

Better Together!

Depression

Biblical Characters experienced depression: David, Jonah, Job, Moses, Jeremiah, Jesus

- **Isaiah 53:3**, “a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.”
- **Mark 14:34-36**
- **James 5:17**, “Elijah was a man just like us.”

If we are going to help people overcome depression, anxiety, fear, and other types of mental illness, we have to remove the stigma. You may do everything we are going to talk about over the next three weeks and still experience a measure of depression and mental illness.

- Some depression is caused by spiritual issues and even so may require a professional counselor.
- Some depression is caused by medical issues and may require a doctor. Our goal over the next few weeks is to speak to our piece of that equation (spiritual aspects)

Big Idea: We are better together!

- **Why is that so frequently our solution?** We are the living expression and experience of Jesus in the world and Jesus wants us to live a blessed, abundant life characterized by love, joy, peace!
- **J.I. Packer, “The task of the church is to make the invisible kingdom of God visible.”**
- When you encounter Definition, you encounter Jesus. For most people, their first experience with Jesus is you.
- We are image bearers. We reflect the glory of our father.

What was the first problem in creation? Isolation, **Genesis 2:18**

What was the first thing sin produced? Isolation/Separation, **Genesis 3:7-9**

“The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved.” **Mother Teresa**

How does the enemy attack us? Divide and conquer, **1 Peter 5:8-9**

How is the enemy trying to attack us today?

- Digital isolation/ smart phones/ meta verse
- Polarization/ Unite around Christ and the gospel
- War

Social Origins of Depression: A study of psychiatric disorder in women by G.W. Brown, 2012

Eight factors causing depression

1. **Disconnection from work.** (Work does not contain meaning and purpose)
2. **Disconnection from people** (profound loneliness)
3. **Disconnection from meaningful values.**
4. **Disconnection caused by childhood trauma.**
5. **Disconnection from respect.**
6. **Disconnection from the natural world.** Rates of depression decrease when our time outdoors increases.
7. **Disconnection from loss of hope for a better future.**
8. **The role of genes and biology in depression.** *Neuroplasticity* means the brain is continually growing and changing and does not stay the same. This means *the concept of a ‘broken’ brain that cannot be fixed* is not supported by current scientific evidence. Scientists have discovered

that for depression **there is a 37% genetic inheritance**, BUT for those who carry the gene and are born with it — the inherited gene HAS to be activated by your environment, by negative trauma.

Depression, in most people, is caused by what they called the **cumulative effect**.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

The first century church was under constant persecution, literally every day and even every moment they were in constant danger and they were powerless to do anything about it but in the midst of their suffering they were able to comfort one another. Many of you are going through long term, high stress, traumatic circumstances but if you are surrounded by people who love you, who can comfort you, even though they cannot fix it your chances of developing depression is dramatically reduced.

What does spiritual growth look like?

1. Healing

John 3:16

If I am going to heal, I need to experience love from people who know my past and see my imperfection and love me anyway.

2. Identity

Revelation 12:10

2 Corinthians 5:17, I am a new creation.

If I am going to know who I am, I need to know the truth. Often, I need a community of believers to remind me who God says I am. I need their voice to drown out the Devil.

3. Character

Character is not what you do but who you are. My character is exposed when I am under pressure, when I am squeezed. Relationships expose my immature character.

Romans 8:28

God has more for you than that! If my character is going to grow, I need community.

4. Vision

Pain temps us all to become self-centered. Understanding my purpose helps me to focus on serving others. I need something to live for that is bigger than my safety and prosperity.