

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week #4 - Depression



GETTING STARTED

Spend some time checking in with each other. Any highs and lows since the last time you met?

What's something younger people have made you feel clueless about at some point in your life? Is it related to technology, pop culture, music, history, etc.?

THIS WEEK'S THEME

Depression is something the church has often hesitated to address. But as Hans' message suggests, we often have no idea what people around us are really going through. What we see on the outside rarely tells the whole story.

Opening Up

- Why do you think we're so good at hiding our inner struggles?
- When have you felt like someone totally misunderstood what you were going through?

Real Talk: Depression and the Church

- Have you ever heard well-meaning but unhelpful advice about mental health in faith settings? What impact did it have?
- Why is it important that we talk about depression openly in church?

Bible Reflection - Read Lamentations 3:1-8, 19-23

- Which parts of these passages do you relate to the most?
- What do you think it means when Jeremiah says, "Yet I still dare to hope..."? What does hope look like in a dark season?

Emotional Health

- "Your emotions are valid, but they're not permanent." What does that statement mean to you?
- Why is naming our emotions so powerful? Have you ever experienced a moment where naming what you felt helped you start healing?

Hope and Healing

- How does the truth that "with God there is always hope" sit with you right now? Encouraging? Hard to believe? Somewhere in between?
- What practical next step might God be prompting you to take if you're struggling—or to help someone else who is?

DIGGING DEEPER

“Lamentations is a unique book in the Old Testament. It contains five poems from an anonymous author, who survived and is reflecting back on Babylon’s siege of Jerusalem and the destruction and exile that followed (2 Kgs. 24-25).

The fall of Jerusalem and the exile was the most horrendous catastrophe in Israel’s history up to this point. God had promised Abraham the land of Canaan and had given David victory to make Jerusalem Israel’s capital. This city is where the kings from the line of David lived, where Solomon built the temple for Israel’s God, and where the priests maintained the rituals of Israel’s worship. After 500 years of all this history, in the summer of 587 B.C.E., the city fell to Babylon and everything was lost. The book of Lamentations is a memorial to the pain and confusion of the Israelites that followed the destruction.”

Read more here: <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-lamentations/>

“Chapter 3 breaks the design pattern by having three verses per letter, making it the longest poem in the book. The voice is that of a lonely, suffering man who speaks as a representative of the entire people of Israel. What’s interesting is that this chapter is full of language drawn from other parts of the Old Testament, including the laments of Job (Job 3), important lament psalms (Ps. 22; Ps. 69), and even the suffering servant poems in Isaiah (Isa. 53). The poet sees his hardship as a form of God’s justice, just as chapter 2 asserted. But, paradoxically, this gives the poet hope and leads him to offer the only optimistic words in the book.”

Read more here: <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-lamentations/#lamentations-3-hope-for-justice-in-the-midst-of-grief>

PRAY

Ask how you can pray for each other this week. What prayer requests do you have?

God, you promise to be with us through everything. When our mental health struggles, or the mental health of our friends and loved ones, guide us to resources, care, and support. Lord in your mercy,

TAKING IT HOME

Take a moment to name one emotion you’ve been feeling lately. Decide on one way you’ll reach out for support this week (e.g., talk to a friend, counselor, doctor, small group leader).