

How God Can Redeem and Heal Our...

#3 - Depression

Psalm 6

Everyone gets “the blues” at some point over something in life. Depression is not mere _____. Depression as a condition of medical diagnosis and needing (predominantly) chemically based treatment only came into being in the late 1980s coinciding with the invention of _____ in 1988. Now, the rate of diagnosis of *major* depression is increasing at an alarming rate.

1. There are three recognized and diagnosed levels of depression:
 - a. Major (or clinical) depression involves a persistent (____ weeks) disruptive disturbance of mood and physical effects.
 - b. Dysthymia (mild, chronic depression) is less severe but may have effects lasting two _____ or more.
 - c. _____ Disorder (formerly called manic depression) is a complex genetic disorder requiring professional treatment.
2. Humans are intricately complex organisms (spirit, mind, & body – 1 Thessalonians 5:23). When things go wrong within us, there are usually multiple factors and effects, including:
 - a. Spiritual – A loss of _____, a sense of meaninglessness, inability to see clearly outside of oneself (God’s power, presence, purpose).
 - b. Psychological – The attempt to retreat to an inner world to protect oneself from the _____ difficulties of life.
 - c. Biological – Deteriorating well-being, poor regulation of the chemical messengers in our brains (e.g., a deficit of _____), chemical interactions of multiple prescriptions.

Depression in the Bible

The Bible is very open and honest in acknowledging depression.

1. The book of Job, perhaps the oldest written document in the Bible, is one of the finest works of literature ever about _____. One description of his despair is in 3:23-26:

“Why is life given to those with no future, those God has surrounded with difficulties? I cannot eat for sighing; my groans pour out like water. What I always feared has happened to me. What I dreaded has come true. I have no peace, no quietness. I have no rest; only trouble comes.” (New Living Translation)

2. King David experienced severe depression more than once due to grief over his _____, family betrayal, and the deaths of two sons.

“Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye is wasted from grief; my soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones waste away.”

– Psalm 31:9-10 (English Standard Version)

3. The _____ person to ever live, King Solomon, wrote an entire book, Ecclesiastes, about his despair at the meaninglessness of life. This, by the way, was written *after* a life of hedonistically pursuing total pleasure.

“Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.” – Ecclesiastes 1:2 (New International Version)

4. In addition to wishing he’d never been born (20:18), the prophet Jeremiah suffered numerous bouts of severe depression. He even authored a book named “_____,” which are dirges expressing grief, pain, & disillusionment at the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians (587 B.C.).

“Oh, my anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain. Oh, the agony of my heart! My heart pounds within me, I cannot keep silent.” – Jeremiah 4:19 (NIV)

5. The Apostle _____ suffered through deep internal spiritual conflict (Romans 7:15-24) along with severe physical deprivation and abuse (2 Corinthians 1:8-10; 11:23-27), and, on top of that, *“there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches”* (2 Corinthians 11:28).

A path through and out of depression

1. Positive aspects of depression:
 - a. God hears & answers us in our times of distress – Psalm 107.
 - b. When we are weak, He is strong – 2 Corinthians 12:10.
 - c. Spiritual sensitivity to others who suffer – 2 Cor. 1:3-7.
2. Practical steps:
 - a. Work, exercise, healthy diet, positive daily habits, and _____ (Proverbs 17:22).
 - b. Doctor – medical or psychological. A caution: quickly opting for medication to treat the symptoms may prolong the affliction since the _____ are being left untreated.
3. Spiritual practices:
 - a. Prayer – Philippians 4:4-7. If you don’t have the energy or the words to pray know that the Holy Spirit is already praying on your behalf (Romans 8:26-27). Also, read _____ prayers (explore the Psalms) or devotional books.
 - b. Bible reading (renewing _____) – Philippians 4:8.
 - c. Praise music - sing, listen, _____.
 - d. Community, especially a focus on _____ others.

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.” – Romans 12:15 (ESV)

- e. Keep _____ your mind, heart, and body to Jesus.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” – Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV)