

Westwood Life Groups - *A Place to Belong & A Place to Grow*

Life Group Leaders & Meeting Times (groups with a * meet at the Westwood building):

5:30pm, Mondays-Terry Boyd

5:00pm, Saturdays- David Womack

*11:45, Sundays – David Britton

*11:45, Sundays – Joseph Stotts

* 1:00, Sundays – Bob Deason

7:00, Wednesdays – Teens

1:00, Sundays-Glenn Mitchell

1:30, Sundays- Tim Deason

5:00, Sundays – Kirk Mullican

5:00, Sunday- Neil Helton

6:00, Sundays-Terry Connor

*6:00, Sundays – Jeff McKinley

6:00, Sundays – Josh Chandler

(PLEASE, CALL IN ATTENDANCE TO CHURCH OFFICE)

Finding His Strong Arm in the Darkness

Introduction:

- We are pausing our series on David until next week. We have two more lessons in that series.
- The company of the depressed is a very noble and crowded company. And whether we will admit it or not, all of us have been numbered among them.
- When we look at great people of Scripture, we become aware very quickly that almost all of them knew, at one time or another, great discouragement and deep depression.
- **Psalm 77** is a tremendously helpful passage when we are struggling.

I. _____ to God (It's O.K.)

- Psalm 77:1-3; 7-9. Asaph draws pictures with words that depict desperation.
- Perhaps you can identify with Asaph's feelings. But don't miss his first response. In his battle with depression, he **doesn't pretend**. Instead, he got honest with God. Folks, let the wisdom of one in the grip of depression come to you.
- Don't be ashamed to admit your inner turmoil, thinking that voicing your questions will offend God. He really wants to hear from you! (Psalm 34:18)

II. Choose to See _____ Days - vv. 4-6, 10-12

- Psalm 77:4-6; 10-12
- This is a super-important step when you feel locked down by depression! As hard as it may be - one must **regain perspective!** You know it to be true: when troubles crowd in and just getting up in the morning seems like a chore, where does your mind lean? It leans toward how bad it is now, and it's easy to conclude that the future will probably be too. However, when you recall God's goodness and faithfulness in the past, you condition your weary heart with hope for tomorrow.

III. _____ God to _____ Your Problems

- Psalm 77:13-20
- There is something about worship that can renew the heart and soul of a person. But worship is not the natural instinct of the depressed person.
- Psalm 115:3.

Close...

- Asaph began with a huge problem and a little God; but he kept sending up cries to God.
- He forced himself to rehearse the past blessings of God's faithfulness, where hope for the future is strengthened.
- And he worshipped. For Asaph, God became bigger and bigger and his problems began to shrink in comparison!

Westwood Church of Christ
Sunday Morning
September 2, 2018

Life Group Questions for the Week Beginning...

September 2, 2018

1. What are your personal experiences with depression (whether your own struggle or the struggles of those you love). **Share only what you are comfortable doing so.
2. List and describe some of the Bible characters we mentioned this morning who certainly had their bouts with depression (Job 7:6-7; Numbers 11:13-15; Psalm 32:3-5; 1 Kings 19:3-4).
3. What are some of the things well-meaning Christians may say to those struggling with depression that only cause a person to go deeper into the darkness?
4. What was the first thing Asaph did when talking to God and what can we learn from this? (Psalm 77:1-3, 7-9).
5. What do you think Asaph meant when he cried to God and said, "You have kept me from closing my eyes..." (Psalm 77:3) **Think deeper than simply not being able to sleep.
6. The natural inclination of a depressed person is **NOT** to lean toward worship. Why? What benefits of corporate worship did we speak of in the lesson that would be beneficial for one in the midst of depression?
7. Either right now or sometime this week please take time (no matter how you are feeling) to do the "napkin exercise". *"Put a ballpoint pen in your pocket, go to a restaurant, get a soda, and pull out a napkin. Begin to list all the specific blessings that happened that day . . . that week...that month . . . that year. These are facts, not feelings. Write down what God has done for you. List the top ten answers to prayer in your life. List five people who love you. Write down the best things that have happened in your life."*

*****"It is important for anyone struggling with depression to *KNOW* that you are *NOT* less of a person or Christian because your pain cannot be put in a cast or sling." Seek God honestly, seek the help of trusted Christians, and if necessary seek the help of health care professionals.*****