

## Depression

### Confusion

- a. What is a normal & appropriate sensory experience in the life of a believer – what should I expect my life to feel like as I journey from new birth until death?
- b. We know that God allowed AOS which corrupted the human system and gave the devil freedom to use evil to control the people of the world – insures pain & suffering
- c. We read words like rejoice, joy, content & peaceful used in relation to the Christian life and wonder: where is mine? Aren't I supposed to be feeling joy or at least content with my life?
- d. Each person inherits a personality and disposition that becomes their natural set point along the happiness/misery spectrum.
- e. We all have experiences up and down the happiness spectrum but return to our natural demeanor and emotional set point.
- f. The high end of the happiness spectrum can be approached through spiritual development but there are no guarantees about what you will feel as a mature believer – too many complex issues involved in each person's life to declare any absolutes about our emotions.
- g. One cause of confusion is the decision to believe in outward results instead of proper motives when considering the will of God.

**Galatians 5:16** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

- The OSN tempts us to seek gratification of our desires through a sinful method
  - GHS encourages us to seek fulfillment through submission & intimacy with Him
  - We often mistake our compliance with some kind of rule (legit or not) because of fear for walking in the Spirit – the Spirit filled life is a life of pursuing Godly desire, not avoiding sins out of fear – living to love God and win your race, not living to avoid losing through sin.
- h. Mistaking the spiritual life for fearful compliance to law/rules gives no fulfillment, no joy or peace and over time causes burnout and despair.

### Definition & Description

Depression is a state of mind caused by choosing to believe that you will never obtain those things that you most value & desire, producing a sense of hopelessness & despair. We conclude that because we will never receive what we have chosen to value and desire that there is little reason to continue pursuing a meaningful life. Emotions associated with depression are sadness,

fear, anger & feelings of despair. Deciding to depress (depressing) can be the result of inherited predispositions toward depressing being our instinctive path of least resistance, becoming a habit of life by consistently choosing it.

### Personal Perceptions

1. God designed our souls to learn from our experiences & to adjust our beliefs accordingly.
2. Using the visual and verbal faculties of our mind we form images and scenarios that represent what we believe that life is teaching us and what we believe will fulfill our lives.
  - We form images in memory based on events connected to a lot of emotion – pos/neg
  - We will continue to talk within ourselves about these images thinking them to be real
3. The conclusions we believe become the images of what is true and real to us, therefore we end up imposing our image of reality onto the world and others, even God.
  - Egocentric – only **able** to view the world only through your eyes – all children
  - Selfish – seeing the world based only on what is good for or pleases self – OSN
  - As we mature, we move toward other centered & a God centered view of the world
4. It is important to realize that while these images and inner discussions feel like they are reality for everyone, they are only our perceptions based on what has happened in our life.
5. We develop our versions of reality as we grow up, forming our core ideas long before we have enough real understanding to be wise about what is real and what is not.

Recall Wilma, the girl whose father left her and her mother for another family and chose to become depressed. It is instinctive to desire her family to remain intact and for her to want her father to return. Under the influence OSN, she made the image of her father returning & the reunion of her family into an idol, a situation with god-like powers to give her happiness. She decided that her imagined situation must come to pass for her to have any happiness in her heart. She would have pulled any string & fought even the real God Himself to get what she wanted. When it became clear that her father was not going to return, that her idol would fail her, she instinctively chose to decide her life was hopeless. She would remain deeply sad and hopeless until was able to construct another situational idol concerning her future, something to which she could attach her faith & hope.

- a. Wilma's desire that her family remain intact is normal, instinctive & universal.
- b. But making her intact family an idol to which she attached her desire, faith & expectations is a function of the OSN exaggerating its importance.
- c. Under the influence of OSN we exaggerate the importance of our needs/desires, making their fulfillment our life's purpose rather than God's purposes.
- d. From her perspective, her chances for happiness were over when her father refused to cooperate with her plan for him – her plan replaced God's plan.

- e. Setting up false idols that always fail us and then losing hope when do is the behavioral loop into which all of mankind is born and from which only God can save us.
- f. Being caught in the loop of making idols out of legitimate life, setting ourselves up for disappointment and then being hurt & losing hope is the human condition caused by AOS.
- g. Living under this idolatrous cycle causes us to interpret daily life as constant stress, keeping us from peace & contentment while diminishing our bodily health.

### **Chronic Stress & Brain Damage**

Neuroscientists at the University of California, Berkeley, have found that chronic stress triggers long-term changes in brain structure and function. Their findings might explain why young people who are exposed to chronic stress early in life are prone to mental problems such as anxiety and mood disorders later in life, as well as learning difficulties. The "stress hormone" cortisol is believed to create a domino effect that hardwires pathways between the hippocampus and amygdala in a way that might create a vicious cycle by creating a brain that becomes predisposed to be in a constant state of fight-or-flight.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-athletes-way/201402/chronic-stress-can-damage-brain-structure-and-connectivity>

Chronic stress causes the body to produce cortisol, the fight or flight chemical. The body is designed to stay in this mode only for short bursts when there is imminent danger. When a person consistently perceives their life in a negative light it keeps the body under stress, causing it to constantly produce cortisol. Too much cortisol damages the ability of the brain to connect within itself, especially damaging the serotonin receptors. The brain uses serotonin to produce thoughts of wellbeing and hopefulness. Without the ability to process serotonin we find it difficult to think positive thoughts, to see life from God's perspective and feel hopeful. Even though we trust with our souls, if our brain refuses to function properly, the positive feelings that we desire & associate with God's promises won't be there, making life very difficult.

Anti-depression medication (SSRI's) is designed to cause more serotonin to remain in the brain so that the receptors have more opportunity to use it. When the brain is able to use more serotonin we are able to not only logically conclude the promises of God but our emotions are able to connect with our thoughts. Over time when our brain is able to operate properly it is able to heal itself, enabling us to think and feel again as God intended.

### **Summary**

1. We create our own version of the real world by what we choose to believe about our life, especially those events we think of as adversity.
2. The images and inner dialogue that come from the ideas we believe control our emotions and even our overall disposition – live with a low grade discouragement
3. Our choices to believe, think & feel also have impact on the formation of the human body
  - a. Some medical professionals believe that many diseases are rooted in negative emotions.
4. The choice to negatively interpret our circumstances causes unhealthy reactions in the body
5. The consistent decision to think of our circumstances as stress unbalances body chemistry, causing a breakdown in the brain's ability to communicate within & damaging specific neural receptors.
6. Once the brain loses its ability to process serotonin it becomes very difficult to see life in a positive light, causing the person to become stuck in a depressed state – clinical depression
7. The tendency to interpret life as loss & sadness is passed down to next generations, creating predispositions toward depression – Wilma's children will be predisposed to depression.
8. Predispositions toward mental illness are often activated into new choices by reacting to the adversities in our life – probably Wilma's genetics contained depressive tendencies.
9. Solutions:
  - a. God's plan always operates from knowledge of the truth as revealed by GHS and using the truth to reprogram our thinking habits and patterns, forming images of reality based on biblical principles – aligned with God's view of reality.
  - b. Adversity exposes our false ideas and assumptions so that we can see them for what they are and **erase** them from our minds and brain.
  - c. Knowledge of God's true plan allows to **replace** our old thinking with God's
  - d. Once we have believed our new way of thinking, we purposely choose these ideas over and over to **embrace** them to be our new habit & patterns.

## Human Dreams — The Setup for Heartache Faith, Hope & Love

**“When you have expectations, you are setting yourself up for disappointment.” Ryan Reynolds**

1. God designed the human heart with a vacuum within, an emptiness that is the source of the awareness of our human needs and desires.
  - a. By design, God is our primary need with a need for other humans as secondary
  - b. We experience our needs as desires that Jesus called hunger and thirst

- c. The vacuum operates by attaching (*sunkerranumi* Heb 4:2) to people and to imaginary situations (dreams) in relationships with people.
  
2. We attach our needs/desires and our faith to earthly objects that we decide will fill the emptiness and satisfy the hunger of our hearts. (Wilma attached to image of her family)
  - a. We naturally & rightly bond with mother, father, family, friends, mates & children
  - b. Because we begin life w/out God, corrupted by OSN, we wrongly conclude & then believe that people are our primary source for love and happiness.
  - c. We attach our faith to imaginary scenarios of situations with people where they value, want, admire & respect us.
  
3. Having imagined our happiness coming from relationships with people we expect that God and life will eventually provide these things for us.
  - a. Expectations based on faith in images of the Lord's promises are realistic and dependable
  - b. Expectations based on our imaginary people scenarios are unrealistic & set us up for disappointment, discouragement, disillusionment and even depression.
  
4. Having constructed imaginary scenarios for our future happiness, we strategize the way we relate for the purpose of bringing our images into reality.
  - a. Conditional Relating – we give to others to induce others to give to us in return
    - Conditional Love – we give love so that the other will love us in return
  - b. When we believe that our needs are not met, our self-centered nature is driven to relate to others so that they will give you what you think you need.
  
5. The devil controlled world is designed to reinforce the idea that our happiness can only be found within the earthly, human realm.
  - a. The ultimate arrogant belief is that your own needs and desires are the most important issue in life, more important than God's will & you are willing to do whatever is necessary to have what you want.
  - b. Romantic love w/out cost or responsibility is promoted as necessary for happiness
  - c. Financial prosperity is required to create a life of security, unlimited opportunity and freedom from worry.
  
6. All plans apart from God's plan will ultimately fail and result in hurt, pain & anger.
  - **How we interpret the events of our life and what we believe because of our losses & frustrations becomes the most important decisions in our life.**

### Shattering of our Human Dreams

1. The only plans that are guaranteed to succeed are those based on the promises & principles of God's word, properly applied to life goals & dreams.
  - a. Our initial goals are formed from our self-centered neediness and built from ideas of the devil's world.
  - b. The goal of the Christian Transformation is to exchange our worldly values & goals for those taught in God's word.
  - c. Spiritual maturity is characterized by having removed a large number of earthly beliefs from the soul and replaced them with beliefs found in the bible.
2. We spend our life pursuing these imaginary, unworkable goals that even should they succeed, will not be what we need nor satisfy the hunger of the heart.
  - a. Whether we succeed or fail in reaching our goals, earthly & worldly gains can never satisfy the hunger and thirst of the heart.
3. When we have hard wired our emotions to the idea of gaining the worldly goals that we value so much, our failure to achieve those goals causes great heartache.
  - a. At first we are disappointed & discouraged but continue to believe in our goal and continue to pursue our dreams – real solution is to give up our earthly dreams.
  - b. As life continues, if we are unwilling to change our thinking about what we believe will bring us happiness, then our sufferings will increase.
  - c. Disappointment → discouragement → disillusionment → depression
  - d.

We've all experienced change for a moment, only to feel let down and disappointed in the end."– **Tony Robbins**, *Awaken the Giant Within*

"Sometimes Good Things Fall Apart So Better Things Can Fall Together."– **Marilyn Monroe**

The CWL is a supernatural life, beyond normal human comprehension (1Cor 2:14) and beyond human ability (Rom 8:7). At the moment of salvation, God enters every one of His children into a lifelong process He calls transformation (Rom 12:2). This transformation takes the believer from his/her original state of habitually & subconsciously operating on a self, earthly, temporal, material centered belief system to habitually & subconsciously operating on the belief system used by Jesus Christ (Eph 4:22-24). The primary goal of this process & indeed God's primary goal for the believer is called maturity, or reaching a place where we are more committed to God than we are to ourselves. This place of maturity is referred to as those who love (agapao) God (Rom 8:28).

1. **Transformation** – Rom 12:2 – conformed – *suschematizo* – to mimic the outward form; transformation - *metamorphoo* – process of inner change in stages of growth.

- a. Conformed – man cleaning up his act through human ability & positive thinking
- a. Transformed – man choosing the ministry GHS & WG, allowing them to renew his mind
- b. Salvation → stages of growth – maturity – death – eternity
- c. Purpose – change from being me, like me to being like Christ

**Rom 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;**

- Every aspect of God's plan works toward the goal of changing us to be like Christ
- The more we become like Him, more peaceful, productive & impactful
- God's goal is not to provide heaven on earth, but to allow the difficulties of life in the devil's world to challenge us and mold us to be like Christ – called to suffer.

1. **Mechanics of transformation:** God's grace provisions through ministry of GHS & WG enable believer to choose to be changed to be like Christ (Eph 4:22-24)

GHS + CBD + Adversity → Exchange of beliefs in the heart (erase & replace) + Faith cycle (to make beliefs of Christ new subconscious habit) → mature, complete, lacking nothing.

- a. God's grace program works off of the power of GHS – supernatural way of thinking
- a. CBD – God's grace explanation and perspective forming the mind of Christ
- b. Adversity – exercises that highlight & enable us to see our OM thinking & failures so that we will realize our need to change and be motivated to do so.
- c. Exchange – put off (remove old habitual beliefs & automatic thinking) → renew mind (learning CBD) put on (faith cycle to habituate NM thinking into subconscious automatic NM thinking & behavior – Heb 12:10-11 sharing His holiness & peaceful fruit of +R)
- d. Mature – place of commitment (agape love) to God & maximum production

2. **Stages of Growth** – Child – Adult - Mature

- a. 5 Greek words indicating different human ages and development used to describe the spiritual status of believers – not fixed stages but gives the concept of progression.
  - a. Child – *brephos, nepios, pais, teknon* – stages of human development
  - b. Adult – *huios* – adult son with access to adult privileges & responsibilities.
  - c. Mature – *telios* – finished, completed – mature adult – one who loves God

### 3. Impossible & Inconceivable commands

**James 1:2-4** Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

**Ephesians 5:20** always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God,

a. Are these principles real? Are the writers serious? Is this hyperbole?

Most believers (like me) read these principles, think they are impossible to accomplish and so they ignore them, they live by doing what they call their best and tell themselves that their human best is all God can expect. They either believe that developing a committed love for God to this extent is impossible or they simply don't know how to make it happen.

a. These commands (Mt 22:37 – Love Lord with all self) are given to be obeyed & God has provided the grace assets that enable us to be transformed so fully & so deeply that we begin to naturally desire & choose “not my will but yours”.

### 4. Perspective of the mature believer – the one who loves (is committed) to God.

**Agapao** – (human def) - to choose a mind-set of commitment & devotion to someone or thing because you believe your connection to the person/thing is necessary for your +H.

**Luke 11:43** *“Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the front seats in the synagogues, and the respectful greetings in the market places* – determined & committed to have these things in their life

**Agapao** – (Christian def) – mind-set of unconditional devotion & commitment to serve God's interests & a mind-set of devotion & commitment to do only good to others, to only edify & never harm; to edify to the extent the other will allow, never reacting even when rejected.

- OM – serves self & believes that proper priority is to meet your own needs first
- NM – serves God & believes God has already met all of our needs, filling our cup so that grace overflows to those around us – committed to edify

a. *Consistent desire & committed mind-set to choose God's will over your own Lk 22:42*

**John 14:23** Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him.

a. *Able to “count it all joy” knowing that even the loss of our human agenda through adversity is God working the good of making us like Christ. Jam 1:2-4*

• Believe in & truly buy in to the process of using adversity as an opportunity to see our flawed OM beliefs to be removed & as practice to habituate NM into automatic thinking

b. *Consistently grateful for everything that God allows to serve His purposes Eph 5:29*

• Abandon belief in +H based on earthly prosperity; embrace God's program of using suffering for growth & as opportunity to show extreme loyalty to God

c. *Believe that sharing the undeserved suffering of Christ is a gift – Rom 8:15-18*

• Free from compulsions of our human agenda, we believe suffering glorifies God

• Remaining loyal to God under human suffering contradicts the choices of Lucifer

d. *Contentment with any/all circumstances – God makes them into divine good Rom 8:28*

• At peace with one day at a time, whatever the day brings, looking to eternity.

Our relationship with God motivates us to give to others as He gave to us. · 2Cor 5:14 – love of Christ motivates us – ministry of reconciliation. · Mt 10:8 – freely you have received, freely give · Gal 2:20 – live my life by faith in Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me 5. Believer relating to believer – one another · Jn 13:34 - Love – unconditional commitment to edify one another · Rom 12:10 – love like family; consider others more important · 1Cor 16:20 – kiss – respect and affection · Gal 5:13 – by love serve one another · Gal 5:15,26 – don't bite one another; provoke; envy · Eph 4:2 – humility, patience, forbearance · Eph 4:32; Col 3:13 – forgiving · Col 3:16 – teaching and admonishing · 1Thes 4:18; Heb 3:13 – encouraging; comforting · 1Thes 5:11 – building up · Heb 10:24-25 – motivating and encouraging to good works