

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Kings 19:1-4,10**.
- B. From *The Bumps are What you Climb On* by W. Wiersbe (Ch. 7).
- C. In Psalms 42 and 43, three times we find the psalmist asking, “Why are you cast down O my soul, and why are you disquieted in me?”
- D. Tonight, we look at the subject of depression.

I. DEPRESSION.

- A. To be sure, sometimes depression has a *physical cause*. Some types of depression are caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. It is not the fault of the individual as much as it is a physiological disorder. More about this later.
- B. Normal depression:
 - 1. A reaction to a life event.
 - 2. Alters mood or attitude.
 - 3. Temporary in duration.
 - 4. Functional but with increased difficulty.Normal depression “comes and goes” and is usually not treated with medication.
- C. Clinical depression:
 - 1. A diagnosable illness.
 - 2. Alters mood, thoughts, and physical functioning.
 - 3. Prolonged in duration.
 - 4. Significantly impairs ability to function normally.Clinical depression is a chronic situation requiring constant attention and medication.
- D. Types of depression:
 - 1. **Major depression**. This diagnosis is made if a person has five or more of the symptoms (listed below) and there is impairment in the person’s ability to function nearly every day during a two-week period. It is the most common type of depression.
 - 2. **Dysthymia**. This diagnosis is made if a person’s depressed mood lasts at least two years and includes at least two of the symptoms listed below. It is a milder form of depression that does not cause as much impairment in functioning as major depression. It can develop into major depression.
 - 3. **Bipolar disorder**. This diagnosis is made when a person’s moods cycle between excessive activity and excitability and severe depression. It is sometimes referred to as manic depression.
- E. The signs of depression.
 - 1. Depressed mood; feeling sad or discouraged.
 - 2. Sleep disturbances; trouble getting to sleep or waking up early and not going back to sleep.
 - 3. Restlessness or sluggishness; having to push oneself to accomplish anything or feeling one cannot accomplish anything.
 - 4. Diminished interest and enjoyment in previously enjoyable activities.
 - 5. Difficulty making decisions and concentrating.
 - 6. Thoughts of suicide or death.
 - 7. Feelings of worthlessness, failure, guilt, and/or helplessness.
 - 8. Significant changes in appetite (losing or gaining weight without trying).
 - 9. Fatigue, lethargy, and loss of energy.
- F. If you have at least 4 or 5 of these symptoms and have done so each day or at least 2 weeks, you may have a chemical imbalance--see your doctor.

II. PSYCHOLOGICAL DEPRESSION.

- A. Some depression has a *psychological cause*. Some people seem to have a personality that is naturally gloomy and pessimistic. Instead of trying to change this, they give in to it, and gradually they develop a pattern of defeat and depression.
- B. What happens when people get depressed?
1. *Self-protection*. This is how it begins: anger, apathy, or withdrawal.
 2. *Self-pity*. Excessive guilt over past failures.
 3. *Self-punishment*. Denial of things that could help with self-esteem.
 4. *Self-destruction*. No wonder some people try to take the last step.
- C. There are various causes of depression:
1. **Physical (genetic) causes.**
Lack of sleep, a poor diet, drugs, low blood sugar, etc.
 2. **Background causes.**
Growing up in an environment where too much was expected. Goals were too numerous and too high, while achievement was too low.
 3. **Learned helplessness.**
There are times in life where we have little or no control. Age, illness, death of a loved one, financial ruin, etc., may be others' fault but still affects us.
 4. **Negative thinking.**
Those who only remember the bad of the past see the problems of the present and gloom and doom in the future. To be in this thinking rut means depression.
 5. **Life stresses.**
Problems associated w/job, family, in-laws, house, kids, school, etc., can bring on depression if we allow these problems to consume us.
 6. **Anger.**
There seems to be a progression of emotions that cause depression:
 - a. First, we are hurt and express anger to cover the pain.
 - b. If the anger is not dealt with properly, it can give way to revenge.
 - c. Feelings of vengeance hide the hurt and anger but keep the issue unresolved.
 - d. All of this adds up to deep depression.
 7. **Guilt.**
The feeling of failing or being failure brings thoughts of uselessness/depression.
- D. Successfully dealing with depression means dealing with those things that cause it.

III. "DEFEATING" DEPRESSION.

- A. **See your physician.**
If you have been experiencing at least 4 of the 9 symptoms for 2 weeks or more on a daily basis, you may have a chemical imbalance.
- B. **Encourage physical fitness.**
A healthy body is less susceptible to mental illnesses. Physical activity becomes a catharsis for the soul. There is an adrenaline rush following a good workout that helps the mental outlook (2Cor. 7:1).
Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
- C. **Develop a deep trust in God.**
Paul knew how to live in good times as well as bad. Doubt is of the devil, and we are to be people of faith (Phil. 4:11-13).
Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. 13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

D. Challenge your own thinking.

Instead of ruminating, talk to yourself in a positive way each day. If we think you are a failure, ask yourself, "Why am I a failure?" "On what basis am I incapable?" What your mind dwells on is what you will become (Prov. 23:7; Mt. 12:34b; Phil. 4:8).

(Prov 23:7) For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you.

(Mt 12:34) "You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart."

(Phil 4:8) Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.

E. Learn coping techniques.

When family, friends, in-laws, death, and illness get you down find ways to cope and work through it. Sometimes simple things can work wonders. For example, in family discussions do more listening than arguing.

F. Reach out to others with similar problems.

The NT teaches that we are to "bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the Law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). AA says those who are helped the most are those who help others (Ac. 20:35).

(Gal 6:2) Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

(Ac. 20:35) "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

G. Be part of a support group.

People who are integrated into groups are less lonely, isolated, and less inclined to get depressed or commit suicide (Heb. 10:24-25).

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, **25** not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Some forms of depression need to be handled with counseling and medication.
- B. Other forms of depression can be dealt with by using good coping techniques.
- C. Jesus wants us to have an abundant life in Him (see Jn. 10:10). Hope, joy, and confidence can be found in God.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.