

Dealing with Depression

While there sometimes can be physiological reasons for depression that are treated by a doctor, many instances of depression are caused by spiritual problems. As we look at Scripture, we will see the example of three individuals who suffered from what we now know as depression. Simply popping a pill might have made them feel better, but it would not have solved the root problems. God always gets at the heart of the matter!

Defining Depression

Many times, depression is mistakenly called an illness by modern medicine¹

- Illness –
- Doctor's base their diagnosis on changes in _____ and _____, not in measurable changes to body (*See attachment*)
- The chemical imbalance theory is a _____ not a _____
- People want a reason for their _____ that removes personal _____

The problem with calling it an _____ is that we ignore the _____ problem and focus on _____. In doing so, nothing ever gets permanently resolved!

Depression –

Depression has 2 distinct aspects

1. A strong _____ orientation
2. The _____ become the basis for _____, what the person does or does not do

What is the difference between Depression & Discouragement? –

Based on this definition, is depression a sin problem? (see 1 Corinthians 10:13)

Biblical Illustrations of People in Depression

Biblical Illustrations

Cain – Genesis 4:1-15

What was Cain's root problem?

What would the solution have been to his problem?

How was Cain's depression manifested?

¹ There are a few physical conditions, such as hypothyroidism, that can produce feelings of depression. These are known and measurable conditions via blood tests.

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Elijah – 1 Kings 19:1-18

What was Elijah's root problem?

What would the solution have been to his problem?

How was Elijah's depression manifested?

Principles from these Examples

1. Sinful habits that go _____ will _____ us even tighter – Proverbs 5:21, 22
2. The danger of _____ oriented living – 1 Corinthians 9:25-27
 - a. Unpleasant feelings become the excuse to _____ responsibilities
 - b. Only _____ about the problem
 - c. Unbiblical check points used to _____ spiritual condition
 - d. The belief that "My situation is _____ and _____"

Defeating Depression

1. Change the way you _____
 - a. Know that God has the _____ – 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:3
 - b. Know that with God there is always _____ – Philippians 4:13
 - c. Know that with God, problems have _____ – Romans 8:28-29
 - d. Focus on _____ and _____ – Ephesians 5:18-20
 - e. Apply your thoughts to finding _____ – Colossians 3:17
2. Change the way you _____
 - a. Do what is _____, no matter how you _____! – John 13:17, James 1:25
 - i. If you say you must feel _____ before doing what is right, you have made your feelings into an _____.
 - ii. Read Matthew 26:38-39 – Did Christ feel like dieing on the cross? What would have been the result of Him living by His feelings?
 - b. Establish _____ with another Christian – Proverbs 27:17

The goal of changing the way you think and act is NOT to change your _____, but to _____ God and be more like _____. Don't focus on _____. Focus on _____! He will take care of the feelings in His own time.

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DSM-IV™ Criteria for Major Depressive Episode

The DSM-IV™ Diagnostic Criteria for Major Depressive Episode are as follows:

- A. Five (or more) of the following symptoms have been present during the same 2-week period and represent a change from previous functioning; at least one of the symptoms is either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure.

Note: Do not include symptoms that are clearly due to a general medical condition, or mood-incongruent delusions or hallucinations.

1. depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g., feels sad or empty) or observation made by others (e.g., appears tearful). **Note:** In children and adolescents, can be irritable mood.
2. markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day (as indicated by either subjective account or observation made by others).
3. significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain (e.g., a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month), or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day. **Note:** In children, consider failure to make expected weight gains.
4. insomnia or hypersomnia nearly every day.
5. psychomotor agitation or retardation nearly every day (observable by others, not merely subjective feelings or restlessness or being slowed down).
6. fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day.
7. feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being sick).
8. diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness, nearly every day (either subjective account or as observed by others).
9. recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide.