

# YOUR LIFE IN THE **RED ZONE**

## DEPRESSION

### **REPLAY**

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It seems you've been in a slump lately. At practice, everything seems fine, but when you get on the field, you get slammed by everyone. You miss easy passes, and the ones you do catch result in loss of yards. Don't even talk about that fumble that led to their touchdown, either. You've eaten more astroturf this month than you did all last season. These playing problems form a vicious cycle. The worse you play, the worse you feel. The worse you feel, the worse you play. There's a bad mood around you all the time now. You're depressed and everyone has noticed.

### **GAME BOOK**

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Even Jesus had times when He was lonely and dejected (Matthew 26:36-46). But you can't let these times overcome you. The reason for the depression is real, so you shouldn't ignore it. Ignored problems don't go away. They just wait around for a while.

First, you need to put your problems in perspective. Psalm 34 teaches us to magnify the Lord, seek Him, and He will deliver you. No problem is larger than God. After all, He deals with people rejecting Him all the time. You need to worship Him, pray to Him (Philippians 4:6), read the Scriptures. All of these things may sound trite and easy, but as you do them, God will honor your time with Him. The Scriptures were "written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

Second, you need to avoid the places or people who have made you depressed. An alcoholic shouldn't be in a bar, and if being near Thomas (who got the promotion you were going for) upsets you, avoid him whenever possible.

Third, you need to get your eyes off yourself and your own problems. The problems may seem overwhelming to you, but someone else is worse off. You will feel better not just by realizing they have more problems but by helping them to overcome these problems.

Some of these steps will be harder than others. Perhaps the hardest one is the fourth, take control of your thoughts (2 Corinthians 10:5). The more you dwell on the reason for depression, the more you will be depressed. This is logical, but not easy. In depression, the thoughts come at you over and over. This can be the biggest part of the battle.

Finally, walk in the Spirit. If you have battled depression, you have probably already realized you can't overcome depression alone. You need the Spirit of God to strengthen you. You need to keep being filled with the Spirit. Christianity is not a one-time event. It is a lifestyle of change after salvation. Pressing on in the Spirit will bring you to great peace.

One reason that these steps will work for you is that the more you concentrate on God, the less the Devil wants you to! If you kneel to pray everytime you are depressed, Satan will stop attacking that way. He'll look for other ways to bring you down, ways that won't make you worship.

### **TAKE-AWAY**

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Everyone goes through ups and downs in their life and walk with Christ. During the roughest times, we even get depressed. Depression hurts, but it isn't the end of the world. You have to refuse to live in depression. You can't let it win over you. Even when most depressed, especially when most depressed, you have to say, "God, I can't see the rainbow, but I know it's there."