



-Down in the Dumps-

Disclaimer: There's a deeper, chemical issue that can lead to depression & that goes beyond the counsel of this message. It's a slice of depression called clinical depression. Fortunately, God has given doctors wisdom to help people with severe (clinical) depression through different types of medication. If you suspect you may be clinically depressed, please seek medical help.

Ice-Breaker

- We all move in and out of depression in life. When you're down in the dumps and feeling discouraged and depressed, what do you typically do to cope? (sleep, read, eat, drink, etc.)

Questions & Application:

1. The Bible is filled with examples of depressed individuals who were used by God in remarkable ways. Read about David in Psalm 88:1-6 and Elijah in I Kings 19:3-4. How might the fact that these biblical heroes became very depressed be an encouragement to you?
2. Read Numbers 11:10-15. The passage above reveals **3 warning signs** that often precede depression.
 - **FATIGUE: Consumed by ACTIVITY.** *"The load is far too heavy!"* (Numbers 11:15) Hold up the mirror and look at your own life for a second. Are you worn out? Do you have too many things on your *To Do* list? Do you need to cancel some appointments and obligations?
 - **FEAR: Consumed by WORRY.** *"Where am I supposed to get meat for all these people?"* (Numbers 11:13). Moses took on responsibility that God never intended for him to have. What do you tend to worry about that is really God's responsibility?
 - **FRUSTRATION: Consumed by UNMET EXPECTATIONS.** *"Why are you treating me, your servant, so miserably? What did I do to deserve the burden of all these people?"* (Numbers 11:11). Most of us have had some 'unmet expectations' in our life (about our career, relationships, marriage, etc.). Share with the group an unmet expectation you've had and how you dealt with it.
3. The hope to overcome depression is found in Jesus Christ. **Jesus offers hope in 3 distinct areas...**
 - **Jesus offers me POWER I don't have.** Read Romans 15:13. According to this passage, there is a condition to being filled with God's power – trust. God fills you with His joy and peace and hope, through the power of the Spirit... *"as you trust in Him."* However, we often depend on our own power and wisdom in life. What practical steps might you take to stop trusting in your own power and wisdom and "trust in Jesus" instead?
 - **Jesus offers me PROMISES I can depend on.** Read II Corinthians 1:20. The Bible records over 7000 promises, every one of which can be trusted, because God never lies. Look up the following verses and share with the group how clinging to the promises in these texts might give you hope: I Corinthians 10:13; II Timothy 2:13; James 1:5; Hebrews 13:5-6; Philippians 4:6-7; Matthew 6:31-34; Romans 8:38-39; I John 1:9; Hebrews 11:6; Proverbs 3:5-6.
 - **Jesus offers me PERSPECTIVE of His purpose.** Read Romans 8:28. God has a specific purpose for all we go through in life (the good, the bad and the ugly). Not all things we go through in life are "good" in and of themselves – but God takes all things and works them *"together for good"* in the end. In what ways does this verse encourage you and give you hope?