



# Depression

Searching for Hope in Suffering



# Main Questions

- Who suffers from depression?
- What is it? What does it look like?
- What causes it?
- What does it have to do with the Bible and Christianity?
- How is it treated?
- What about medication?
- What if I'm depressed?

# Who suffers from it?

- 1 in 7 college students will experience depression while in college
- 30% of freshman report feeling overwhelmed
- 17 million people each year
- It is widespread and anyone can struggle with depression





# 1. What is it?

- According to the Diagnostic Statistical Manual V (2014)
- Requires five or more of the following symptoms be present for at least 2 weeks:
  - depressed mood
  - anhedonia (loss of a desire for pleasure)
  - sleep disturbance
  - appetite disturbance
  - fatigue or lethargy
  - muscle pain or tension
  - thoughts of guilt or worthlessness
  - thoughts of suicide
- Note: not caused by bereavement

But what does that  
all mean?

What does  
depression look  
like in someone's  
life?





# 1. What does depression look like?

- <https://youtu.be/-eBUcBfkVCo?t=11s>
- “A Grace Disguised” By Jerry Sittser



# 1. What does depression look like?


- “I tried to sleep but couldn’t. Part of it was that I was scared to wake up with a feeling of panic in the pit of my stomach. Anxiety was always present, and for no good reason it just got worse. I wanted to be out of the house, but I was scared to be alone. No matter what I did, I couldn’t concentrate except on questions such as ‘Am I going insane? What have I done to deserve this? What sort of punishment is this?’” (Welch, *Depression: Looking up from the Stubborn Darkness*)



## 2. What causes depression?

- To be clear, this discussion on causes does not have a clear answer
- Each person has different paths to depression
- It's better to think of “factors” rather than causes
- And every factor has a different level of strength for every person





## 2. What causes/is a factor in depression?

### PHYSICAL

- Brain chemistry is impressionable
- However, not sure if irregular brain chemistry causes depression or is a result from the presence of depression
- Thyroid dysfunction can lead to depression

### ENVIRONMENTAL

- Trauma
- Loss (relative/friend dying)
- Life Transition (moving, starting college)



## Baron King, LPC, Clinical Supervisor:

- “Depression is a combination of physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual symptoms which cause significant impairment in the individual. While depression can have a physical cause, these cases are quite rare. In almost all cases, depression is the result of a disruption in how an individual assigns meaning to how they view God, them self, and the world around them.”

# Depression is:

- Suffering without meaning
- Being sad without knowing why
- Hopelessness
- Despair



A dark, foggy forest road with the word 'DEPRESSION' in a yellow box.

# DEPRESSION

WHAT DOES THE **BIBLE** SAY ABOUT IT?

What does depression have to do with my faith?

# Edward Welch *“Depression: Looking up from the Stubborn Darkness”*

- Depression is suffering: from other people, our bodies, ourselves, Satan, and God
- Often these intermix in a person’s battle with depression
- “Depression is spiritual in the same way that all suffering brings us face-to-face with critical spiritual realities” (p 26)

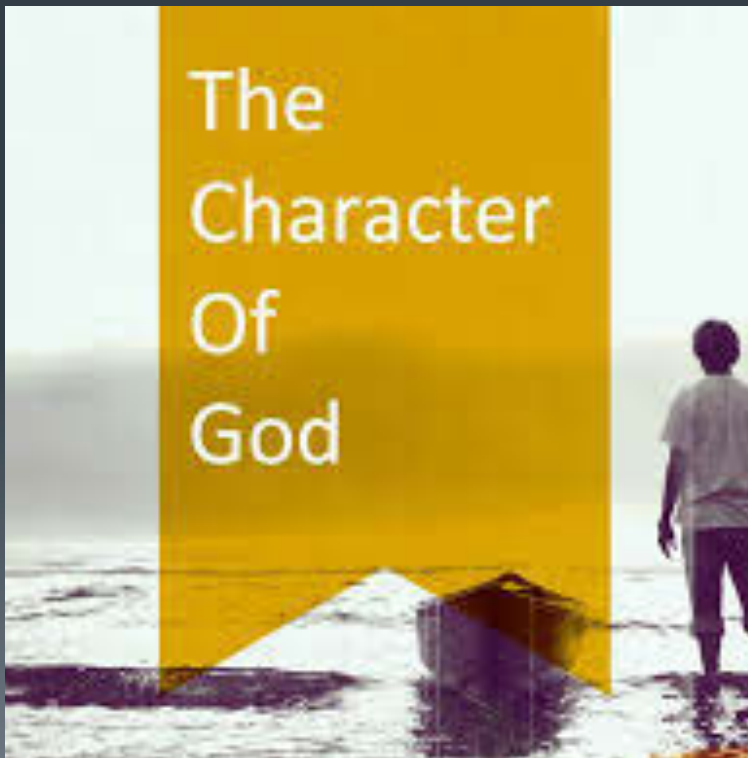




# Depression confronts us with questions

- “Who am I?”
  - “Who is God?”
  - “Why is there suffering?”
  - “What is the meaning of my life?”
  - “Why am I in pain?”
- 
- These are Scriptural issues that bring God to the forefront of your depression

Every time depression is present,  
the character of God is relevant






## Baron King, LPC, Clinical Supervisor:

- “In almost all cases, depression is the result of a disruption in how an individual assigns meaning to how they view God, them self, and the world around them.”





Basically, a majority of  
depression relates to how  
we view the world

(Get it?...World View...the camp you're at...ok moving on)


# Mind Maps





# Mind Maps

- We all have an idea of how the life should work
- How the world, others, ourselves, and God works together
- Based on experiences, opinions, teachings, personality, etc...
- As we progress through life, each experience we have either confirms or contradicts this mental road map we've created



# When something happens that completely contradicts and doesn't fit with our road map...

- It disrupts us and shakes our understanding of the world
- Our view of life becomes shaken
- We lose hope about the world and life
- “Why is this happening? It doesn't make sense. I don't understand why.”



The example of Sam



# How is it treated?

- Again, there is not just one “treatment” for depression
- Often it is a combination of several things including talk therapy, diet, social support, replacing lies we believe with truth, creating a new understanding of God and life, exercise, and medication



# Types of Treatment

## Physical

- Exercise (regular but doesn't have to be overly strenuous; jogging, swimming, etc)
- Healthy diet
- Doctors check up to rule out physical nature
- 8 hours of sleep
- Wellness Toolbox: box of little ideas to boost your mood (reading, take bath, visit park, etc)

## Mental/Spiritual/Social

- Pursuing God for the sake of fellowship
- Talk therapy: therapists help create new “road maps”
- Develop close social connections
- Identify false beliefs and replace them with Scriptural truths
- Be honest with God and others about depression

# Medication?




- There is no definitive answer on whether medication should be used or not
- Each person makes that choice along with professionals
- Some people with higher physical factors will need medication more than someone with experiencing a recent loss






# Medication?

- Thoughts to keep in mind:
  - Medication is a tool, not an ultimate solution
  - Is useful for it's defined purpose of treating symptoms, but when pressed beyond that it becomes dangerous
  - Cannot resolve issues of the heart and life questions



And to be clear, each person has a different path to recovery, and sometimes that recovery doesn't end with depression being gone forever.



# What not to say to someone who is suffering

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0NOIGMW4ww>



# What if I am depressed?

- Find and talk to a trusted adult
  - Pastor Schmoyer, Mrs Koch, Mark, Grace
  - Professional therapy
- Start engaging in simple things (exercise, sleep, diet)
- Be honest with others



# What if I am depressed?

- Remain engaged in your relationship with God
  - Cannot emphasize this enough
- Stay connected with friends



You have very real questions and doubts about God.

But...

Remember what God has done for you, and remember His love, grace, and mercy.



Never forget the Gospel  
and the impact of God's  
grace.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMiLCi9L4ts>

Questions?

