



Depression

Everyone gets depressed at one time or another. Various things make people depressed. They may be happy one day, but horribly depressed the next. Paul will be our subject in depression and several Greek words which can be translated “depression.”

Understand that this doctrine is not dealing with clinical depression. That is a medical problem and should be handled by doctors skilled in diagnosing and treating such physiological problems.

You can be in fellowship and be depressed. You can have a headache and be depressed and be in fellowship. People can cause depression. 2 Cor. 7:1-2.

“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Make room for us in your hearts; we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we took advantage of no one.” (2 Corinthians 7:1-2, NASB)

People often misrepresent you. This can cause depression. When a pastor is really meeting the needs of people in his congregation, someone will sooner or later accuse him of something that is perceived as personal, when it is not.

Pressure can cause depression. In 2 Corinthians 7:3-5, “affliction” is θλίψις (thlipsis) in the Greek and means pressure, oppression, affliction. This is distress brought about by outside circumstances. This is the same word used of the “Tribulation.” “No rest” is ἀνεσις (anesis) in the Greek and means inside trouble from the Angelic Conflict. “Afflicted on every side” is θλίβω (thlibō) in the Greek and means to suffer afflictions and distress. Distress is caused by war. Distress is experienced by a woman bearing a child. Distress is experienced in the realm of dying. Distress was evident in the suffering of Christ in bearing our sins. Col. 1:24.

“I do not speak to condemn you, for I have said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together. Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction. For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within.” (2 Corinthians 7:3-5, NASB)

“Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.” (Colossians 1:24, NASB)

Affliction in the mind can cause depression. 2 Cor. 2:4.

“For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not so that you would be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love which I have especially for you.” (2 Corinthians 2:4, NASB)

To press up as a crowd presses can cause depression. Mark 3:9.

“And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him;” (Mark 3:9, NASB)

To compress, make narrow, to become restricted or narrow as a road that narrows down to nothing can cause depression. Matt. 7:14.

““For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find



it.” (Matthew 7:14, NASB)

To compress the soul through testing and suffering like a creditor pressing you to pay a debt can cause depression. In 2 Corinthians 7:5, “depressed” is ταπεινός (tapeinos) in the Greek and is used of position, power and esteem of low position. In James 1:9, “humble” is also ταπεινός (tapeinos) in the Greek.

“But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus;” (2 Corinthians 7:6, NASB)

“But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position;” (James 1:9, NASB)

In 2 Corinthians 7:5, *tapeinos* is used of an abject depressed person. Paul was constantly the target of the Angelic Conflict. Paul was constantly being maligned by Christians (Alex the Coppersmith, Demas, Hymenaeus, etc.). Paul had the forces of legalism constantly against him. He had battles outside. He had fears on the inside. He had pressure. Most of us don’t have a clue what pressures and opposition Paul had to face.

Sometimes the good human details of just living are enemies of divine good. What kept you from studying the Word on Sunday? What kept you from public assembly during the week? Heb. 10:25.

“not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:25, NASB)

What kept you from studying the Word through printed books and recorded Bible classes this last week? How many of God’s promises did you claim? Did you use 1 John 1:9 or were you in fellowship the whole week? What got you out of fellowship? Does your life show that you make the daily intake of Bible doctrine your highest priority? Is this what you do regardless of what is happening in your life?

People may have physiological change from disease, illness, or change of hormone balance. Any organic illness is a potential here. Mental health issues can cause depression. Loneliness can cause depression. Job 3:25-26; 2 Tim. 4:10.

“For what I fear comes upon me, And what I dread befalls me. I am not at ease, nor am I quiet, And I am not at rest, but turmoil comes.” (Job 3:25-26, NASB)

“for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.” (2 Timothy 4:10, NASB)

Carnality or being out of fellowship can cause depression. All mental attitude sins will cause carnality such as worry, fear, frustration, anxiety, and moodiness.

Solutions to Depression

The first solution to depression or distress is doctrinally oriented believers with whom you can have rapport. 2 Cor. 7:6-7; 2 Cor. 7:13-14.

“But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more.” (2 Corinthians 7:6-7, NASB)

“For this reason we have been comforted. And besides our comfort, we rejoiced even much more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I was not put to shame; but as we spoke all things to you in truth, so also our boasting before Titus proved to be the truth.” (2 Corinthians 7:13-14, NASB)



These are believers you can trust. In fact, you should spend very little if any time around believers you don't trust. These are believers you enjoy being around. It is relaxing to be around these believers. These are rare believers. Titus was the only one and perhaps John Mark who had this ministry with Paul with the rare ability to snap a believer out of depression.

The second solution to depression or distress is to be around believers who are growing spiritually. This really encourages a pastor-teacher when he sees members of his congregation interested in the Word and growing spiritually from it. You should have regular, punctual attendance at Bible class regardless of the details. Ideally, you should have a systematic, enthusiastic response to the Word of God. 2 Cor. 7:7.

“and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more.” (2 Corinthians 7:7, NASB)

The third solution to depression or distress is a completed or growing edification complex of the soul. This is a picture of the maturing believer in spiritual victory. Col. 1:9-14.

“For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” (Colossians 1:9-14, NASB)