not behold his glory by faith now. If we do behold his glory by faith here, we *will* behold his glory by sight then.

VERSES TO RECITE IN TIMES OF DEPRESSION:

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:5).

“...God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5).

“...I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5).

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

“But you, O LORD, are a shield about me,
my glory, and the lifter of my head” (Psalm 3:3).

FIND ENCOURAGEMENT IN SPECIAL AND NATURAL REVELATION

God speaks not only through the special revelation of his Word but also through the natural revelation of his creation. Watch the sunrise, view pinpricks of glory in the night sky, take a walk, or smell your favorite flower. Such pleasures remind us of God’s goodness and serve to lift our spirits.