

Facing Depression Together – Part 2

The Symptoms and Causes of Depression

Introduction:

- What is depression?
- Only by knowing the symptoms can we know if someone is suffering from depression, and then seek the appropriate _____.
- Only by knowing the symptoms and by seeing them in Scripture can we avoid the _____ of thinking that depression must be sinful.

1. The _____ of depression

A. Life _____

- One of the first steps in treating depression is to take the time to ***EXAMINE*** our lives and _____ our depressed thoughts and feelings to events in our lives.

B. _____

Prov 23.7a (NKJV) For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

- False _____
 - ***Life example:*** You make a mistake in a cooking a meal and conclude that you're a total disaster.
 - ***Spiritual example:*** You have a sinful thought in prayer and conclude you must be an unbeliever or an apostate.
 - ***Biblical example:*** When Job suffered, he concluded that he must be an enemy of God.

Job 13.24 Why do you hide your face
and count me as your enemy?

- **False** _____

- **Life example:** If a young man's feelings for a young woman are rebuffed, he concludes that this will always happen to him and he'll never get married.
- **Spiritual example:** When you try to share the Gospel with someone, you're mocked, and you conclude that this will always happen, and you'll never win someone to Christ.
- **Biblical example:** Jacob concluded that since Joseph was dead and Simeon was captive in Egypt that Benjamin would be taken from him.

Gen 42.36 *And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin. All this has come against me."*

- **False** _____

- **Life example:** You get a 90 on a test, but all you can think about are the 10 points you got wrong.
- **Spiritual example:** You heard something in a sermon and you didn't like or agree with and went home thinking only about that part of the service.
- **Biblical example:** In spite of just seeing God's miraculous intervention on Mt. Carmel, Elijah only focused on Jezebel's opposition to him.

1 Kings 19.10 *He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."*

- **False** _____

- **Life example:** If someone compliments you, you conclude that they don't mean it, or they're just trying to get something from you.
- **Spiritual example:** When you receive a blessing from a verse or a sermon, you decide that it's just the devil trying to deceive you.
- **Biblical example:** Instead of Jonah rejoicing that the Ninevites repented, his mood slumped so low that he angrily asked God to take his life.

Jonah 4.3–4 *Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” 4 And the Lord said, “Do you do well to be angry?”*

• **False** _____

- **Life example:** A friend passes by you without stopping to talk. Unknown to you he’s late for a meeting, but you conclude he no longer likes you.
- **Spiritual example:** Someone who used to talk to you at church now hardly talk to you anymore, so you conclude she must be offended by something you did. But unknown to you, her marriage is in deep trouble, and is too embarrassed to risk talking to anyone.
- **Biblical example:** A psalmist concluded that all men are liars, but on reflection he admitted that this judgment was overly hasty.

Psa 116.11 *I said in my alarm,
“All mankind are liars.”*

• **False** _____

- **Life example:** You feel sure you’ll always feel depressed and will never feel better again, despite the evidence that almost everyone recovers.
- **Spiritual example:** You’re convinced that you’ll never be able to pray in public, even though with a little practice almost everyone manages it.
- **Biblical example:** Anticipating the opposition Jesus would face in Bethany at Lazarus’ funeral, Thomas falsely predicted that they’d all be killed.

John 11.16 *So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”*

• **False** _____

- **Life example:** When you make a mistake at work, you conclude, “I’m going to get fired!”
- **Spiritual example:** In spite of having received God’s forgiveness, you focus on your past sins in such a way that leads to continued guilt and fear of punishment.

- **Biblical example:** When Peter denied the Lord Jesus, he wept bitterly but decided that what he'd done was so catastrophic that there was no alternative but to forget preaching and go back to fishing.

John 21.3 *Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.*

- **False _____ -based reasoning**

- **Life example:** You feel useless, so you conclude that you are useless.
- **Spiritual example:** You feel unforgiven, so you conclude that you are unforgiven and cut off from God.
- **Biblical example:** At one of his low points, David felt cut off from God, and it led him to falsely concluded that he was.

Psa 31.22 *I had said in my alarm,
"I am cut off from your sight."
But you heard the voice of my pleas for mercy
when I cried to you for help.*

- **False " _____ "**

- **Life example:** The busy mother who tries to keep her house spotless as if there were no children living there is putting herself under undue pressure to reach unattainable standards.
- **Spiritual example:** The conscientious Christian woman who feels that despite being responsible for running a household, preparing meals, cleaning house, and raising children, she should also be at every prayer meeting and Bible study, should serve on several church committees, prepare meals for needy church members, read good Christian books, and feel close to God.
- **Biblical example:** Martha felt deep frustration that Mary wasn't fulfilling what she felt were her obligations, and she strongly complained about it.

Luke 10.40–42 *But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." 41 But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 but one thing is*

necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.”

• **False** _____

- **Life example:** When your child doesn't get excellent grades, you conclude that you're an awful mother, when the real reason may be that your child may be missing some academic strengths or skills.
- **Spiritual example:** When your child turns away from the Lord, you assume that it's all your fault, despite doing everything you humanly could to bring him up for the Lord.
- **Biblical example:** Moses felt so personally responsible for the negative reactions of Israel to God's providence, that he prayed for his death.

Num 11.14–15 *I am not able to carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me. 15 If you will treat me like this, kill me at once, if I find favor in your sight, that I may not see my wretchedness.”*

C. _____

• **Do you feel** _____ **sadness?**

- **Biblical examples:** Job (Job 3.20; 6.2-3; 16.6, 16) and David (Ps 42.3, 7)

• **Do you feel** _____ **with God or others?**

- **Biblical examples:** Jonah (Jonah 4.4 9) and Moses (Num 20.10-11)

• **Do you feel your life is** _____ **?**

- **Biblical examples:** Job (Job 3.3-26) and Jeremiah (Jer 20.14-18)

• **Do you feel** _____ **anxiety or panic?**

- **Biblical examples:** David (1 Sam 21.12) and The Disciples (Matt 8.25)

• **Do you feel God** _____ **you and is far from you?**

- **Biblical examples:** Job (6.4; 13.24; 16.11; 19.11; 30.19-23, 26) and Jeremiah (Lam 3.1-3)

• **Do you feel** _____ **or do you have a longing to die?**

- **Biblical examples:** Job (Job 3.20-22; 6.9; 7.15-16) and Moses (Num 11.14) and Elijah (1 Kings 19.4)

D. Bodily _____

Prov 17.22 *A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*

- Disturbed sleep (Job 7.4, 13-15)
- Tiredness (Ps 6.6; 69.3)
- Weight fluctuations (Job 17.7; 19.20)
- Digestive problems (Lam 3.15)
- Loss of appetite (Ps 42.3; 102.4)
- Bodily pain (Ps 31.10; 32.304; 38.3)
- Choking feelings and breathlessness (Ps 69.1-2)

E. _____ and activity

- We may stop doing things we _____ or were good at or were good for us.
- We may start doing things that make us feel _____, like staying indoors, drinking alcohol, or pushing away people who care.

2. The _____ of depression

A. _____ causes depression.

- Life events
- Lifestyle

B. The way we _____ causes depression.

C. _____ causes depression

- Truly spiritual causes of depression usually involve behavior that a Christian knows is wrong, but is _____ persisting in.

D. _____ causes depression.

John 9.2 *“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3*

E. _____ causes depression.