



Lesson 9

Overcoming Depression

Introduction:

Depression affects people in all walks of life. In a desperate attempt to cope, billions of antidepressant drugs and tranquilizers are gulped down each year, yet the problem continues. W.H.O. reports that by the year 2020 depression will be the 2nd leading cause of disease in the world. How do we then cope?

1. **What is depression?**

1. Severe despondency and dejection, accompanied by feelings of hopelessness and inadequacy.
2. A condition of mental disturbance, typically with lack of energy and difficulty in maintaining concentration or interest in life.

Google dictionary

Discouragement – Cause is understood and feelings are temporary

Depression – Persistent sadness, reduced physical activity, Irrational anxiety, hopelessness.

2. **Where there Bible heroes that faced depression?**

You'd better believe it. God's people are not immune to the feelings of hopelessness this is where the devil attacks the hardest. Abraham experienced depression at the thought of not having a rightful heir (Genesis 15). Jonah experienced depression when he found God would have mercy on his enemies (Jonah 4). Elijah was asking for death when he was under extreme stress and fear for his life (1 Kings 19). King Saul felt depression when God's Spirit left him (1 Samuel 16:14-23). Jeremiah (the weeping prophet) was depressed at the thought of God turning His back on the entire nation (Entire book of Jeremiah). David sensed discouragement when he realized he had hurt his friend, his nations, and God (Psalms 38:6, 8).

3. **What caused Elijah to fall into depression?**

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I [am] not better than my fathers.

1 Kings 19:4

The condition of the mind affects the health to a far greater degree than many realize. Many of the disease afflicting humanity are the result

4. **What are the main causes of depression?**

The condition of the mind affects the health to a far greater degree than many realize. Many of the disease afflicting humanity are the result of mental depression. LOSS OF CONTROL, Negative emotions, such as grief, anxiety, discontent, sorrow, and guilt all tend to break down the life forces and invite physical disease and death.

5. **What are the results of depression?**

-Heart attacks are much more common among depressed men.
-Calcium loss in even young women.
-In severe cases brain functions become deranged, and brain cells shrivel and die to the extent of key areas succumb to atrophy.

6. **How did Elijah break this feeling of hopelessness?**

And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise [and] eat.
And he looked, and, behold, [there was] a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.
And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise [and] eat; because the journey [is] too great for thee.
And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

1 Kings 19:5-8

Rest, a good warm meal, someone encouraged him. This natural remedy strengthened him to continue 40 days and 40 nights.

7. **What part did God take in depression relief?**

And it was [so], when Elijah heard [it] that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, [there came] a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?
And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, [even] I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.
And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael [to be] king over Syria:
And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint [to be] king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint [to be] prophet in thy room.
And it shall come to pass, [that] him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.
Yet I have left [me] seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

1 kings 19:13-18

**God asked him to examine himself by saying “What are you doing here?”
Elijah did a little more whining and complaining and God commissioned him
to work and then encouraged him that he is not alone in the matter.**

8. **How did Elijah react?**

So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who [was] plowing [with] twelve yoke [of oxen] before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

1 Kings 19:19

He actually took the advice and went to work finding purpose and found that he really was needed by others.

9. **What promises does God make?**

1. God does not abandon us in discouragement – Heb. 13:5
2. Trust & faith leads us to rejoice during trials – Ps. 28:7, 8
3. Trials draw us closer to Him – Ps. 119:67, 71
4. God will see us through – Ps. 118:6

10. **How can my lifestyle affect my mood?**

Research also confirms that many cases of depression are brought on slowly and subtly over time...by poor lifestyle habits. Science has identified several factors that can promote, and even intensify feelings of hopelessness and despair.

Among them are:

Alcohol—Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant, and it has been shown to increase depression, including suicidal thoughts and behavior.

Smoking—Research suggests that smoking may play an equally, if not even more dangerous role than drinking in the development of depression. Smokers are three times more likely to experience major depression.

Caffeine—After assessing 143,000 people, Scandinavian researchers found a significant increase in depression among women who were heavy coffee drinkers. In addition, these same women also had more problems coping with stress.

Physical Inactivity—A major study of 8,000 adults revealed that the less active persons are, the more depressed they were likely to be.

Improper Diet—Sugary sweets, and heavy rich meals can contribute to blood sugar imbalances and feelings of depression.

Food allergies—For some people, food allergies can play a role in depression. These may need to be identified.

Medications—Some high-blood pressure medications, as well as other types of medicine, can bring about depression. Consult with your doctor about this possibility.

11. **What can I do to overcome discouragement/depression?**

4 - Rejoice in the Lord alway: [and] again I say, Rejoice.

6 – Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 – And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 – Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things [are] honest, whatsoever things [are] just, whatsoever things [are] pure, whatsoever things [are] lovely, whatsoever things [are] of good report; if [there be] any virtue, and if [there be] any praise, think on these things.

13 – I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

19 – But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4, 6, 7, 8, 13, 19

Thank God no matter what. Pray to God lay it all to Him. Then will you find the peace of God that passes all understanding.

Talk with others. Do purposeful meaningful tasks. Bring structure into your life. Introduce a healthful diet. Get adequate rest. Exercise. Outside and get regular sunshine. Cultivate an attitude of gratitude.

Conclusion:

Say it and believe it “with God all things are possible”. No more stinkin’ thinkin’!
Amen.

When depression settles upon the soul, it is no evidence that God had changed. He is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." You are sure of the favor of God when you are sensible of the beams of the Sun of Righteousness; but if the clouds sweep over your soul, you must not feel that you are forsaken. Your faith must pierce the gloom. Your eye must be single, and your whole body shall be full of light. The riches of the grace of Christ must be kept before the mind. Treasure up the lessons that his love provides. Let your faith be like Job's that you may declare, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Lay hold on the promises of your Heavenly Father, and remember his former dealing with you, and with his servants; for "all things work together for good to them that love God."

[RH, January 24, 1888 par. 8E.G.W.]