

From The Pastor's Study Dark Holes

In today's sermon we see Elijah suffering with depression, were you aware of anyone in Scripture had to deal with depression?

I certainly wasn't and I have read through Elijah's story many times and I never recognized it until this sermon. Who ever thought about people suffering depression three thousand years ago. But the depression spoken of here is a temporary kind of thing that passes.

Today there are a large percentage of Americans being treated for different forms of clinical depression. In some cases the medications are absolutely necessary, but some people are so over medicated they are lost.

At some point in our lives most people suffer temporary depression; the loss of a loved one, even a pet, financial issues, family problems, any number of reasons. These may pass slowly, quickly, or return from time to time and that is absolutely normal.

What isn't normal is when the body is missing a chemical or has an over abundance of some chemical and controlling actions and attitudes is more than hard, for some it's impossible.

Over twenty years ago I had a hard time holding my temper, I would go off over for no reason and had a very hard time pulling the anger back. There have been many times I didn't care whether I saw the Sun ever again. Much of the time I was completely under control, other times I would have to force the anger down. I eventually I went on medications and control was so much better.

Having these moods under control is a great thing, days are mellow, very limited lows but the other side of the coin is the highs are also. Imagine listening to music and the high notes are clipped as well as the low. That means you have a middle range with almost no modulation, in other words the music is monotone, a one note song.

Suddenly creativity is limited, life becomes little more than shades of gray but the civil thing to do is take meds and live in a gray world. It is comforting to a great degree, at least at first, after a while grey gets a bit boring; what if all clothes were the same color, black and white movies, cars all unpolished grey.

Periodically I want to see color as it is, I want to hear the peak notes, I want to see a beautiful sunset and actually feel something. So I come off my meds and for a couple of weeks I manage to stay in control but in the past I was forced to return to medications and bring the colorless world back. Each time I stop the meds I hope I won't have to return to them but for the first time I feel I just might make it but I have people watching my actions to see if I start slipping.

Clinical depression is something no one can understand until you have experienced it. Something that may be small can be very hard on someone who deals with depression. Have you ever felt like a whole day just drops on you? Like, your car won't start so you replace the battery, then as you drive away you find you have a flat tire. You replace the flat and get to work only to have the boss chew you out for being late, so you work late and arrive home to find your wife fuming because you were supposed to have dinner with friends. That is depression, The weight gets heavier and heavier, pushing you into a hole. If you know someone with depression, don't ridicule them; pray for them, listen to them and be the best friend you can.