

Prayer in SADness

By Jessica Harris Daum

Almost everyone experiences some change in mood as days shorten and there is less sunlight. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that occurs as the seasons change, especially in northern regions. God promises to be with us as a light in the darkness.

For

Young Adult

Season

Winter

Needed

Candle or small lamp, Bible or Bible app, pen, paper or journal book

Prepare in Advance

Mark your Bible at John 8:12.

Activity Plan

1. Begin with this prayer:

Christ, be my light, for you are the light no darkness can overcome. Amen.

2. Take a moment to get in touch with your surroundings. Note your observations mentally or write them on a piece of paper or in a journal. Consider:
 - What is the time of day, day of the week, month of the year?
 - What is the weather outside like?
 - What do you hear? What do you see? What do you smell?
3. Now, take a moment to get in touch with your emotions. What is your mood right now—what words would you use to describe what you are feeling? (A helpful glossary of feeling words can be found at: [Feelings Inventory](#).)
4. Variation: Consider to what extent your mood is affected by your surroundings. Each day for a week, take a moment to be still and get in touch with what you notice outside and inside yourself. You may want to keep a journal to help you observe how your mood changes from day to day.
5. Some people in northern regions find the decreased hours of daylight during the winter affects their mood in profound ways. This may be true for you or someone you know. Read this helpful definition of Seasonal Affective Disorder from the [Mayo Clinic](#):

“Seasonal affective disorder (also called SAD) is a type of depression that occurs at the same time every year. If you're like most people with seasonal affective disorder, your symptoms start in the fall and may continue into the winter months, sapping your energy and making you feel moody.”



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6. Seasonal Affective Disorder, like any depression, is something to take seriously. Talk to a medical professional or pastor if you think you may be experiencing SAD. He or she can help you explore the many options for help. The [Mayo Clinic](#) offers this encouragement:

“Treatment for seasonal affective disorder includes light therapy (phototherapy), psychotherapy and medications. Don’t brush off that yearly feeling as simply a case of the ‘winter blues’ or a seasonal funk that you have to tough out on your own. Take steps to keep your mood and motivation steady throughout the year.”

7. Whether you are experiencing SAD or just have a case of the winter blues, prayer is a practice that, when paired with other tools, may help you to find healing and lift your mood. The following prayer can help you focus on the hope in God’s promise that the light of Christ will prevail, even when we cannot perceive it.

Light a candle or small lamp and dim other lights in the room. Read John 8:12 from your Bible or use the text below:

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Focus on the light of the lamp or candle in front of you for a few moments, and then read John 8:12 again. Spend a few minutes resting in silence and God’s presence.

Pray this prayer used by some churches for worship on the Second Sunday of Christmas:

God our redeemer, you created light that we might live, and you illumine our world with your beloved Son. By your Spirit, comfort us in all darkness and turn us toward the light of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

