

# Biblical Counseling

Dealing with Depression

# Statistics

The CDC reports that at any given moment, 8% of the population in the United States is suffering from depression. In fact, it is said that one in four Americans (almost 80 million people) will meet the criteria for major depression in their lifetime.

# Definition

Dr. Robert Smith wrote... in his book *The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference*: “Depression is a debilitating mood, feeling, or attitude of hopelessness (despair or joylessness), which becomes a person’s reason for not handling the most important issues of life.”

# Depression

Martyn Lloyd Jones gives two reasons why we must address this issue:

For the sake of those who are in this condition, in order that they may be delivered from this unhappiness, this disquiet, this lack of ease, this tension, this troubled state which is described so perfectly by the Psalmist...

...for the sake of the Kingdom of God. In a sense a depressed Christian is a contradiction in terms, and he is a very poor recommendation for the Gospel.

# Depression

Consider the life of Elijah

1 Kings 17-19

# Depression

Psalm 42:5

<sup>5</sup> Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence.

Psalm 42:11

<sup>11</sup> Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

# Depression

I have never met a depressed person who described himself or was described by others as joyful or thankful. The reason for this is because a depressed person is by definition joyless and hopeless. According to Scripture, to be in a state of joylessness and hopelessness is a sinful choice one makes.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always;

<sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing;

<sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

# Depression

Ministry to the Depressed

Demonstrate gentleness, love and grace.

Ask beneficial questions



# Depression

## Gospel Clarity

A right understanding of the Gospel provides the life change and resources to walk in the joy of the Lord

A faulty understanding of the Gospel sets a tragic course of failure in this life and the life to come.

# Depression

## Identify Any Sin Patterns

Could be resentment regarding life circumstances:

Single and want to be married

Married and want to be single

Family concerns or disappointments

Financial challenges

Health issues

Employment challenges

# Depression

## Identify Any Sin Patterns

Could be struggles with introspection

Could be struggles with guilt

Could be related to habitual sinful choices

Could be the result of carelessness regarding spiritual disciplines

Could be the result of trying to put off sin without putting on righteousness

# Depression

## Provide Instruction on Biblical Repentance

### 2 Cor. 7

#### Ephesians 4:20–24

<sup>20</sup> But you did not learn Christ in this way,  
<sup>21</sup> if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,  
<sup>22</sup> that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,  
<sup>23</sup> and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,  
<sup>24</sup> and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

# Depression

## The Spiritual Battle

Biblical Change Requires Diligence and Faithfulness!

Matthew 26:41

<sup>41</sup> “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”