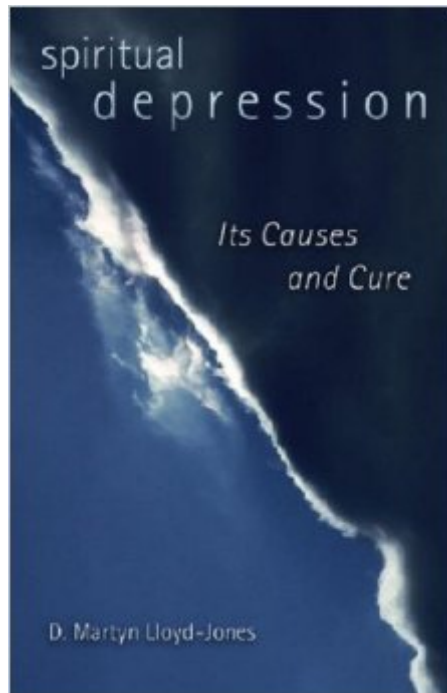


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Spiritual Depression: Its Causes And Its Cure



Synopsis

This enduring collection of twenty-one sermons by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, each originally delivered at Westminster Chapel in London, carefully and compassionately analyzes an undeniable feature of modern society from which Christians have not escaped -- spiritual depression. "Christian people," writes Lloyd-Jones, "too often seem to be perpetually in the doldrums and too often give this appearance of unhappiness and of lack of freedom and absence of joy. There is no question at all but that this is the main reason why large numbers of people have ceased to be interested in Christianity." Believing the Christian joy was one of the most potent factors in the spread of Christianity in the early centuries, Lloyd-Jones not only lays bare the causes that have robbed many Christians of spiritual vitality but also points the way to the cure that is found through the mind and spirit of Christ.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Although D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones's "Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Its Cure" is nearly forty years old, the truth it speaks to a generation lost amid a plethora of pop-psychology books is timeless. Jones, long the pastor of Westminster Chapel, gives readers the benefit of his many years of preaching and counseling, paving the way for the lost to find their way home. Psychology and Christianity have two dichotomous worldviews that cannot be shoehorned into each no matter how hard anyone tries. Psychology attempts to bolster the inner self, while Christianity says that the inner self is so hopelessly corrupt that it must be replaced with something entirely new. To this end

Jones points out that all depression has its root in sin and works from that point to lead readers into an understanding that only in Christ can release from the bondage of self come.

This is a collection of 21 sermons that Lloyd-Jones preached on the topic of Spiritual Depression, a broad term he uses as a sort of catch all for various types of unhappiness in the Christian life. Though I felt introduced to very few new concepts, I have a suspicion that is because I have been taught by many who have been influenced by Lloyd-Jones' teaching. One of the most helpful concepts he suggests is quite foundational and is the issue of one speaking to himself rather than listening to himself. Lloyd-Jones often refers to this as "apprehending yourself" or taking your heart to task. In his chapter entitled Feelings he says, "your business and mine is not to stir up our feelings, it is to believe" (116). The author states early on "ultimately the cause of all spiritual depression is unbelief" (20). This has too has had a profound impact on my life. Much of this book is the author working this out in many other contexts. Much of his strategy could be summed up by "believe and then act... feelings will come." Perhaps one shortcoming of this book is that some temperaments may find this advice to be a little cold. While in many senses "believe and act" is quite true and the necessary response, what of those who are struggling for hope while stuck in habitual sin... or in a moment of darkness find the faith to act quite small... what then? I would love to have seen him work this out more to make it more accessible to those who are truly depressed. I would have loved to hear this man preach. I imagine he is far more effective as a preacher than a writer. Since these are sermons which were lightly edited for publication, they read much like sermons do.

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