

Facing Depression with a Living Faith (Part 1)

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Introduction: Depression is an overwhelming emotion that can rule our lives.

- A. We all will have times where our spirit is overwhelmed by emotion.
 - 1. As a younger man I saw this as a weakness that must be avoided at all costs. As I have lived life I have found that this is a part of life.
 - 2. Our emotional side will be affected by many things. Often the accumulation of experiences and thoughts will bear fruit as we get older.
- B. The beginning of who we will be starts in the home. Most issues that adults face regarding depression starts with their home background.
 - 1. Do we learn nurture or buried wrath in our home life? **(Eph 6:4)**
 - 2. Greater emotional struggles can be passed down through generations through the same mistakes being repeated in the homes.
 - 3. Regardless of our present emotional nature our God has given us a powerful weapon to overcome our struggles, a living faith. **(1 Jn 5:4-5)**

I. Some fundamental truths about depression

- A. Depression is often a product of buried anger.
 - 1. It could be taught in the home as how one “deals’ with problems.
 - 2. It could be a short term overwhelming due to physical exhaustion and unrealistic expectations and perceptions. **(1 Kgs 19:2-10)**
- B. Depression can be brought about by physical changes unrelated to past experiences.
- C. Depression is an emotion and not by itself a sin!
 - 1. The pain and uncertainty that comes with this emotion can drive us closer to God. **(Psa 124:2-4, 8)**
 - 2. It becomes a sin when, like anger, when it becomes our master and shuts our mind down from yielding to the will of God. **(Eph 4:26-27)**
 - 3. The purpose of our study is to learn how God will help is in this.
- D. Depression is something that every Christian experiences.
 - 1. There are different levels of depression - Short term, Periodic and Chronic.
 - 2. The first step in finding help is to identify it in our lives. There is often a great deal of denial when seeing our own issues.

II. Identifying chronic depression in my life

- A. Consider some basic characteristics of depression. **(Psa 103:3-7)**
 - 1. There is an inability to let go of hurtful thoughts and find rest.
 - 2. There is a loss of appetite or even an escape through overeating.
 - 3. There is a desire to escape that can lead to creating your own reality. **(Psa 55:5-6; 1 Sam 22:8)**
 - 4. You become ego centered and look at all problems only as it relates to you. You find it difficult to understand and listen to others.

5. You often complain and can even make your hurts to be the center of your life. Self pity becomes a major issue. **(Ps 77:3; 142:3-4)**
- B. You become fearful of seeing self and life itself as it really is.
 1. Denial becomes a way of life. Loved ones learn the penalty that comes from telling to truth to one who wished to deny it. **(1 Sam 20:32-33)**
 2. Buried anger and depression can have various expressions:
 - a. **Active and Strong:** Murder, suicide, physical violence, physical damage, bullying, cursing.
 - b. **Not as Strong:** Slander, ostracize others, provoking others
 - c. **More Subtle:** Gossip, ridicule, sarcasm, criticism, careful revenge.
 - d. **Unsuspected:** Withdrawal from others or activities, psychosomatic illness, despondency.
 3. You can deny what everyone else sees! Consider your communication:
 - a. **Content of words** - 7%
 - b. **The tone of voice** - 38%
 - c. **Non-verbal, body language** - 55%
 - d. Consider how I say these 3 words: "I love you."

III. Win the battle for the mind through a living faith

- A. You have to learn to hold on to certain truths and bring them to the forefront of your mind. Consider the fight found in Psalms 77.
 1. He experienced the symptoms that come with great fear. **(Psa 77:2-4)**
 2. He immediately began asking important questions about what God will do. Have you ever asked these questions? **(Psa 77:5-9)**
 3. He found answers in remembering what God has done! **(Psa 77:10-15)**
 4. Does God give ear to your prayers and answer them this way? **(Psa 77:1)**
- B. Our God will teach you how to deal with hurtful people and let go of the past.
 1. One of the worst things you can do is to hold bitterness within when another has wrongfully hurt you. **(1 Jn 3:15)**
 2. Have you learned how to forgive another? Have you learned to give vengeance to God? **(Rom 12:17-21)**
 3. What happens to you when you do not do this? You have vivid memories, you never heal, you cannot stand to be around the enemy, you become cynical and lose heart and you likely will lose your soul.
 4. What happens when we let go and become healed loving people? God will bless us as a witness to our "enemies." **(Psa 23:5-6)**
- C. Our God is a God of peace and pleads with us to win the battle of the mind. **(Phil 4:8-9)**

Conclusion: By faith let us see our hurts as God does.