

Counseling Question 5. Provide a biblical definition of depression. Describe manifestations of depression in both the inner and outer man. Explain the biblical factors that drive depression. Detail several biblical strategies to respond to depression.

Definitions:

Depression

Scripture Texts:

Genesis 4:3-7

Psalms 42 & 43

Proverbs 4:13

Matthew 7:24-27, 27:3-5

2 Corinthians 10:5

Resources:

Ed Welch, *Depression* (P&R) – booklet

Ed Welch, *Depression: A Stubborn Darkness* (P&R)

Bob Somerville, *If I am a Christian, Why Am I Depressed?* (Xulon, 2014)

Jay Adams, *What to Do When You Become Depressed* (Timeless) – booklet

Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Zondervan, 1986), 350, 375-376.

Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Zondervan, 1986), 126, 146.

Laura Hendrickson & Elyse Fitzpatrick, "Depression: An Opportunity in Disguise" in *Will Medicine Stop the Pain?* (Moody, 2006), 97-120.

Wayne Mack, *Out of the Blues* (Focus, 2006).

Robert Smith, *The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference* (Timeless, 2000), 195-2

Case Study: Sarah

Sarah is a 34 year-old married mother of three who comes to you for help with depression. She says that she has been feeling “terribly sad” for the last six months, and has had a lot of trouble “keeping up with life.” She came to you seeking the opinion of a biblical counselor on what she should do. Sarah has several friends who received anti-depressants from their family doctor. The medicine seemed to help for a while, but they also experienced some unpleasant side-effects that she is concerned about. She asks you explicitly, “Do you think I should see my doctor about taking an anti-depressant?”

Counseling Question 13. How would you respond to this question? Write out your answer exactly as you would provide it to Sarah.

Definitions:

Scripture Texts:

Genesis 4:3-7

Psalms 42 & 43

Proverbs 4:13

Matthew 7:24-27, 27:3-5

2 Corinthians 10:5

Resources:

Elyse Fitzpatrick & Laura Hendrickson, *Will Medicine Stop the Pain?* (Moody, 2006), chs. 1, 2, 5.

Charles Hodges, *Good Mood Bad Mood* (Shepherd Press, 2012), 37-53.

Edward Welch, *Blame it on the Brain* (P&R, 1998), 115-130 (chs. 1-3 provide essential theological material which may be helpful also).

Edward Welch, *Depression: A Stubborn Darkness* (New Growth, 2004), 209-217.

Robert Smith, *The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference* (Timeless, 2000), 63-100.

Counseling Question 14. What means would you use to find out more information about Sarah's current problem? What information would you seek?

Definitions:

Scripture Texts:

Proverbs 18:13

Proverbs 20:5

Resources:

Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically (Thomas Nelson, 2005), 131-146.

Howard Eyrich & William Hines, *Curing the Heart* (Mentor, 2007), 93-99.

Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Zondervan, 1986), 257-293.

Robert Smith, *The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference* (Timeless, 2000), 71ff.

Paul Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* (P&R, 2002), ch. 10 and appendices 1-3.

Wayne Mack, "Taking Counselee Inventory: Collecting Data" in John MacArthur, ed.,

See also resources listed under question 5 regarding depression as several contain help on data gathering.

Counseling Question 15. Carefully describe whether and how you would want to work with a physician to help Sarah through this ordeal? As part of your answer to this specific question describe, in general terms, how you believe biblical counselors should cooperate with medical professionals.

Definitions:

Scripture Texts:

1 Timothy 5:23

Colossians 4:14

2 Corinthians 4:16

Resources:

Dan Wickert, "Working with a Physician," audio (NANC Annual Conference, 2010). Available at <http://soundword.com>

Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Zondervan, 1986), 37.

Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Zondervan, 1986), 437-443.

Laura Hendrickson, "How to Talk with Your Doctor" in Elyse Fitzpatrick & Laura Hendrickson, *Will Medicine Stop the Pain?*, (Moody, 2006), 217-221.

Robert Smith, *The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference* (Timeless, 2000), 195-223.

Case Study: Tim and Emily

Tim and Emily come from a church across town, and have asked to meet you because of some help that you offered their friends several months ago. They are coming because of a persistent problem they have had in their marriage. They explain that in their six years of marriage Tim has always had a “short fuse.” He regularly “loses it” when he comes home from work which fills the evenings with tense communication. Their weeks are filled with arguments about everything from dinner being ready on time, to whether they should have kids. Tim thinks Emily is a good wife, admits the problems are his fault, but says he just doesn’t know how to “maintain control.” About a year ago Tim went berserk screaming at Emily, kicking the kitchen table and throwing plates on the floor in response to Emily’s complaint that he came home late without calling. Emily was always uncomfortable with Tim’s previous pattern of outbursts, but this was different. She was truly scared. Tim was too. In tears she told Tim that something had to change.

Tim talked to his pastor who told him that he needed to see a professional therapist. Tim followed the advice and made an appointment with the Christian counselor whom his pastor recommended. Tim met with the therapist for a few sessions, who ultimately recommended he see a psychiatrist for medical care. When Tim met with the psychiatrist he was told that he had bi-polar disorder and began to take the medications prescribed by the physician. Tim was initially discouraged to learn that he had a disease that would likely last his entire life, but he was thankful to have a plan to deal with problem. Emily was also encouraged that there was now at least something they could do.

Their encouragement quickly gave way, however, when after several months on the medication Tim had still not really changed. While his temperament seemed milder in general the loss of control, and screaming were still present. It was at this point that Emily began to regret ever marrying Tim. All the arguments together with the couple’s lack of children were taking their toll. She realized she was in a marriage that she did not want to be in, but didn’t think she had any options.

Then last week Tim “went completely crazy.” Emily suggested on a Saturday morning that Tim should cut the grass because he had not done it the week before. Tim did more than scream and throw things this time. As he yelled and became more “worked up” he threw the phone at Emily. He missed her, knocking a hole in the wall, but they both knew he had crossed a line.

Emily said she couldn’t take it anymore and wanted out of the marriage. She told him that if something didn’t change very quickly she was going to leave. That is when he reached out to his friend who recommended you.

Tim and Emily both profess faith in Christ, and relate their testimonies of conversion in their teen years. Both are also terribly discouraged. Tim doesn’t know how to treat Emily better

since he is “plagued” by this disease. Emily loves Tim and would like their marriage to work, but she is worn out with the lack of change. She feels badly about wanting to leave because she knows he has an illness, but she is increasingly convinced that God is telling her to divorce Tim.

Counseling Question 16. Using biblical categories, what considerations should be made relating to Emily’s safety? What practical steps can be taken to ensure Emily’s safety?

Counseling Question 17. How will you decide whether to pursue Tim and Emily as believers or unbelievers? What difference will their status as Christians make in your counseling?

Definitions:

Scripture Texts:

Matthew 7:15-23

James 2:14ff

1 John 1-5

Resources:

Jay Adams, *Ready to Restore* (P&R, 1981), 20-23.

Jay Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling* (Zondervan, 1979), 22-23.

Jay Adams, *A Christian Counselor’s Manual* (Zondervan, 1973), 37.

Howard Eyrich & William Hines, *Curing the Heart* (Mentor, 2007), 187-193.