

## Depression Recovery

**Eph 4:17-19** This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that **you walk no longer** just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup> being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; <sup>19</sup> and they, **having become callous**, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

- Believers living like unbelievers.

### Compare with:

**Rom 1:18 - 32** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, <sup>19</sup> because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks (hardened their heart) but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures (Doctrines – Demons). <sup>24</sup> Therefore **God gave them over** in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. <sup>25</sup> For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. <sup>26</sup> For this reason **God gave them over** to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, <sup>27</sup> and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. <sup>28</sup> And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, **God gave them over** to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, <sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; <sup>32</sup> and, although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

## Defense Mechanisms

1. We instinctively pursue pleasure and prevent pain – pursuing pleasure apart from God turns us into idolaters and inescapably eventuates in disappointment and pain.
2. Unable to attach to God to make everything right, we instinctively change/distort the perception of our situations to minimize pain – we numb our emotions by telling self not to feel it, to stuff it down below our awareness – we instinctively stuff it.
3. **Fantasy:** Wilma's family was very poor and she attended high school with children of the very wealthy. Nothing she possessed measured up to the generally accepted standards of the other kids and we know how cruel kids can be. Her father was an honorable man but with little education working a blue collar job. She felt very ashamed and inferior every time she was around her rich classmates, wishing desperately to escape the reality of her situation. So in order to make herself seem more acceptable to herself and her mates, she began to romanticize a narrative about her father's job that boosted her image of herself. If she had been capable of humility she would have been more able to accept that God had given her an honest, loving dad and that the amount of money he made was not important. But because she was in an idolatrous relationship with her peers at the moment, she chose to fantasize her way into feeling better about herself.
4. The believers discussed in our passage are moving away from God and the fulfillment that is in a relationship with Him, experiencing greater and greater levels of frustration.
5. When fantasizing & pursuing happiness through sin nature strategies loses more and more of its ability to bring pleasure, we are left empty, miserable and so we instinctively choose to numb our emotions to cope with a situation we don't know how to correct.

## Deciding to Feel

1. DM's while instinctive choices that normally occur below the level of conscious awareness, they are choices none the less and choices can be charted & changed.
2. Practicing awareness of our own thoughts (visual & verbal) enables us to recognize that we are not operating as God designed – free from OSN control influenced by GHS
3. Observing self from the outside inward, watching our overt & verbal behaviors motivated by our emotional states created by our visual & verbal thinking, we can realize that under the surface of our thinking lie false ideas that are sabotaging our relationships.
4. As we become aware of our numbness that we continue to choose moment by moment, we can choose to remove the emotional wet blanket that we are keeping on top of our feelings.
5. We choose to allow ourselves to feel, a little at a time, more and more along the way until we are operating emotionally more openly and honestly.

6. Removing the cover of a past trauma can cause us to re-experience the pain of that trauma but God is with us and will give us the wisdom and ability to change our minds about the pain.
  - a. Remember that the only reason we felt pain from the event was because we chose to interpret the event as painful – we lost something we had chosen to value – idolatry
  - b. When we change the interpretation of the event in question, we change the emotional state that we associate with it
  - c. God has always been in charge of the circumstances of our life and what He allows is always able to be used for growth, not to damage us.
  - d. When we interpret the adversities of our life from His point of view, we can see that what was allowed was for our benefit and rather than interpret the event as a painful tragedy, we can see it as a beneficial blessing & be grateful for it.
7. The purpose for allowing ourselves to fully feel again are to operate with total honesty and to be able to uncover suppressed pain tied to human viewpoint interpretations of life.
8. Paul used the event of being arrested to look deeply at his human ambition & how he had kept the logic producing it as part of his Christian motivation – he wrote Phil 3 about those things he had previously valued, he now considered as dung in comparison to Christ.
9. Peter initially became very discouraged because of his 3 denials but after the Lord told him to get back to work, he gave up self pity, forgiving himself & realized the depth of his weakness.
10. The mechanics of removing the DM of denial & emotional numbness is to bring your consciousness into the moment and tell yourself to stop numbing & let yourself feel whatever you are feeling, even if it is painful – feeling pain is much better than feeling nothing at all.

**Are your emotions numb? Have you turned down the intensity of your feelings to get along with your life so that you don't bust out crying or smash something? Emotional numbness is a huge clue that you are covering up pain from the hurt that comes along with life as a sinner in the devil's world. Are you willing to trust the Lord and allow yourself to feel the pain in your heart? To feel the pain so that you can rethink the conclusions you believed that are causing the pain? Guilt, shame, regret, fear of the future, self doubt, bitterness, hatred of self/others....**

Vs 19 having given themselves over to unrestrained sinful desire

19 having given – **paradidomi** to surrender oneself, let yourself go, remove the restraints

19 sensuality – **aselges** – **Selges** (sell/gayce) was a city in the ancient world known for its people being models of self discipline and restrain – a/selges = unrestrained desire

- Unrestrained lasciviousness – giving self over to the sins of the flesh or to fantasies of sins of the flesh
- Unrestrained ascetic lust for control, order, purity & finger wagging morality

Vs 19 producing all types of impure – unrighteous behaviors.

Vs 19 with greed – **pleonexia** – unable to get enough, insatiable pursuit of more

1. When we harden our hearts toward God and His word we go down a road of corruption & enter into a process of degeneracy that addicts the soul to sin nature lust.
  - a. Moral Degeneracy: self righteous religiosity & finger wagging human morality
  - b. Immoral Degeneracy: unrestrained pursuit of lascivious pleasure – food, sex, etc
2. The farther down this road we travel away from God, more pleasure is required from whatever our strategies to gain gratification.
3. The road away from God is a journey of frustration and suffering – we minimize the suffering through numbing and try to maximize gratification through unrestrained pursuit of our sin nature strategies.
4. Verse 19 is an extreme description of a soul having abandoned all restraint provided by GHS & entered into a mind numbing, dissatisfying pursuit of more and more pleasure gratification from your OSN trend.
5. Futility of the mind (vs 17) describes this empty, meaningless lifestyle where we enslave our desires to more and more extreme types of OSN pursuits.
  - In my youth I became obsessed with golf, indulging in it at every opportunity, never able to get enough – nothing wrong with sports but it can't replace God
  - Another person becomes obsessed with exercise and healthy living to the point that every aspect of their life is dominated by it – can't even have an ice cream
  - Another becomes addicted to religious activities, pursuing every aspect of church life with unrestrained greed, unable to be at peace without being in church

## Greed:

1. **Greed** (or **avarice**) is an uncontrolled longing - hunger for increase in the acquisition or use of material gain (be it **food**, **money**, land, or animate/inanimate possessions); or social value, such as **status**, or **power**.

- Covetousness - Unrestrained hunger for more of whatever you have attached your desires & faith; no such thing as enough, there must be more

Lk 12:15-21 – beware of greed; parable of the Rich Fool – couldn't get enough, more, more

2. **Greed originates from the heart, believing that more will produce satisfaction**

**Mark 7:21** For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come-- sexual immorality, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup> adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.

The opposite of contentment – **arkeo** – enough **Phil 4:11** Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

- Contentment comes from believing & telling self that “I have enough”
- Greed is a belief in the heart that says “never enough, I must have more”

3. **Greed believes that happiness in life comes from one's possessions of every type, viewing everything including the people as possessions.**

**Luke 12:15** And He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not *even* when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."

4. **Greed attached the vacuum of the heart that cause our insatiable desires to the things of this life and demands that we have more and more – can't get enough – idolatry.**

**Col 3:5** Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

- Greed attaches full capacity for hunger & thirst intended for God to earthly treasures.

5. **Greed often motivates people to manipulate, scam & flatter to take advantage.**

**1 Thes 2:5** For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with pretense for greed.... **2 Peter 2:3** and in *their* greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

**2 Peter 2:14** having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart **trained (exercised)** in greed, accursed children;

- When we want to much from each other, we unintentionally manipulate each other trying to induce the other to change to be more accommodating.

## Summary

- a. The moment we harden toward God, His word or deviate from His perfect will we begin to degenerate into a state of ever increasing corruption.
- b. Prior to the age of accountability, before we choose for or against God, there exists a protection against the influence of evil.
- c. Once we choose to reject either the idea of God's existence or the gospel of Christ, the vacuum in the soul opens & pulls in all forms of corruption & evil.
- d. As we are influenced to operate from our OSN & OMBS, more and more pleasure or self-righteousness is required to bring gratification to the soul.
- e. We are driven into fantasy and pursuit of happiness through either lascivious or ascetic pleasure strategies, eventually trapping ourselves in lust with no gratification – addiction
- f. Life with no joy and only pain drives us to become callous and numb.
- g. Eventually we are influenced to seek our happiness in this life through earthly treasures and blessings that give us less pleasure for more investment.
- h. Greed is the essence of pursuing happiness that provides no satisfaction – continue thinking that a little more will do the trick.