

Choose Your Attitude

IF WE WILL FOCUS ON GOD, HIS TRUTH WILL STRIP AWAY THE SPIRITUAL DYNAMICS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO DEPRESSION AND BEGIN THE HEALING PROCESS

God has a potent, supernatural prescription for depression—His Word! Hebrews 4:12 says, “The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (NKJV). The Word will not only diagnose our condition, it will also prescribe a potent treatment program that drives depression out of our lives and sets us free! God’s Word is the ultimate antidepressant.

God’s plan for dealing with depression is very different from the world’s plan. The world wants us to reopen our wounds and recall every injustice from the past. The Word tells us to focus on the Healer.

When depression tries to come upon you, determine to look at Jesus—not at your distress. When you focus on God and His Word, the cause of your depression becomes irrelevant. God’s answer is the same: “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds” (2 Cor. 10:3-4).

Depression has many causes—in both the spiritual and the natural realms. Spiritually speaking, generational curses in a bloodline can predispose members of certain families to suffer from depression. In the physical realm, medical treatments, chemical or hormonal imbalances, fatigue, and just plain stress can be the culprits. Additionally, unresolved emotional

issues or abuse can bring overwhelming sadness, anger and the inability to function normally.

The bottom line is: Depression is a supernatural spirit of destruction straight from the devil, and as such, needs to be treated like an enemy. We must take a strong stand against it and refuse to give it any power in our lives.

Depression stems from an underlying root of unbelief—unbelief in God’s care, goodness, faithfulness, presence in your life or ability to get you out of seemingly “impossible” situations.

Unbelief is more than simply harmful to you; it is sin. In Mark 16:14, Jesus rebuked the disciples’ “unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe.” We cannot afford to make excuses or convince ourselves we have a right to be depressed. Instead, we need to take the supernatural prescription God has provided.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

The saints of old had to do the same thing. The Bible indicates in 1 Kings 18 and 19 that Elijah was at the pinnacle of his “career” as God’s prophet. Yet, at the end of chapter 19, he has plummeted from his highest high to his lowest low, sinking into a deep, suicidal depression.

Elijah began to look at his circumstances and feel very sorry for himself. This opened the door to destruction and caused him to cry out to God, “I’ve had away my life. I’ve got to die sometime, and it might as well be now” (1 Kin. 19:4, The Living Bible).

Elijah focused on the past and on the unfair treatment he had received from Jezebel. He forgot about the amazing things God had done in his life and now found himself hiding in a cave, alone and depressed.

I love God’s response to Elijah: “Then He said, ‘Go out, and

stand on the mountain before the Lord.' And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice" (1 Kin. 19:11-12, NKJV).

God came to Elijah and spoke in a still, small voice—the voice of the Spirit. When depression comes to your door, don't open it! Listen to what God says to your spirit.

As He did for Elijah, God will give you a truth that will take you through despair. Freedom occurs as you listen to His quiet voice. "'You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free'" (John 8:32). When you find yourself physically and emotionally exhausted, His gentle Spirit will remind you of His faithfulness—past, present and future.

King David struggled with depression throughout his life. Sometimes it was self-induced, brought on by his own sin. On one such occasion, he said, "For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my iniquity" (Ps. 31:10).

At other times David's despair was the result of his enemies' treatment of him. This was the case in 1 Samuel 30.

Before David became king of Israel, he and his 600 men were on the run from both King Saul and the Amalekites. They took up residency at a place called Ziklag (which means "overwhelming despair").

Once, after David and his men had been away, they returned to discover that the Amalekites had attacked the city, set fire to it, and taken their wives and children captive. "Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in

the Lord his God" (1 Sam. 30:6).

This was one of the worst days of David's life. All seemed lost. There was no one around who could help him or lift him up out of the horrible pit he was in.

That's what depression does. It isolates us from others and steals our joy. David cried out, "I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart have enlarged; bring me out of my distresses!" (Ps. 25:16-17) Yet, in the midst of his despair, David took God's prescription for his depressed state and "encouraged himself."

How did he do this? Listen to Psalm 25:5-6: "On You I wait all the day. Remember, O Lord, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses, for they are from of old."

As David spoke of God's faithfulness to him, he was literally speaking his deliverance from the depression and oppression threatening to destroy him. In Psalm 32:3 he wrote, "When I kept silent, my bones grew old." David knew the importance of speaking the Word in order to walk in victory.

How can you "strengthen yourself in the Lord" when depressing thoughts and circumstances rise against you? Read the Word and say what it says. Refuse to speak negatively. Instead, agree with the Word.

What does the Word say about you? That you are more than a you can do all things through you always triumph through all things will work together for your so much more! (See Rom. 8:37; Phil. 4:13; 1 Cor. 15:57; Rom. 8:28). Revelation 12:11 confirms that we overcome "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of [our] testimony."

It was the Word of God that spoke to David's heart! It was the spiritual "secret weapon" that set him free from the overwhelming circumstances of Ziklag. If you read the rest of 1 Samuel 30, you'll see that David gained a mighty victory—he

rescued his wives and children, and recovered all the spoil that had been taken!

Jeremiah is another Old Testament prophet who dealt with depressing thoughts and situations. For 37 years, he preached to the unrepentant Israelites. They had turned away from God to worshiping idols, and Jeremiah was called to confront them. His heart was broken for Israel's sins and the judgment of God that was coming upon the people (see Jer. 8:21-9:1).

Yet Jeremiah used the supernatural weapon of the Word to resist depression: "Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. 15:16). He was set free from the depression and filled with joy.

How did Jeremiah get his joy? He ate God's Word! When we are attacked by depression, we need to take our "faith pills." We need to "eat" God's Word—to read it, meditate on it and speak it.

If circumstances pile up, simply "eat" more Word. Unlike a traditional prescription, there are no adverse side effects from the Word and you can take it as often as needed!

The truth will not only set you free from depression, despair and hopelessness; it will give you joy in their place. Jesus said, "'These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full'" (John 15:11). He promises us a double portion of joy—His and ours!

What is the source of your joy? Circumstances? Money? Health? Your spouse? Your job? No, the Word is to be the source of our joy, and God's supernatural double-portion joy will defeat depression every time!

YOUR WORD PRESCRIPTION

Depression is of a supernatural origin. Therefore it's going to take the supernatural—a greater truth and stronger

anointing—to gain the victory and keep depression out of your life. Here are some important steps to take.

Repent. If you've allowed unbelief into your heart, causing you to become depressed, the first thing you must do is repent. Accept God's forgiveness and ask Him to give you faith in place of your unbelief. Then you can claim with the psalmist: "I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and You forgave the iniquity of my sin" (Ps. 32:5).

Speak your deliverance by speaking God's Word. You must refuse to speak the negative, doubt-filled lies the enemy tries to get you to agree with, and instead agree with God's Word—out loud.

Accept the Word above your circumstances. As you look to Jesus and the Word, not your troubles and trials, you'll find the victory you need. The Bible tells us He is our Deliverer. As the psalmist declared: "He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my support" (Ps. 18:16-18).

Make a choice to rejoice. As you "eat" the Word, God will replace your depression and despair with peace and joy. Make Psalm 103:2 your daily confession: "I will bless the Lord and not forget the glorious things He does for me" (The Living Bible).

A FINAL PRESCRIPTION Have you ever noticed that depression and anxiety often come at night? God in His mercy has given us a nighttime prescription in Psalm 4:4,7-8: "Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety" (NKJV). You can go to bed and have sweet dreams; you can lay your head down and not be depressed.

What about when you wake up? Have you ever faced discouragement in the morning? God has written a prescription for that too! Psalm 5 is your morning dose of the Word: "Give heed to the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for to You I will pray. My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up" (Ps. 5:2-3).

Morning, noon and night, you can take your supernatural antidepressant. As you focus on God's Word, listen to the Spirit's voice and allow Jesus to give you a double portion of joy, you can walk in victory over every spirit of depression that tries to disable you or sidetrack your life! God's prescription for joy will keep you depression-free!

Marilyn Hickey is founder and president of Marilyn Hickey Ministries in Denver. She is an anointed teacher and author whose ministry reaches the world through television, books and crusades.