



*Sermon Series—Dealing with Depression*  
*Part Five—Overcoming Depression*  
**Proverbs 1:5**

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*Objective Sentence: Everyone can deal with depression by taking eight practical steps in overcoming it.*

*Turn Every Hurt; Capture Time March 5<sup>th</sup>:* My Pastor's wife, Daisy Osborn, was certainly not off base in expecting great things from her only son. He was an accomplished musician, powerful communicator and gifted leader. From all outward appearances one would assume he was going to make his mark in the world for the Lord. Everything looked promising until he began abusing alcohol. In a short time his body collapsed, and at age thirty-seven he died from illnesses associated with alcoholism. Her world fell apart. In that same year her daughter and son-in-law, who had been struggling in their marriage, divorced. After twenty years of faithful service this son-in-law whom she loved, was out of her life and out of their ministry. She was devastated. It took weeks for her to gain the strength and courage to want to live again. She began seeking the Lord and, after what seemed like an eternity, He spoke to her, "Turn your hurt into ministry." Initially, His words seemed trite and insignificant when compared to the intensity of her pain. But as God's word echoed in her heart a small ray of hope began to shine in the darkness. Sometime later, she met a lady whose only son committed a terrible crime and was sent to prison for life without parole. Her heart went out to this grieving soul. She befriended the woman, then contacted the son and began ministering to him through the mail. Renewed hope and strength began flowing. As she began to help this broken mother, Pastor Daisy found encouragement for herself. She began to rise spiritually and emotionally above the dark cloud of circumstance hanging over her head. The more she helped the more she received help. All over again she began to find a new reason to live. Pain is not something anyone should bear alone. Never turn the other cheek to an individual who may be suffering. God moves through the channels of our compassion for one another and heals through love. James 5:16 says (Amplified), "Confess to one another your faults—your slips, your false steps, your offenses, your sins; and pray also for one another, that you may be healed and restored to a spiritual tone of mind and heart. The earnest heartfelt, continued prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available—

dynamic in its working.” The Golden Rule is a healing rule, “Whatever you want others to do to you, do also to them.” You can turn every hurt you experience into ministry by helping others.

- #1. *One thing common to almost every form of depressive illness is treatability. Depression, even the most severe cases, can be treated. The earlier that treatment begins, the more effective it is.***
- A. *Ed Hinson: Our attitudes reflect our true inner beliefs about ourselves and our problems. I can’t is another way of saying—I won’t. Anxiety, hatred, envy, grief fear—all reflect how we think. Non-biblical thinking will always result in non-biblical actions.***
- 1. **Work on Your Problems by Taking Small Steps in Resolving Them** (*Mark 5:25-28 NLT* *A woman in the crowd [following Jesus] had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding. <sup>26</sup> She had suffered a great deal from many doctors, and over the years she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she had gotten worse. <sup>27</sup> She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his robe. <sup>28</sup> For she thought to herself, “If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed.”*)**
- a. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* Work on your personal problems, using small steps to make sure you don’t become overwhelmed. Work on only one or two simple things at a time, breaking large or complex problems into goals you can easily accomplish. Use rewards, friends, family, and support groups. Don’t give up and allow your problems to continue. Brainstorm solutions and ask other people for ideas. Some depressed people reject all the possible solutions, finding reasons to eliminate each one as unacceptable, unpleasant, or unworkable. Don’t let negative thought habits interfere with problem solving. Keep an open mind to possible solutions.
  - b. *Psalm 46:1* God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble.
  - c. *Author Unknown :* A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.
  - d. *Author Unknown:* If you continue to do the same thing you have always done you will continue to be the same thing you have always been.
  - e. *Joshua 1:8-9 Message Bible:* And don’t for a minute let this Book of The Revelation [the Bible] be out of mind. Ponder and meditate on it day and night, making sure you practice everything written in it. Then you’ll get where you’re going; then you’ll succeed. Haven’t I commanded you? Strength! Courage! Don’t be timid; don’t get discouraged. GOD, your God, is with you every step you take
  - f. *National Institute of Mental Health:* Set realistic goals in light of the depression and assume a reasonable amount of responsibility. Break large tasks into small ones, set some priorities, and do what you can as you can.
  - g. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* A few depressed and overwhelmed people need to quit pushing themselves so hard, relax more, and eliminate some work activities, but most depressed people need more interests and activities.
- 2. **Understand that God Uses Problems to Make You Better** (*Romans 8:28 Crandall Miller: Depression is anger turned inward. Depression is anger without enthusiasm.*)**
- a. *God Uses Problems to Direct You [CBN Website]*

\*\* **Deuteronomy 8:3** Yes, God humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna, a food previously unknown to you and your ancestors. He did it to teach you that people do not live by bread alone; rather, we live by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

\*\* **Pat Robertson:** Sometimes God must light a fire under you to get you moving. Problems often point us in a new direction and motivate us to change. Sometimes it takes a painful situation to make us change. One reason that many of us change is because we hurt enough that we have to change.

**b. *God uses Problems to Inspect You***

\*\* **James 1:2-3 Amplified Bible** Consider it nothing but joy, mybrothers and sisters, whenever you fall into various trials. <sup>3</sup> Be assured that the testing of your faith [through experience] produces endurance [leading to spiritual maturity, and inner peace]. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have its perfect result *and* do a thorough work, so that you may be perfect and completely developed [in your faith], lacking in nothing

\*\* People are like teas bags ... if you want know what's inside them, just drop them into hot water!

**c. *God uses Problems to Correct You***

\*\* **Psalms 119:71-72** My suffering [affliction, trouble] was good for me, for it taught me to pay attention to your decrees. <sup>72</sup> Your instructions are more valuable to me than millions in gold and silver.

\*\* Some lessons we learn only through pain and failure. It's likely that as a child your parents told you not to touch a hot object. But you probably learned by being burned. Sometimes we only fail to realize the value of something ... health, money, a relationship, until we lose it.

**d. *God uses Problems to Protect You***

\*\* **Genesis 50:20 NLT** You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.

\*\* Many times problems are blessings in disguise.

**e. *God uses Problems to Perfect You***

\*\* **Romans 5:3-4 Romans 5:3-5 NKJV** And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us

\*\* **Oswald Chambers:** Problems, when responded to correctly, are character builders. God is far more interested in your character than your comfort. Your relationship with Him and your character are the only two things you're going to take with you into eternity.

- 3. Do not bury anger or mistreatment** (**Eph.4:25-27** Therefore, putting away lying, “*Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,*” for we are members of one another [and we are all parts of the body of Christ]. <sup>26</sup> “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, <sup>27</sup> nor give place to the devil.)

- a. *Pastor Dan:* Burying anger or other negative emotions such as unforgiveness, is like burying toxic waste material. They will show up somewhere else in a form that is as destructive, or more destructive, than they were in their original state .
  - b. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* If you avoid confrontations and bury your anger at mistreatment from others until you explode, work on assertiveness and expressing your anger in constructive ways. Are some people inconsiderate, unkind, overly critical, or overly hostile toward you? If certain people in your life contribute to your depression by the things they do, you may need to become more assertive with these people, to reduce your contact with them, or even to eliminate them from your life.
  - c. **Colossians 3:5-8 NLT** So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. <sup>6</sup> Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming. Now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander and dirty language.
  - d. *Chinese proverb:* The torrid sun melts mountain snows; when anger comes, then wisdom goes.
  - e. *Charles Buxton:* Bad temper is its own scourge. Few things are bitterer than to feel bitter. A man's venom poisons himself more than his victim."
4. **Get a physical exam** (*Proverbs 3:7-8 Amplified Bible: Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD [with reverent awe and obedience] and turn [entirely] away from evil. It will be health to your body [your marrow, your nerves, your sinews, your muscles—all your inner parts] and refreshment (physical well-being) to your bones.*
- a. *National Institute of Mental Health:* The first step to getting appropriate treatment for depression is a physical examination.... Certain medical conditions, such as a viral infection can cause the same symptoms as depression, and the physician should rule out these possibilities through examination, interview, and lab tests. If a physical cause for the depression is ruled out, a psychological evaluation should be done by a psychiatrist or psychologist.
  - b. *Ed Hinson; Overcoming Life's Toughest Problems:* Depression is sometimes caused by physical conditions that are unrelated to spiritual problems. Any disruption of the physical processes of the brain can lead to chemical imbalances within the nervous system, causing depression. The brain relies on several key chemical substances that help a person to maintain a stable mood. An imbalance of any of these chemical substances can lead to drastic mood swings and depression. Other physical causes of depression include hypoglycemia (low blood sugar); hypothyroidism; endocrine hormone imbalances in blood levels of estrogen or adrenalin; viral infections such as the flu or mononucleosis; vitamin shortages; drug misuse; exposure to industrial poisons; fatigue; and premenstrual syndrome (PMS).
  - c. **Proverbs 17:22** A merry heart does good, *like* medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.
  - d. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon issues caution about certain medications:* A surprising number of medicines can cause depression, including many tranquilizers or sleeping pills, many high blood pressure medicines, hormones such as oral

contraceptives, some anti-inflammatory or anti-infection drugs, some ulcer medicines, etc.

- e. *Author Unknown:* Antidepressant drugs are not habit-forming (although in many cases there are side effects when discontinuing their use [some antidepressants when discontinued can lead to thoughts of suicide]). Antidepressants should be carefully monitored to see if the correct dosage is being given. The range between an effective dose and a toxic one is small with many drugs.

**5. Develop social skills and friendships** (*Proverbs 18:24 NKJV He or she who has friends must be friendly, and there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*)

- a. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* Good social skills and a good network of friendships ranging from casual to intimate ones help prevent depression ... and speeds recovery from depression.
- b. **Genesis 2:18** It is not good for man to be alone.
- c. *Epicurus:* Of all the things which wisdom provides to make us entirely happy; the greatest is the possession of friendship.
- d. *Author Unknown:* Remember that no man is a failure who has friends.
- e. *Aristotle:* Without friends no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods. *Ralph Waldo Emerson:* A friend might well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature. *John Hay:* Friends are the sunshine of life.
- f. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* Don't worry about whether you are happy. Develop interests, activities, and friendships, be kind, help other people, strive to be virtuous, accept emotional pain, work on conquering your personal problems, and improve your thinking habits. These things will lead to happiness. Conquering your depression may take months or years, depending on its severity, how long you have had negative thinking habits, your personal problems, and how much effort you put into it.
- g. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. <sup>10</sup> If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. <sup>11</sup> Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? <sup>12</sup> A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

**6. Get involved in helping others** (*Philippians 2:3-4 NKJV Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others as better than yourself. <sup>4</sup> Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also for the interests of others.*)

- a. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* Perhaps one of the most common reasons for depression is a lack of enough interests and activities. Interest and activities are very important in mental health, contributing to self-esteem and happiness. **National Institute of Mental Health:** Try to be with other people and to confide in someone; it is usually better than being alone and secretive.
- b. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* Helping others is one of the best ways to life yourself spiritually. Helping less fortunate people can also give a healthy sense of perspective.



- c. **Matthew 20:26 Amplified Bible** ... whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,<sup>27</sup> and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your [willing and humble] slave;<sup>28</sup> just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many [paying the price to set them free from the penalty of sin].
  - d. *Author Unknown:* The essence of all spiritual life is your emotion, your attitude towards others. Once you have pure and sincere motivation, all the rest follows—compassion and human affection.
  - e. **Hebrews 3:13-14** Continually encourage one another every day, as long as there is a day [and there is an opportunity], so that none of you will be hardened [into settled rebellion] by the deceitfulness of sin [its cleverness, delusive glamour, and sophistication].
  - f. *National Institute of Mental Health:* Participate in activities that may make you feel better: mild exercise, going to a movie, a ballgame, or participating in religious, social, or other activities may help.
  - g. *Author Unknown:* It is hard to be depressed and in action at the same time. There are two sides to this statement. One is positive in the sense that if you need temporary relief from depression it might help to get busy doing something such as cleaning the house, going for a walk or bike ride. But action is not a permanent solution because it does not address the cause of the depressive feelings. Some people use activity to avoid facing the causes of their depression and to avoid allowing themselves time to feel. In the long term, merely being active and even productive does not fill the required unmet emotional needs. *Patrick Wakeling:* For me, depression is a sign of not dealing honestly with my problems.
7. **Do not attempt to medicate your pain with alcohol or drugs (*Hosea 4:11 NKJV:* Harlotry [promiscuity], wine, and new wine enslave the heart. *Message Bible:* Wine and whiskey leave my people in a stupor. They ask questions of a dead tree, expect answers from a sturdy walking stick. Drunk on sex, they can't find their way home. They've replaced their God with their genitals. *Amplified Bible:* Prostitution, wine, and new wine take away the mind and the [spiritual] understanding. *Living Bible:* Wine, women, and song have robbed my people of their brains. )**
- a. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* Using alcohol or other drugs to improve your mood is especially risky because addictive substances often intensify pre-existing mood or personality problems. Even prescribed medications may lead to severe depression.
  - b. **Proverbs 20:1** Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray or deceived by it is not wise. *Pastor Dan:* In spite of the multibillion dollar add campaigns spinning the message that alcohol makes life ATTRACTIVE, it would be wise to heed the words of King Solomon who said, "Wine is a mocker [it is addictive]; strong drink is raging [it is destructive]; and whoever is deceived by it is not wise [it is deceptive].
  - c. **Proverbs 23:29-35 Living Bible:** Whose heart is filled with anguish and sorrow? Who is always fighting and quarreling? Who is the man or woman with bloodshot eyes and many wounds? It is the one who spends long hours in the taverns, trying out new mixtures.<sup>31</sup> Don't let the sparkle and the smooth taste of strong wine

deceive you. <sup>32</sup> For in the end it bites like a poisonous serpent; it stings like an adder. <sup>33</sup> You will see hallucinations and have delirium tremens, and you will say foolish, silly things that would embarrass you no end when sober. <sup>34</sup> You will stagger like a sailor tossed at sea, clinging to a swaying mast. <sup>35</sup> And afterwards you will say, “I didn’t even know it when they beat me up. . . . Let’s go and have another drink!

- d. *Dr. Chuck T. Falcon:* The brain is awash with chemicals called neurotransmitters. These chemicals are used to carry electrical signals through the nerves, which is how human beings think and feel. We need adequate amounts of neurotransmitters in the correct balance in order to function properly. There are several neurotransmitters, which affect mood but here we will only consider one. This neurotransmitter is called serotonin. Put simply the more serotonin in the brain the higher a person’s mood. If the level of serotonin drops we become depressed. That’s why many of the drugs prescribed to treat depression have an effect on the serotonin level. Serotonin also affects sleep which is why depressed people tend to sleep poorly, often finding it difficult to drop off in the first place, waking repeatedly through the night or sleeping solidly but for only a short time. It’s often to do with serotonin. Incidentally, people who drink a lot of alcohol tend to be depressed and often have trouble sleeping. The reason is because **alcohol destroys serotonin**. So much for cheering ourselves up with a few drinks.
- e. **Ephesians 5:18-20** Don’t be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, <sup>19</sup> singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**8. Do What God Says Do and Don’t Do What He Says Not To Do** (*Pastor Dan: God has given His Word, the Bible, to us for two reasons: to protect us and to provide for us. Everything God tells us not to do in His Word is harmful to our well being. Every thing He tells us to do will make life meaningful and what He designed it to be—fruitful, productive and fulfilling.*

- a. *Safe Haven Bible Studies:* Depression can be a consequence of sin. Guilt, bitterness or rebellion leads to discouragement and despair. When we find ourselves suffering because of sin we must repent and allow God’s grace to cleanse our lives from the stain and pain of disobedience.
- b. **Psalms 51:10-12** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right [and steadfast] spirit within me. <sup>11</sup> Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by *Your* generous Spirit [make me willing to obey you].
- c. **1 John 1:9** If we confess [and forsake] our sins; God is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *Pastor Dan:* Forgiveness is not enough; we must allow God to cleanse from our lives the things He forgives.
- d. **Isaiah 48:22** There is no peace for the wicked,” says the LORD.
- e. **James 4:17 NLT** Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.
- f. *Thomas Watson:* The pleasure of sin is soon gone, but the sting remains.

*Closing and Invitation; Charles Haddon Spurgeon:* There was but one crack in the lantern, and the wind found it and blew out the candle. How great a mischief one unguarded point of character may cause us! One spark blew up the ammunition and shook the whole country for miles around. One leak sank the vessel and drowned all on board. One wound may kill the body, one sin destroy the soul. (8-27-17)