

LYNDA ALLISON DOTY, PHD

Lord, Why am I  
*Crying?*

**A Christian Perspective on Depression**

# Lord, Why Am I Crying?

## A Christian Perspective on Depression

by Lynda Allison Doty

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## C O N T E N T S

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	Preface . . . . .	9
	Introduction. . . . .	11
Chapter 1	My Story . . . . .	15
Chapter 2	Early Beginnings. . . . .	23
Chapter 3	To France and Home Again. . . . .	35
Chapter 4	The Problem . . . . .	49
Chapter 5	Symptoms and Diagnosis. . . . .	67
Chapter 6	Traditional Treatment: Comparison of Psychotherapies. . . . .	71
Chapter 7	Healing of Depression. . . . .	81
Chapter 8	Forgiveness and Guilt . . . . .	89
Chapter 9	Healing by Changing Thoughts and Feelings. . . . .	97
Chapter 10	The Perils of Positive Thinking . . . . .	105
Chapter 11	Self-Talk. . . . .	111
Chapter 12	Demonic Oppression . . . . .	123
Chapter 13	When All Is Said and Done . . . . .	131
	Bibliography . . . . .	139

## MY STORY

*I* will never forget that awful day. To the outside world, we were the family who had it all. I edited a monthly magazine, had a local television talk show, and by some standards was a pacesetter in bustling, metropolitan Atlanta. I was also a graduate student at Georgia State University, with a meaningful career as a clinical psychologist ahead of me. My husband had his law degree, and his business as a real estate developer was flourishing. He developed office complexes, airports, shopping centers, and so on. He had finally amassed the million dollars he had set out to earn, even though he had unfortunately developed a case of greed in the process.

We had two beautiful children, both enrolled in an exclusive private school. They were lovely, well-behaved, and very talented. The house we lived in was

my dream house. It had everything.

Yes, to the outside world, we had it all together. But is that not the way it is? How much do we really know about what our neighbor might be going through? How much does the world really know, or care, about the suffering on the next block or at the next desk?

To look at my family going away on vacation in our nice suburban station wagon, no one could guess. They did not know about the long months of depression that I suffered, trying to drown it in bottles of Scotch. They did not know about the abject loneliness I endured as he was away, night after miserable night, flying around in his own private plane, showing mountain real estate values to some lovely young thing? And now, at last, the thing I feared was coming to pass. He, my husband, was finally leaving me. He was tired of all the responsibility of a family, and *she* was so much *fun*. He stood by the door, his hand on the knob, looking at me oddly. I could not stand much more of this. Why could he not see how my heart was being torn in two?

“I have a funny feeling,” he said, “that if I walk out of here now I’ll never see you alive again.”

His prophetic words pierced my spirit and sent chills down my back. He knew me so well. His soul was indeed knit with mine. The only problem was, I had never known *him*. I had only thought I did. From the depths of my being, I longed to fling myself into his arms and experience once again their strength and their comfort. I longed to cling tightly to him, have him stroke my hair once more and whisper those magical, wonderful words that every-

thing would be all right. *Just one more time*, my heart begged, *just one more time* . . .

But I knew that everything would *not* be all right. After several weary, heart-wrenching years of this denial, I was finally beginning to see that it was over. No longer was he mine. I had done everything I could to save this marriage. There was simply nothing left to do. I had hung on for dear life, enduring humiliation after burning humiliation. My children needed their father. *I* needed their father! My love was as strong as ever, but the futility of it all dulled my senses. My emotions became numb as the finality set in. My marriage was over. If I were to go on with this life, it would be alone. Without him.

Without him? No. I could not do that. There was simply no way that I could live with that kind of pain and emptiness. I thought I had already felt all the pain that this world had to offer, but nothing had really prepared me for this day. I longed to go back into denial, where it did not hurt so much. My mind raced back to the time I discovered those dreadful plane tickets and motel receipts—"Mr. and Mrs." on both. And I was not the "Mrs." For days I lived in a stupor, not knowing what to do with what I had discovered. I did not know the Lord then, not really, so I did not seriously consider prayer. I struggled with it all alone and then decided to confront him.

With trembling hand and broken heart, I held out the horrible evidence toward him. Even to this day I cannot recall the explanation he gave, but he lied and explained it all away. Like most wives everywhere in this kind of situation, I believed him. Some of you reading this know