

## Depression—There’s a Biblical Diagnosis and Hope

### Introduction

John and Misty—she’s really depressed.

### I. Foundations—a biblical view of humans gives us hope.

A. We are more than a single part being (you are not just a biological machine).

B. The most used word in the Bible for the inner person is \_\_\_\_\_.

- It’s a famous word—Proverbs 4:23; Matt. 12:34-35.
- Definitions of the word (mind, will, emotions, desires)

“One’s inner self, seat of feeling and emotions, inclination, disposition, will, reason, the mind in general” (Kohler, Baumgardner).

“As the seat of the appetites and passions”(Brown, driver, Briggs, Gesenius).

- Significance of this word for depression. Since it is an emotion then something is going on in the heart. Let’s learn how to diagnose potential heart themes.  
When do you tend to experience fear?  
When do you tend to worry or feel anxiety?  
What do you find yourself seeking to avoid?  
What stirs your anger or frustrates you?  
What do you turn to for dealing with the pressures of life?  
What thoughts tend to consume you?

Options to consider:

Is this a control theme?

Is this a comfort-loving theme?

Could this be a people-pleasing theme?

Is it possible that you are being driven by success?

What would you call the theme?

### II. Godly people can feel depressed (Psalms 42-43). This gives hope.

Myth: If you were godly then you would never feel depressed.

### III. Common issues that stir depression and rob hope.

- A. Guilt/shame—Psalm 32 “I can’t be forgiven.”
- B. Hope’s disappointed—**expectations** not met (for example, marriage)  
“Hope deferred makes the heart sick” (Proverbs 13:12)
  - A proper view of other humans—no other human can be your chief security/hope/desire/rock/refuge (Psalm 18:1-3)
- C. Grief/loss
- D. Goals/dreams crushed—“By this time I thought I would be here in life.”
- E. Exhaustion/mixed with the desires of the heart.

#### IV. Practical help that gives hope

- A. Jerry Bridges' definition of trust and your thought life (let's look at the sheet on trusting God).
  - Phil. 4:8
  - Worship—sing aloud. This accomplishes three purposes. You are worshipping. You are thinking on truth. You are drowning out other voices in your head.
  - Martyn Lloyd-Jones "The problem with most Christians is that they believe what self is saying rather than telling themselves what to believe." *Spiritual Depression*
- B. A BIG and growing bigger view of God—Isaiah 40 Stop grumbling.
- C. Recognize and trust in the sovereign hand of God—Rom. 11:36. Nothing comes into my life unless it comes through the hand of God first.
- D. Recognize the nature of scripture—2 Timothy 3:16-17. What voice will you listen to? What voice (or voices) has the most authority when condemning voices come?
- E. What do you tend to serve in your heart?—Repent and turn to superior worship
- F. Relish the gospel—Col. 2:11-15
- G. Deal with your anger. Depression can be internalized anger. What do you want that you're not getting and getting that you're not wanting. How is pride feeding this?
- H. The importance of sleep
- I. Don't complicate things (drinking or other substances, adultery). Causes more of a downward spiral.
- J. Lament—please read the article
- K. Persevere—endurance (James 1: 2-4). You're in a battle. FIGHT for joy! If you don't carry out responsibilities you just complicate things.
- L. Love God, Love others (Matthew 22: 36-40). Depressed people get consumed with self. Repent and change your focus.
- M. Suicide Risk Assessment
- N. What should I do about medicines? Talk to your doctor.
- O. Resources:
  - *Depression A Stubborn Darkness: Light for the Path* (Edward Welch, New Growth Press).
  - *If I'm a Christian Why Am I Depressed?* (Robert Somerville, Xulon).
  - *Help! I'm Depressed* (Carol Trahan, Shepherd Press).
  - *Depression, The Way Up When You are Down* (Edward Welch, P& R).
  - *Uprooting Anger* (Robert Jones, P&R).
  - *Help! My Anger is Out of Control* (Jim Newheiser, Shepherd Press)
  - *Help! I'm in a Conflict* (Ernie Baker, Shepherd Press).

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