



The Grove

BIBLE CHAPEL

• TAMPA •

LIFEGROUP RESOURCES: 03.17.24 Pulpit Curriculum

Triumph Over Depression through Christ

Main Passage: 2 Cor 2:12-14

- 1) The Story of Paul's Suffering and the Severe Letter: Paul had invested greatly into the church of Corinth. Between the two epistles (letters) to the church in Corinth, Paul wrote another letter of rebuke (2 Cor 2:3, 4; 7:8, 9) to Corinth because of a horrible sin embraced in the church (1 Cor 5). Paul went to Troas to meet Titus and was distressed in his spirit when he didn't find him, because Paul was in anticipation of how Corinth received the rebuke. He cared for the welfare of the people. Despite his suffering, Paul still found an opening for the Lord.
 - A. In what areas of your life are you experiencing the greatest discouragement and difficulty? Who are you walking through this with? _____

 - B. How are difficulties an opportunity for further gospel progress? _____

- 2) Paul's Deep Depression – Pastor's are People Too: Paul was afflicted in his heart and excessively burdened because of his care for the Corinthian people. He grieved over the severe letter. Paul was despaired in life itself, despondent and depressed in his affliction, but the hope that was for Paul is the hope that is for us – Jesus Christ. We are helped by Paul's vulnerability because it reminds us that we are all weak, but Paul was comforted by the coming of Titus in Macedonia.
 - C. How does vulnerability in fellowship cultivate soul care? _____

 - D. How would you describe the depth of your vulnerability in your most intimate Christian friendships? _____

- 3) The Problem with Depression in our Culture: Depression comes from wrongly looking for strength in self rather than God. When we see ourselves inadequate, wrongly in our flesh we inflate ourselves. The world is calling us to find ourselves in ourselves, seeking self-esteem and entertainment as a product of self-actualization, leading to a perceived psychological wholeness. Putting yourself at the center is a fool's errand because self-worship leads to depression – our only hope is in Christ.



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E. In what areas of your life are you inadequate and tempted to rely on yourself? What does this say about our heart? Why is reliance on self foolish? _____

F. Why is the gospel the only true hope in finding our purpose despite suffering?

4) The Triumphant Procession: Despite Paul's depression and anguish, he rejoices for over 4.5 chapters in the glory of God saying the captain of our faith always leads us in triumphal procession, an extraordinary victory purchased by Christ (2 Cor 2:14-7:4). The profession of our faith is the enjoyment of serving the King in the midst of suffering with our purpose fixed in Christ despite the circumstances.

G. Are you walking in the parade of Christ or watching from the sidelines? Do you know that you are saved by Christ because of the gospel? _____

H. For your discouragement/difficulty, what biblical truths do you lean on to renew your mind? _____

5) The Gospel is the Answer for Depression: The glory of the gospel frees us from the chains and tyranny of self-worship and depression. A critical component of being in the body of Christ is to be vulnerable and open in heart, embracing the reality of our frailty and turning to the cross. The gospel is the path to true wholeness by acknowledging we are weaker in reality, behold Christ, taking up our cross in repentance, and being reconciled with God. The cross is an emblem of death to self (Luke 9).

I. Read 2 Cor 4:7-11. Consider how death is working in you (dying to self), and how others are receiving life through the manifestation of Christ through you.

J. Which path are you inclined to choose? Is your life characterized by obsessing over Christ or over self? _____
