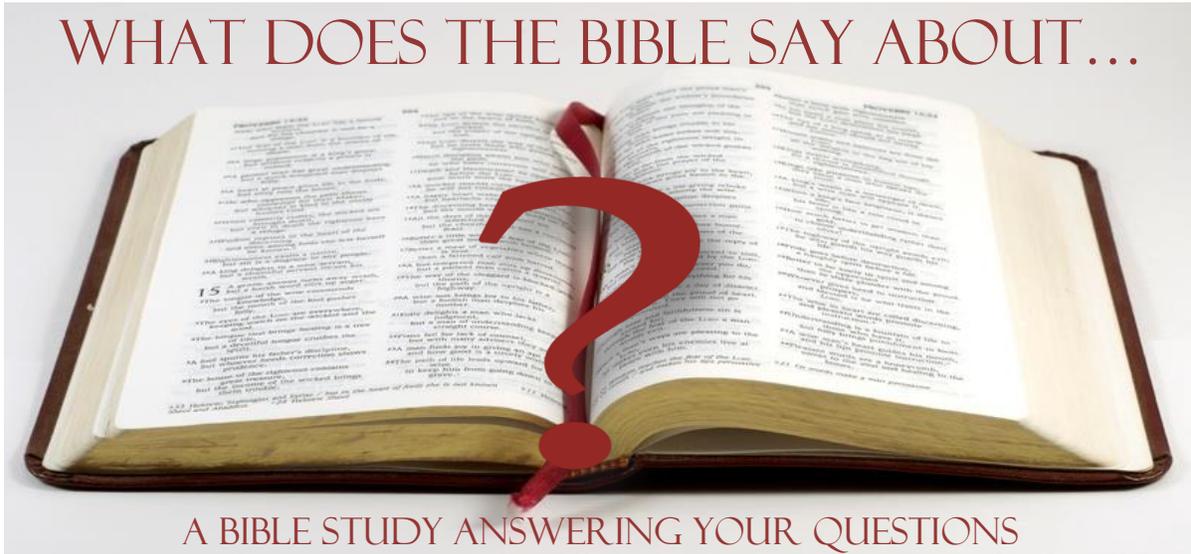


WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT...



Lesson 7:

Depression, people who victimize themselves, suicide

Depression:

I do not have a degree in counseling nor am I educated in psychology. I do, however, believe that the Word of God can give us direction in answering these important questions. I would suggest professional help if depression is long lasting, personally destructive, or severe. Sometimes depression is the result of a chemical imbalance or physical problems that can be addressed medically.

The word Discouraged is used six times in the Bible.

Here are some references of people who went through depression or discouragement.

- Abraham** (Genesis 15)
- Jonah** (Jonah 4)
- Job** (Book of Job)
- Elijah** (1 Kings 19)
- King Saul** (1 Samuel 16:14-23, etc.)
- Jeremiah** (Book of Jeremiah)
- David** (Psalms 6, 13, 18, 23, 25, 27, 31, 32, 34, 37-40, 42-43, 46, 51, 55, 62-63, 69, 71, 73, 77, 84, 86, 90-91, 94-95, 103-104, 107, 110, 116, 118, 121, 123-124, 130, 138, 139, 141-143, 146-147)

Depression strikes both women and men. Such as Hannah, who was barren, and like Jeremiah, the "weeping prophet."

Depression can come after a defeat:

When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives, sons and daughters taken captive. So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep (1 Samuel 30:3-4).

Emotional letdown can also come after a great victory.

Elijah the prophet, defeated the false prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel in a stunning display of God's power (1 Kings 18:38). But instead of being encouraged, Elijah, fearing Jezebel's revenge, was weary and afraid:

He (Elijah) came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. (1 Kings 19:4-5, NIV)

Even Jesus Christ, who was like us in all things but sin, may have suffered discouragement. Messengers came to him, reporting that Herod Antipas had beheaded Jesus' beloved friend - John the Baptist:

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. (Matthew 14:13, NIV)

Is it totally outrageous to say that Jesus was discouraged or even depressed at times?

What examples can we use to support that?

Does God not get angry with us if we get depressed?

The enemy would love for you to think less of yourself, feel condemnation or guilty about feeling depression.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Ask yourself, do I know where this depression/discouragement is coming from?
- How is my health?
- Am I reading the Bible and praying like I should?
- Are there people who I associate with that are dragging me down?

David:

1 Samuel 30:6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

David had to "encourage himself" in the Lord.

How did David encourage himself?

How could you "encourage yourself"?

A note to all of us:

- Don't dismiss someone who is telling you they are depressed. Pray for them, encourage them.
- Don't say, "Well, if you were right with God, you wouldn't be discouraged."
- Discouragement can be crippling both physically and spiritually. So, helping someone may take some time and effort.

Paul to Timothy:

2 Timothy 4:14-18 ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: ¹⁵ Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. ¹⁶ At my first answer no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge. ¹⁷ Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. ¹⁸ And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Paul wrote to Timothy about Alexander and how God's people didn't help him when he was distressed.

Paul did, however, understand that his help was in the Lord.

We need to understand that as well. Although it is good when fellow saints in the church reach out and encourage us, we shouldn't depend on that.

How to get past or get the victory over discouragement

1. Prayer
2. Read the Word of God, particularly encouraging passages. (Good Book: God's Promises)
3. Talk to someone who is mature in the Lord, not just anyone, or everyone.
4. Get pastoral counseling. Possibly from a Christian counselor, psychiatrist or medical doctor (*word of caution: many psychiatric drugs are misused and over prescribed*).

5. Take time off. Get away for a prayer retreat; Jesus did on more than one occasion.
6. Don't take on other people's problems or take on too much...

One of the great truths of the Bible is that God is our hope when we are in trouble, including depression. The message is clear. When depression hits, fix your eyes on God, his power, and his love for you.

Deuteronomy 31:8 And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

Joshua 1:9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Psalm 34:18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Isaiah 41:10 Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Jeremiah 29:11-12 ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. ¹² Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Matthew 28:20 *(Jesus said to his disciples)* Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

Write down Scriptures that help you most, and memorize the verses.

Victimizing Oneself:

People have been known to hurt themselves, commit suicide or attempt suicide.

Victimizing oneself or committing suicide is wrong, it is sin.

Exodus 20:13 Thou shalt not kill.

Suicide is self murder.

The Bible mentions six specific people who committed suicide: Abimelech ([Judges 9:54](#)), Saul ([1 Samuel 31:4](#)), Saul's armor-bearer ([1 Samuel 31:4-6](#)), Ahithophel ([2 Samuel 17:23](#)), Zimri ([1 Kings 16:18](#)), and Judas ([Matthew 27:5](#)).

Five of them were wicked, sinful men (not enough is said regarding Saul's armor-bearer to make a judgment as to his character).

Some consider Samson an instance of suicide ([Judges 16:26-31](#)), but Samson's goal was to kill the Philistines, not himself.

The Bible views suicide as equal to murder, which is what it is—self-murder. God is the only one who is to decide when and how a person should die.

Attempted Suicide or Desired to Die:

King Saul (1 Samuel 31:4) Later killed by Amalekite (2 Sam. 1:10)

Asked to be Killed:

Abimelech (Judges 9:54)

Elijah (1 Kings 19:4)

Is suicide wrong? Yes!

Is it (suicide) "unforgiveable"? This is a hard question. The catholic church teaches that suicide is unforgivable and that the person goes to hell.

But is this what the Bible teaches?

For a long time, I believed someone who committed suicide was lost and could not be forgiven for it. Today, I'm not sure I was right.

The Bible says there is only one "unforgivable sin". Blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. Matt. 12:31

Therefore, we can assume, someone can be forgiven for committing the sin of suicide.

However, I believe we should stress the fact that if someone has come to that point in their life, they need help.

This tragic reality does not have to happen.

The Bible clearly teaches respect for human life. Taking it, other than during war or self preservation, is sin.

Are we, the church, the Bible, against euthanasia?

I believe I can answer the questions for us all together.

The Bible clearly teaches that human life is precious and ought to be cherished.

How we treat our bodies, is clearly taught in the Bible as well.

What about a person victimizing themselves?

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 ¹⁶ Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? ¹⁷ If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Ecclesiastes 7:17 Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 ¹⁹ What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? ²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Psalms 34:17-20 ¹⁷ The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. ¹⁸ The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. ¹⁹ Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. ²⁰ He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

1 Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

2 Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Psalms 147:3 He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

Choose LIFE...

God does know our hearts and all we are going through.

What about victimizing oneself?

Is it wrong/sin?

Here's the solution:

Getting beyond suicidal thoughts and victimizing oneself is needful.

Learn to have faith in God and trust in God.

Learn to respect your body.

Take your stress and hurt to the Lord.

Make a real effort to get to know "who you are in the Lord".

You are a child of God and He loves you.

You do have HOPE!

We need to learn how to love ourselves regardless of our perceived faults and failures.

Respect life, your life.

Matthew 10:29-31 ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. ³⁰ But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Jesus Died, so you could live with Him for eternity.