



Sermon Series—Dealing with Depression
Part One—All Forms of Depressive Illness is Treatable

Proverbs 17:22

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Objective Sentence: *Everyone can overcome depression by taking steps that will help one to focus on the good of life and not the bad.*

Introduction: Depression is one of the great problems in the world today. It has been called the common cold of emotional illnesses. *According to the National Institute of Mental Health* almost every person experiences depression at some point in their lives—and one out of four Americans will suffer a major episode of depression.

Depression is a **serious** medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act. It can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease a person's ability to function at work and at home. Depression causes feelings of sadness, a loss of interest in activities once enjoyed, a loss of energy and increased fatigue. It creates difficulty in thinking, concentrating and making decisions. Depression often results in a significant increase or decrease in appetite, time spent sleeping, restlessness, trouble sitting still, feelings of dejection and hopelessness. Depression puts a negative spin on everything, including the way you see yourself, the situations you encounter, and your expectations for the future, making you feel worthless, pessimistic, guilty, hopeless. Depression often results in a person being stuck in a time warp, causing them to think that the difficulty they are experiencing will never end, creating in them the inability to construct a future which lead to thoughts of death and sometimes suicidal tendencies. The major cause of suicide is depression. One person commits suicide every 20 minutes in the United States alone.

Depression is a far more common problem than many people realize. It is a form of self-imposed isolation that may be spiritually, emotionally, or physically caused. Physical illnesses such as a stroke, heart attack, cancer, Parkinson's disease, hormonal disorders, the loss of a loved

one, divorce, guilt, unemployment, loneliness, business failure, difficult relationship, financial problem, the sense that one has failed or any stressful change in life pattern can cause a person to be depressed. The experience of trauma, at any time of life, has been found to increase the likelihood of experiencing depression, or stress. Also, medical conditions such as thyroid problems, a brain tumor or vitamin deficiency can mimic symptoms of depression. Certain medications, the use of substances of abuse and the withdrawal from these substances can induce depression. Depression can run in families. People with low self-esteem, who are easily overwhelmed by stress, or who are generally pessimistic appear to be more likely to experience depression. Continuous exposure to violence, neglect, abuse or poverty may make some people more vulnerable to depression .

#1. One thing common to almost every form of depressive illness is treatability.

A. Crandall Miller, one of my professors at Southeastern defined depression is anger turned inward. An unknown source states that that depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.

1. Don't Give Up and Never Give In

a. **Proverbs 17:22 NKJV** A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones). [**Living Bible**: makes one sick] [**NIV** saps a person's strength] [**Message Bible**: leaves you bone-tired]. One of the chief causes for depression is living life with unfulfilled expectations.

a. **Ed Hinson**: Some people commit emotional suicide instead of physical suicide. They cut off all their emotional feelings toward God and people. They withdraw into their own inner closet and shut the door to their lives. This can lead to what psychiatrists call a psychotic depression where the person altogether loses touch with reality. This is what happened to the Prophet Elijah.

b. **1 Kings 19:4, 13, 15, 18 NKJV** Elijah prayed that he might die, and said it is enough! Now, Lord take my life ... (the Lord said to Elijah) What are you doing here, Elijah? And he said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." God said, "Go, return on your way ... anoint Elisha ... I have reserved 7,000 in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal."

* What led to Elijah's state of depression? **Proverbs 13:12** Hope deferred (*postponed, put off, suspended*) makes the heart sick; but when desire is fulfilled, it is a tree of life. When experience does not line up with expectation then we often lose sight of

** Things did not turn out the way Elijah expected causing him to lose sight of all the good and see only the bad.

** He ran from the problem instead of facing it and ended up in a place where he should not have been. [God asked Elijah, "What are doing here?"]

** He focused on the problem which caused him to feel like a failure—all alone in the midst of the battle. [God said, "I have reserved 7,000 who have not

bowed to Baal].

- c. **Proverbs 12:25 Amplified Bible:** Anxiety [fear, worry, distress, panic] in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad.
- d. **Oswald Chambers:** God does not deliver us from trouble, He delivers us in trouble. God does deliver us from pain; He delivers us from stain. We are not made for the mountains, for sunrises, or for the other beautiful attractions in life - those are simply intended to be moments of inspiration. We are made for the valley and the ordinary things of life and that is where we have to prove our stamina and strength.
- e. **Gilbert Keith Chesterton:** If seeds in the black earth can turn into such beautiful roses, what might not the heart of man become in its long journey toward the stars?
- f. **Proverbs 25:28** Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down without walls.
- g. **Charlie Brown:** This is my depressed stance. When you're depressed, it makes a lot of difference how you stand. The worst thing can do is straighten up and hold your head high because then you'll start to feel better. If you're going to get any joy out of being depressed, you've got to stand like this.
- h. **Proverbs 3:7-8** Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil.⁸ It will be health to your flesh and strength to you bones [**Amplified:** your marrow, your nerves, your sinews, your muscles—all your inner parts] [**Message:** Your body will glow with health, your very bones will vibrate with life.] [**Living Bible:** you will be given renewed health and vitality].

2. Never Allow the Sense of Past Failure Defeat You

- a. **Matthew 26:45-46** ... Jesus came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”
- b. **Oswald Chambers:** Never let the sense of past failure defeat your next step. Whenever one realizes that he or she has not taken advantage of a magnificent opportunity, that person is apt to sink into despair. But Jesus comes and lovingly says to in essence, “Sleep on now. That opportunity is lost forever and you can't change that. But get up, and let's go on to the next thing.” In other words, let the past sleep, but let it sleep in the sweet embrace of Christ, and let us go on into the invincible future with Him.
- c. **Ed Hinson:** Depression may be fueled by circumstances far beyond our control, but depression is often the end result of not handling our problems properly.
- d. **John Gardner:** Self pity is easily the most destructive of the non-pharmaceutical narcotics; it is addictive, gives momentary pleasure and separates the victim from reality.”
- e. **Pastor Dan:** Over and over again David expressed his feelings to God. He felt as though he were alone, abandoned and forsaken. David learned to deal with his feelings and emotions with a positive confession. His faith—what he believed—helped him to conquer what he felt. **Psalm 10:1** Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? *Why* do You hide in times of trouble. **Psalm 13:1-2**, How long, O LORD?

Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? ² How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? ⁵ But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. ⁶ I will sing to the LORD, because He has dealt bountifully with me. [LB: blessed me so richly; been good to me].

- f. *Hannah Whitall Smith*: The Secret of failure or success in any matter lies far more in the soul's interior attitude than in any other cause or causes. You cannot control what goes on around you but you can control what goes on within you.
- g. *Oswald Chambers*: It is not true to say that God wants to teach us something in our trials. Through every cloud He brings our way, He wants us to unlearn something. His purpose in using the cloud is to simplify our beliefs until our relationship with Him is exactly like that of a child—a relationship simply between God and our own souls, and where other people are but shadows. Until we come face to face with the deepest, darkest fact of life without damaging our view of God's character, we do not yet know Him
- h. *Dr. Megan Reik*: There are few human emotions as warm, comforting, and enveloping as self-pity. And nothing is more corrosive and destructive. There is only one answer; turn away from it and move on. *Maya Angelou*: Self-pity in its early stages is as snug as a feather mattress. Only when it hardens does it become uncomfortable.
- f. *Ralph Waldo Emerson*: Don't waste life in doubts and fears; spend yourself on the work before you, well assured that the right performance of this hour's duties will be the best preparation for the hours and ages that will follow it.
- g. **Jeremiah 20:8-9** The word of the Lord was made to me a reproach and derision daily. Then I said I will not make mention of Him anymore ... but His word was in my heart like a burning fire ... I was weary holding it in).
- h. *Robert Louis Stevenson*: There is no duty we so underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy we sow anonymous benefits upon the world.

Closing; Today in the Word; December 1989: Many years ago a young Midwestern lawyer suffered from such deep depression that his friends thought it best to keep all knives and razors out of his reach. He questioned his life's calling and the prudence of even attempting to follow it through. During this time he wrote, "I am now the most miserable man living. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell. I awfully forebode I shall not." But somehow, from somewhere, Abraham Lincoln received the encouragement he needed, and the achievements of his life thoroughly vindicated his bout with discouragement. 7-30-13