



## BRINGING LIGHT INTO DARKNESS

August 2015

*... and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,  
then your light will rise in the darkness,  
and your night will become like the noonday.*

Isaiah 58:10

Have you ever noticed how uplifted you feel when you do something for someone else? Helping them with something they may need—anything at all to make them happy and feel cared for? If you're able, try doing something for someone when you're depressed and see what happens. You will find it takes away from the self-centered part of depression—that part of depression that we dislike so much but is hard to shake.

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I have a friend who lives with chronic back pain. Impossible to imagine if you haven't been there. Despite her pain she keeps going as well as she is able, not only cooking meals for her own family, but often for anyone who she notices needing help. It's not uncommon for her to deliver not just one meal, but several days' worth of food to people who are sick. And all she brings is presented in an attractive way, appealing to the most unwell person.

Despite her constant pain there's always a smile on her face when she greets others. Her joy shines through. And you know, I believe it's her deep faith that gives her this strength and it's her ability to consider others before herself. Her love for Jesus spills over onto the people whose lives she touches. Her ready joy comes from a caring, giving spirit.

I'm not as energetic a giver as this friend is, although I try when I can to be there for others. But what I've found out when I'm dealing with depression is that when I do give whatever I can, even the smallest gift or help that comes from my heart brings me into a lighter place—if only for a while. My light rises in the darkness. And how amazing to see that happen!

I pray for my friend. May God keep her strong. May He give her relief from the pain, peace that passes all understanding, continued joy in her work.

I pray for all of you who may be experiencing depression right now. I pray that God will show you a little glimmer of hope when you consider what you could do for others. It doesn't have to be a big thing. Reach out your hand beyond your darkness and see what happens.

May you feel the presence of God's healing love.

marja