

# RCC Library Newsletter

July 2010

Editor: Anna Tooze

## What's New in the Library?

*Shakespeare the Christian*, by Ralph Smith (CD)  
*God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in all of Life*,  
by Gene Edward Veith

Dan Drinkwater has been busy converting our library cassette tapes to MP3's! Find great "oldies" now on CD by Bahnsen, Rushdoony, and others!

## When the Darkness Will Not Lift

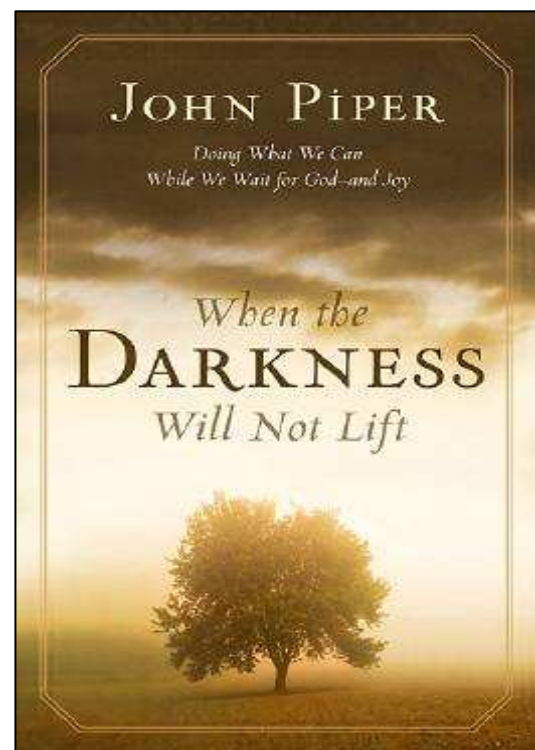
*When the Darkness Will Not Lift*, by John Piper is a compact (79 pgs) book, but don't be deceived by its size. This book, sort of an offshoot of another of Piper's books, *When I Don't Desire God: How to Fight for Joy*, is chock full of resources and encouragement to strengthen the Christian who is going through a spiritual dry spell, also known as depression.

Let's face it. Anyone who has been a Christian for any length of time is going to come through times where God seems far away and life seems futile. This book is a primer on how to deal with it. I think that as families take on more—more children, home schooling, church activities, civil responsibilities, and more financial commitments—there may be an increase in spiritual darkness as people become more drained of energy, and allow themselves less time to recharge in the Lord.

In this book, Piper starts off with the basics: in ourselves we will always be guilty,

and this can be crippling if we stay there. We must stand on the faith that Jesus took care of our sins on the cross. Now, I know that this sounds like a no-brainer, but as humans we tend to forget this. There is nothing within ourselves to help us; we must rely on Christ and his finished work.

Piper also assures us that we are not alone: even spiritual greats like John Bunyan went through periods of depression. In the book he describes Bunyan's revelation: "Thy righteousness is in heaven." Winston Churchill called depression his "black dog" and his learning to deal with it early on in his life taught him how to help his country when they went through the trials of World War II.



Piper has a great respect for the Puritans and comments on the fact that the pastors of that time seem to be able to hit the nail on the head with their causes and cures for depression. He cites other authors, such as Richard Baxter and John Owen and provides footnotes with sources for those that want to delve deeper there.

Depression may also be demonic harassment, but here we have comfort: Satan cannot do anything without permission from God (Job 1:12, 2:6). Satan has no grounds for accusation: All was forgiven on the cross.

Now that we are aware of the problem, what is the cure? Good solid Bible teaching and study is the first place to start. For myself, I have found that if I am not studying the Bible daily, I am much more susceptible to depression. A good place to start are passages recommended by Elder Wilson in his sermon on Mark 4:35-41: Ro 8:15-18, Ps 9:10, Ps 34:19, Is 43:2, Jn 14:1-2, Eph 1:1-14, 1 Pe 4:1, Rev 21:4. Meditating on these verses is good medicine.

Also, spiritual depression seems to feed on self absorption, a staying in your own world and spiraling downward into selfishness. We don't consciously choose to be self absorbed, we drift into it gradually. The practical remedy is to look outside yourself and your problems and reach out to others around you...and share your faith.

There is also a chapter on how to help someone you love who may be depressed. Piper cites the example of John Newton's friend, William Cowper, who suffered from depression his whole life, suffered a nervous breakdown and even tried to commit suicide a number of times. John Newton tried to stand by him as much as possible, and even cancelled a vacation to be with him through a particularly difficult time in his life. William

Cowper wrote two very hopeful hymns, "There is a Fountain Filled With Blood" and "God Moves in a Mysterious Way".

*When the Darkness Will Not Lift* is definitely one of those books I will turn to again and again, and hopefully gain new strength and insight each time. And since this book was so encouraging, I think I will move on to *When I Don't Desire God* and see what gems I can glean from it.

-Review By Karen Dahlin

## Book Checkout

- Find your book using the category labels on the shelves.
- Fill in the information on the card that is placed in the back of the book (name & date).
- Place the information card in the basket at the front of the library.
- Enjoy your book!
- Once you have finished it, return the book/s in the bin that is labeled RETURN.

## Online Reservations

- Go to the RCC church website and click on the link that says *church library*.
- Search for the book by title, author, or subject.
- Select your book and submit a hold request.
- Look for your book at church on the black library cart in the upstairs hallway (allow 7 days for processing request).

If you or your child are interested in writing reviews on material in our church library, please contact Anna Tooze ([annabanana171@hotmail.com](mailto:annabanana171@hotmail.com) or in person at church). Thank you!

If you have any questions about the church library please contact Alice Barnard ([alice@dranrab.com](mailto:alice@dranrab.com)) or Dan Drinkwater (who is available on Sunday afternoons or at [Drinkwat@hotmail.com](mailto:Drinkwat@hotmail.com)).