***The Causes of Depression - PH81-01

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 4:4***

We are pausing at Philippians 4:4 for our subject of happiness, and happiness as a duty. The human soul under emotional tension creates an unhappy person. The mind determines our emotions – not external factors, as such. Feelings are not the result of external factors. Feelings are always the result of what we think. Remember that just a little back beyond your forehead is the part of your brain that is the major control center of your whole body. That is the central switchboard. All the electronic signals go out from there. Every action of your body is signaled from that little point right up there near the front of your head, just beyond your forehead. That's your emotional center. And scientists have even learned how to make you feel things. They can take electric probes, and they can touch certain points in that center, and you will feel exhilaration; you will feel depression; and, you will feel various things. It's the switchboard that God has put into your body so that what is in your mind triggers that switchboard. Your feelings do not come from external sources. They come from internal thinking.

Therefore, the mind determines our emotions. So emotional tension or unhappiness is because something is wrong with your mental attitude. Anytime you say you're unhappy, always have at least enough knowledge of Bible doctrine to say, "Now, I've got to go back inside the front part of my head, and see what it is in there that's causing me to be unhappy." Don't be so dumb as to look outside to some external thing and say, "Now this person is making me unhappy; this situation is making me unhappy; this thing is making me unhappy; or, the lack of this thing is making me unhappy." That's not true. The only thing that triggers emotions is something you think. It's a mental attitude. If you learn that, you'll be worlds ahead of a lot of psychiatrists and psychologists, although they may they understand this principle as well.

A mind, which is oriented, consequently, on functioning on divine viewpoint, produces peace in the soul. When your soul is at peace, you experience happiness. Why? Because when divine viewpoint thinking controls that part of your brain, the result is happiness pouring through your being, because you are functioning on principles on the basis that God can bless.

People who are in conflict are people who are unhappy. Thus, here in Philippians 4, we read about Euodia and Syntyche, these two women who were in conflict in this local church in Philippi, and inevitably we know that they were two unhappy women because of the emotional tension that existed between them. The apostle Paul follows up this particular reference to these two women with the command in verse 4: "To rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I say rejoice." The apostle Paul commands this. This is in imperative mood in the Greek. It is a command – a spiritual duty to be happy.

For most people, happiness is really a rare commodity. Most people are starved for it, and everybody seeks it, but most people seek it in a wrong way. Yet the Word of God has the audacity to command us to be happy without excuse. The great enemy of personal happiness, we pointed out, is depression. Depression attacks believers and unbelievers alike. People react in various ways to depression. The famous artist Van Gogh cut off one of his ears once in a fit of depression. And you have your own way of acting and reacting in a fit of depression. You cut off certain things in different ways too, when you are depressed.

The whole Book of Philippians, I remind you, is a book written to explain the way to overcome depression, and to build the capacity in your soul for personal happiness. This is the "happiness is" book, and it is spelling it out in considerable details. We're coming now to the climax of it. In the fourth chapter, the pace is going to increase considerably, and he's going to become very specific, and he's going to spell it out so that you can't miss it. He is now preparing the groundwork, approaching that final climax of how to be happy. He begins with the declaration that it is your business to be happy. It is your God given duty to be happy.

Now, you can, of course, approach it on a humanistic basis and say, "OK, I'm going to be happy if it kills me." You've got to grit your teeth, and you've got to smile and be happy. But you're not. He is talking about something that is genuine. It's real. It just flows from your being. It's like walking into a room flooded with sunshine. Feeding your mind on Bible doctrine creates the mental attitude and the capacity for happiness. That's the basic principle. Spiritual reversionism leads inevitably to your personal loss of happiness. So people cause their own depression. People cause their own happiness. Once you have accepted that, and once you have grown spiritually enough to understand that, you've gone a long way. People create their own unhappiness; people create their own depression; people create their own happiness; and, people create their own peace. God has given you the means to do it. Either way, He leaves it up to you as to which one you want.

We pointed out that people who are depressed (and, of course, that means unhappy), are people who signal this with certain physical signs, among which we mentioned: erratic sleep patterns; apathy; loss of appetite; loss of sex drive; unkempt appearance; various physical ailments; weaknesses; and, so on. These are externals which signal that a person is suffering from depression. There are also emotional signs of depression or unhappiness. These are loss of affection; sadness; weeping; hostility; irritability; anxiety; fear; worry; and, a sense of helplessness. All of these are indicative emotionally that a person is unhappy.

**The Stages of Depression**

Unhappiness (or depression) goes in stages:

1. **Discouragement**

We have stage number one, which is a very mild stage of depression. This might be described by the word "discouragement." Discouragement is a mild state of depression. When you say, "Well, I really feel discouraged," you are saying, "I'm on the mild side of being unhappy. I have a mild case of depression."

1. **Despondency**

Then the second stage is severe. Severe depression may be described by the word "despondency." Despondency is a deepened stage of depression.

1. **Despair**

Then you get to the serious stage of depression, and there the person just has a sense of despair. Stage three is very dangerous because stage three crosses over, in time, into unreality. You go psychotic, and it often requires medical treatment to resolve the problem.

So when you find yourself discouraged, that's the time to do something about it. You now have taken the first step on the road to depression. You have now taken the first step on the road to violating the biblical principle of being happy. If you keep going, you're going to get to where it's severe, where you're just despondent with all kinds of external and internal expressions of that. Then you'll get to the serious stage where you are just in a complete state of despair, and that has very serious consequences in time.

**The Cycles of Depression**

Depression comes in cycles. Unhappiness comes in cycles. Part of dealing with our depressions and unhappiness can be dealt with by recognizing the cycles:

1. **Mondays**

All of you have heard about Blue Monday. Blue Monday is an old expression which is not quite true today. But in earlier times, it used to be a time when a woman could look forward to a very happy, relaxing time over the weekend with the family, and then come Monday, it was time to washing the clothes; doing all the chores; doing all the work; and, getting back into the work routine after the happy change of pace. So Monday was Blue Monday. For men, it was going back to the routines of work.

If you set up the fact in your mind that come Monday, I'm going to be blue, then you're going to be blue every Monday. Then you have a cycle. You have set up a cycle for yourself. You have said, "Every Monday is going to be blue." Instead, you could say, "From now on, Monday is going to be pink with me. It's going to be Pink Monday. Everything's coming up roses," or whatever.

1. **Seasons**

Seasons contribute to depression. Most basic American holidays are family-oriented. Therefore, along comes Christmas and it's a family affair. And if somebody isn't involved in a family situation, it can be very depressing. That's why a lot of people commit suicide at Christmastime. These other holidays like Thanksgiving are very family-oriented. People who don't have that context to join in find themselves in a very depressed condition. People who are in the ministry know almost SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) that come these holidays, they're going to get a lot of calls from people who want advice and counseling because their depression has had a prime time for maturing.

1. **Nighttime**

Certain times of the day are depressive times. That's why counselors generally will tell people, "Don't talk things over at night." Some of you have Blue Monday, and some of you have nocturnal blues. Some of you just have blues in the night. All night long, you're just blue. Well, that's a terrible time to crawl into bed and say, "Now I'm going to review my day." That's like one of our men on the executive committee said that somebody asked him once, "Do you pray before you go to bed at night?" And he said, "No, I'm too tired to stay awake to pray when I go to bed. That's why I go to bed. I pray when I'm awake." But there are some people who think that it's just wonderful to pray when you're groggy; trying to keep your eyes open; and, yawning in the Lord's face just to show Him you love Him. How dumb can you be? Well, nighttime is depression time. That's not a good time to review your day, or to talk things over. That's a time to forget your problems. It's a bad cycle period.

1. **Holidays**

After a holiday (after the party is over), that's the time to get depressed. The party is over, and it's 1:30 in the morning. Where do you go from there? You've shot the fireworks off in the afternoon; the aerial smoke bombs have been dropped; and, the whole bit is over, so now where are you going to go from there? You say, "Thanks for a great day, Lord," and you hit the sack. But that's a time for depression. All holidays have that tendency: that you're high; then, after it's over, the next day – that's the watch-out time.

1. **National Moods**

There are national moods of depression. We've gone through national cycles now. We think we're through with one telling blow to our national ego over the way national leaders are acting; we're about recovered from that; and, people are beginning to get happy again and get out of the depression, then something else comes along. It has just been one series of blows after another, on a national level, recently for this country. We're going to be subjected to a lot more of it because there are going to be a lot of promises.

If the American people are not smart enough to recognize old promises in new words; to recognize the same old song and dance; and, to have enough judgment to say, "Now let's just stop once, and back off, and do it really differently, and put somebody in office who's really going to do it differently, and that we really know is going to do it differently, so we can really see whether we have been that far off the track, and whether we've missed the boat way back sometime, and now it's our chance to get on," the result is going to be business as usual. And it's not going to be very long after the election before there is going to be another cycle of national depression, as the euphoria evaporates, and the nation discovers that it has done the same thing to itself again that it has been doing.

1. **Gender**

Depression cycles have effect, whether you're male or female. Your physical structure affects times in your life when you have moods. Actually, all human beings go through cycles. Women go through a mood cycle of 26 to 29 days. They're high and low, from peak to peak. It's 26 to 29 days. Men have the same thing. Psychiatrists discovered that for men it runs 34 to 38 days. So if you can find where you're at your low, and mark it, then everybody can count ahead and say, "Stay away from him 38 days from now," or 34, or whatever it is with you. That wouldn't be a bad idea if we could identify that for everybody. We'd all be happier with one another.

1. **Age**

Your age level has a certain significance for depression:

* 1. **Ages from Birth to 10 Years Old**

The first 10 years of your life are years when you're very happy. Small children don't have too much depression. There are not too many of them going to the psychiatrists.

* 1. **Ages 11 through 20**

But you get to your next decade of your life (11 through 20), and then things begin changing. This is a very emotionally volatile period, and the result is that it creates all kinds of excessive behavior so that the people who are involved in this age bracket become very offensive people. Because they become very offensive people, they find themselves rejected. And because they find themselves rejected, it is a prime time for depression. It opens the door to being depressed. Kids are coming into puberty (adolescence). They're confronted with the sexual controls that they've never had to be confronted with before, and that has a depressive effect.

They suddenly become aware of the fact they're going to be separated from their home. This can start in high school. A kid may be ninth or tenth grader, and he begins to add up on his fingers how many more years he can stay at home before he has to go away to school. Then, after that, how many more years before he's through with college, and he's going to be separated. He suddenly realizes that it's a shorter time than he has already lived. For a lot of youngsters, that has a very depressing effect to realize that their days are numbered in a situation that they enjoy. There's a certain time of letdown because you've reached goals. You have graduated from college; you've achieved a job; and, you've reached a career. So this is a very volatile period for depression. Here's where you really need some stability in handling depression, which is what we're getting to.

* 1. **Ages 21 Through 30**

Between the bracket of age 21 to 30 is a depression period also, but it's associated with different things. In large measure, it's an era of depression associated with establishing new relationships with the opposite sex, and moving into marriage situations. Here's where marriage brings the realities to life. People go into marriage with certain ideals and certain visions that they have which are unrealistic – certain miscalculations of one kind or another. Then marriage very quickly brings those miscalculations to the fore, and they see what the real picture is. Or they haven't been prepared for marriage with what to expect; what to anticipate; and, what the realities are. Or, if they were prepared, they were negative toward it, and didn't take it seriously. So when they get hit with it, it's a very depressing period.

In connection with that, along comes the birth of the first baby. For many women, this is a cause for considerable depression. A woman almost always tends to be depressed to some degree after the baby is born. She gets a whole lot more depressed after she gets into the routines of the diapering; the burping; the slobbering; and, all the other stuff that's involved. While she may have previously been looking at pictures of that cuddly little bundle of joy (that stranger who is going to come into her home), she discovers that stranger is a slob, and it's depressing. So she has to adjust to that.

There are burdens of finances that people get into in this age bracket that they have not entered into before. They're buying things, and they're expanding their lifestyle and their standard of living.

Also, here's where it hits – that traumatic day when mother and father stand at the door, and the little kid walks out to go to kindergarten for the first day. He's leaving home; the mother is crying; and, the fathers looking very serious. This kid's really happy, and the bus pulls up. I heard one kid turn to his parents one time and say, "I'm not going off to war. I'm only going to Berean Academy. I'll be home tonight." It is a discouraging thing in that bracket because you suddenly realize that your little kids are taking that first step of growing up – that first step away from home.

* 1. **Ages 31 Through 40**

Stage number 4 covers ages 31 through 40. This is a period that's a little more stable. It's not quite so depressive-prone. The 31-40 bracket is involved with rearing teenagers. It's a very active period of life. People are expanding; they're doing things; they're achieving things; they're realizing goals; and, they're realizing plans. They've come to some financial stability, and they're reaching out and doing things that they've wanted to do; planned on doing; and, hoped to do.

So that is a period when the cycle of depression is not really so intense. It's really a minimum depression period. The first decade was modest; the second decade was increasing considerably; the third decade was significant; and then, in the fourth decade, it was phasing off again.

* 1. **Ages 41 Through 50**

In the fifth decade of life (ages 41 through 50), there is a great increase in depression. It starts moving up again. So those of you who are in this category are going to be prone to this kind of unhappiness. That is because, in part, there is a gradual sensing of a decrease of vital physical force and energy. This is true for some people considerably more than for others. You can't do all the things that you could once do before. The realization that you're beginning to go over your peak is a very depressive thing for many people who are not prepared to deal with it.

Furthermore, you have here a more major departure of children from the home. They're not just going off to school. Here, they break; they leave; and, they move off for good. If all of the children have been bunched together (spaced two or three years apart, say), then you quickly go right through it. But if you've got a couple at one end; then a span between; and, a couple at the other end, the break isn't nearly so great. As a matter of fact, you appreciate getting rid of some of them because you still have some on your hands at this stage. By the time you get a little older, you're a lot more ready to retire.

It's like one lady said to me who's second child (a son) got married. She said, "I see what our mistake was. Two were not enough." I told her, "Well, they're cheaper by the dozen, but that might be too much." Anyhow, I know what she was saying. Suddenly, it's gone. And you have a big expanse of life – a very vital life period there, and no kids to enjoy in the process. So the spacing business is good. You can avoid some depression by a big span between children there. You'll spread out the enjoyment of the family. But the departure of youngsters from the home is a depressive thing: because they're gone; it's silent; it's quiet; and, it's different.

This is also the time, because of the sensing of the downhill movement of vital capacities, when you're back up to the condition of stage two, where sexual responsibility then becomes a major problem again. Those who have problems on that; can't handle it; don't handle it; and, haven't developed the spiritual maturity to handle it, find themselves in a depressed condition (especially if they're believers), because of breakdowns on that score.

* 1. **Ages 51 Through 60**

The next section, the 51 through 60 category, is another cycle. Here, the depression (the unhappiness) can bear in on you because you're realizing that life is half over. Some can cope with this stage of limitation because actually there are some people, when they hit this stage, who are planning, and their vision is really expanding. What they're doing is that they're using this as a base to do things that they've never done before. They're planning whole new worlds.

I remember one of the things that so characterized Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer of Dallas seminary, when he was doddering around up in his 70s, was making his plans for his annual trip to California to see the people that he used to minister to out there. Here we were carrying him up and down the stairs to go to his classroom, and he's sitting around making his big time plans for his next trip to California. That's the vitality that can be preserved with people who have constantly expanding vision. They're never saying, "OK, now I'm going to settle back and enjoy my retirement," or something like that.

A lot of people here react with self-rejection. They just reject themselves. They hate themselves. They look in the mirror and they don't like what they see. Consequently, they begin to become neurotic, and they become very unpleasant people. They have set themselves on the course to moving toward the third stage of depression. So things can get very bad in the 51- to 60-year-old bracket.

* 1. **Ages 61 Through 70**

Then we have the ages of 61 through 70. Here's the problem of the retirement area. Or one depressive factor here is that the husband or wife passes on. If the person has not been preparing for retirement, he just retires into nothing. That's the kind of person that you hear: "Here's Sam Jones. He retired, and three weeks later, or a few months later, he's dead." What happened? Or, he retires, and six months later, you see him, and he's a doddering old man. What happened?

Well, all of his drives; all of the vitality of life; and, all of the things that maintained him as an active person, he permitted just to dissipate because he retired into nothing. That causes a monumental case of depression and unhappiness. A person at this stage of life needs to retire into a situation where he is contributing to the well-being of other people, because one of the things that breaks people in their older age bracket is that they don't feel needed. One thing a person always needs is to be able to love, and to be loved – to need someone and to be needed. When that combination is gone, you have a prime candidate for depression.

This is the bracket where most people choose to rust out rather than to wear out. So they retire to nothing and start rusting. That's not biblical. The Word of God says, "As your days, so shall your strength be." But your strength can be considerably conserved and prolonged by keeping a vision. It all goes back to the mind. Remember that all of this stuff I'm talking about is all up in your head.

I remember during World War II, one of the great songs that everybody was singing was a song entitled The Young at Heart. It had a nice melody, and it had some sensible words to it: "The young at heart." It was a fact that the young at heart (that is, a mental attitude of youth) is something a person can carry right to the grave. But some people lose it when they get to be 18 years old. In the ages from 61 to 70, you have to be prepared to go it alone, because a lot of the old cats you've been run around with are gone. They've gone to the great pool hall in the sky, or wherever you used to hang around. But you're going to have to be prepared, in one way or another, to go it alone in that bracket more and more.

* 1. **Ages 71 Through 80**

When you get to the bracket of ages 71 to 80, senility is your major problem. You're more conscious of your own problems. This is the time you can really go with occupation with yourself, and then you can really bring depression. Your circle of friends is obviously decreasing, and you're wondering when it's going to hit you. Hopefully, you are prepared with dying grace as well as living grace. If you have living grace, you can be prepared with dying grace, and it won't disturb you. You are thrown back a lot more on your own resources. There are less people here who care about you; who want to take care of you; and, who are preoccupied with what's happening to you. It is a time, again, that if you are not mentally prepared by biblical principles, it will be a hard time.

* 1. **Ages 81 Through 90**

For those who are in the age 81 to 90 bracket, here, again, interestingly enough, depression drops off. You're back to a low level of depression. I think the reason for it is that the depressive types have all died off, and the only people that end up at 81 to 90 are those who are gung-ho, and have got it going for them. So that's why you get to 81 to 90 – there are no more depressive types around. Of course, that makes all of those who hang around in this group a lot happier with one another, because they're all the same mental temperament type, and they have the optimistic outlook that reaches the future. And they have active plans for the future.

I've got a mother that's 84 years old. She doesn't like me to tell that to anybody. And she gives her three younger daughters a fit because they can't keep track of her – where she's running around Chicago. She's a chaplain for the Salvation Army. So she's always operating all these big-shot operations. She has all of these super-duper things that she's putting on for all these senior citizens in their golden years. So I know that she can really operate, because she has a mind that's young at heart.

So these cycles of depression are going to be there, and at certain stages they get worse than others. It helps to know that it is possible to prepare for these cycles.

**External Causes of Depression**

There are external causes of depression, and we want to look at that a little bit. By external, I mean that there are external conditions which, if you have the wrong mental attitude, will contribute to triggering depression and unhappiness in your life. These factors are not uncommon in the experiences of all of us, but only a divine viewpoint mental attitude prevents these things from falling off into a state of depression. These are the external factors:

1. **Disappointment**

Number one is disappointment – something that causes you to be displeased. Your reaction to that disappointment results in depression. Maybe it's just a mild stage, but it sets you on the road. This, of course, indicates a lack of a relaxed mental attitude. The main cause of disappointment is people. People, for various reasons, get out of line. People violate our ideals for them. We expect something more of somebody; that person does something; and, we're terribly disappointed. Sometimes we're even shocked. What has happened, if you are not a mature and prepared Christian, is that Satan has given you an opportunity to go ahead and be unhappy. He is giving you an opportunity to be depressed because of the violation of your ideals for that person.

If you're preoccupied with yourself rather than the Lord Jesus Christ, then some insult; some cruelty; or, some failure is going to lead to discouragement. But if it does, then you know something about yourself. If the disappointment leads to discouragement (to that stage of depression), then you know something about yourself. That is that you are not a person who is mentally oriented to the Word of God. You do not have a relaxed mental attitude. You are preoccupied with self rather than the Lord Jesus Christ.

You can nurse this kind of heart into stage two (despondency), and you can go on to full-blown stage three (despair) if you want to. People are your prime opportunity for carrying you right into depression. And the more important the person is who disappoints you, the deeper your discouragement is going to be. So that always hurts. The more significant the person is; the more prestige he carries; and, the more stature he has, the deeper the impact is when he disappoints you, and the more likely you are to be depressed. Even very self-sufficient people are subject to disappointment. Everybody is subject to being displeased. If the love object is important enough, it can be very deep.

This type of depression can be experienced by children when they feel rejected by their parents. They're disappointed by that rejection. This produces a sense of loneliness that people have from the sense of rejection. Loneliness does not cause depression, but rather depression is what causes you to feel lonely. When you say, "I'm so depressed because I'm lonely," that's not true. What you should say is, "I'm lonely because I'm depressed. I've been rejected by someone that's important to me – by my love object." The result is loneliness. The emptiness of loneliness can only be cured by the love of somebody else. So when you are depressed, because of having been rejected or disappointed or denied the response of a love object, it's cured only by the love of another person.

First of all, it is cured by the love of the Lord Jesus Christ for you. If you go back to that, you are never in this position of being depressed, and thus lonely, because you've been rejected by a love object. You always have the deep sense, "God loves me." The Scripture says, "When my parents abandon me, God is still standing by me." His love is perfect.

Depressed people tend to withdraw from others, so their loneliness is crystallized. Because you're depressed, now you're lonely, and a false love can come along, and you can respond to that. That's where people marry on the rebound, and get into trouble out of a divorce situation. That's where people become attached to someone that they've idealized who isn't really at all like what they are envisioning that person, but their loneliness is creating this desire to have this fulfillment. So you can also have a false love object. However, that's reversionism. If reversionism controls your soul, then everything is inverted. It's like looking in a mirror where everything is backward. The people you should love, you hate. The people you should withdraw from are the ones you're being attracted to. Depressed people tend to crystallize their loneliness. So the Bible doctrine principle of mental attitude love for one another is vital to dispelling depression.

1. **Lack of Self-Esteem**

A second external trigger is lack of self-esteem. You just have a lack of a grace oriented attitude. I've noticed one way to spot a lack of self-esteem in some people. They're at a Berean event where I'm running around with my movie camera, and they see me point it in their direction. Some people hide themselves. What are they doing? They're saying, "I don't like my looks. I don't want them recorded on film. I don't want anybody to see me." Well, we're looking at you all the time. But they don't want it on film. They don't want to record it. A person has unrealistic expectations of himself, and thus he does not esteem himself. He exaggerates his own deficiencies to an extreme.

This is a legalistic type of Christian. The legalistic type of Christian has a lack of self-esteem. That's bad. That dishonors God. It's a travesty. You place arbitrary demands on yourself, and you make it impossible for you to approve yourself just because you're making arbitrary demands on yourself. You are not oriented to the grace of God. You're acting in a way that is not the way God treats you. Self-induced disgust will produce depression. It will trigger it.

1. **Unfair Comparisons**

Another one is unfair comparisons. You lack a mastery of the details of life. You're matching yourself against someone who does better than you do in something. You're discontent with what you are or what you have. You fail to accurately assess another person's situation. That's why you think that they're so much better. If you knew what the situation was of a lot of people, you wouldn't want to be in their shoes. You would thank God that you are not in their shoes. Unfair comparisons of yourself with other people is a trigger for depression, if you have a wrong mental attitude to begin with. And somebody else may do it to you. Somebody else may compare you unfairly to someone else.

Parents often do this by comparing one child to another child in an unfair way. They make comparisons that don't fit – where the situation from one to another is different. And if you are not prepared to take unfair comparisons that people make of you to others, it will hit you. It'll depress you. You'll be unhappy.

1. **Ambivalence**

A fourth one is ambivalence. Ambivalence means loving and hating at the same time – opposite reactions and opposite emotions to the same thing. Ambivalence leads to a sense of being trapped in an impossible situation which you cannot tolerate, and which you cannot remedy. Sometimes a mother gets a feeling like this. On the one hand, she loves the children; but, on the other hand, she resents the fact that they tied her down so much from what she once was able to do. This quality of ambivalence is waving both ways – love and hate toward the same object, or attraction and distaste for the same object. If you don't have the mental attitude to cope with it, this results in depression. It will often take an expression of an attitude of indifference. The ambivalence leads to where you are indifferent toward the object. You just don't care. You're turned off.

**Self-Pity**

Sometimes it expresses itself in wrath against the sense of a trap that you're in toward parents; toward mate; or, toward children. It is aggravated by the current belittling role of women in the home by the feminist movement and the Equal Rights Amendment type of mentality. Sometimes I hear some woman who is asked, "What do you do?" I'm always disappointed when she says, "Nothing. I'm just a housewife." She is belittling the finest role women can have by God's viewpoint.

Instead of saying, "Nothing, I'm just a housewife," she should hold her head up and her shoulders back, and say, "I'm a queen. I'm a housewife. I'm the queen of 1014 South Grove Street," or whatever it is. "I'm the queen." That's what you are. "I live with a king. The king is coming home tonight, and we're going to have a ball." She should say that instead of, "I'm a poor scullery maid." That is self-pity. By the way, the most hateful thing that God really hates is self-pity. Anybody who has to ever talk to people as a counselor knows that the primary cause of depression, and thus unhappiness with people, is their sense of self-pity.

1. **Sickness**

There is also sickness. That will trigger depression. It lowers your tolerance level because of organic causes. You don't feel well. Certain diseases and drugs will leave you in a condition which is conducive to depression. You can take some amphetamines, which put you high, and after they wear off, you go into depressive low. Alcohol does the same thing. It gives you the high followed by the depressive low. Diseases will do this. It's a condition which promotes depression.

1. **Biology**

Biological malfunctions can cause depression. You lack the physical well-being. This can be the malfunction of your glandular systems. It's not that you're sick, but it just doesn't work as well. Remember that negative volition to doctrine affects your glandular system. It disrupts the body chemistry.

If you have sat here today and you're gritting your teeth over something I've said, you've disrupted your body chemistry. And I say that it serves you right. If you're going to be negative to the Word of God, then you're going to suffer the consequences. You can either learn and be happy, or you can not learn and be depressed. You can go ahead and explain yourself away and defend yourself, but the Word of God is not going to be violated. It's not going to be outmaneuvered. God is not going to be frustrated. Biological malfunctions of your glandular system are directly connected with this up-front part of your brain. That triggers the whole thing. You have no control over it except indirectly. If you have the wrong mental attitude, it will disrupt your body chemistry.

1. **Postnatal Depression**

For women, there is postnatal depression following the birth of a baby. Anytime a lady has a child, she is in a condition prone to depression, and has to prepare for it. At the time of birth, there is a letdown. After that, there is the care of the new child, and that brings on a whole new scene, and that creates a condition that is often a shattering experience. If she prolongs it, then she will go into a very hyper-depressive state – into self-pity.

1. **Hyper Mental Activity**

Then there's another thing that will trigger depression, and that is hyper mental activity. This is the thinker. The mind is always on the go – spinning and going. So many demands are put upon the mind that it can never stand at ease. This kind of a person will find it hard to focus attention on one point. Did you ever talk to someone that, while you're talking to him, you notice that his mind is occupied with people around him?

Preachers do this. I talked to one just the other day. He's the operating kind of preacher who is always making contacts here and there, and talking to the folks. He asked me a question. I'm talking to him, and pretty soon I see his eyes beginning to move around. And I'm still talking, and he's greeting people around him, and he's coming back to me once in a while, and then he gets off again, so he can't focus his big active mind. Pretty soon he's back to me, and I keep talking. I said, "And so I came up to my mother-in-law and I killed her. I said, 'That's it. I'm finished with you. I've had enough of you.'" He said, "Well, praise the Lord, brother." He didn't even listen to what I was saying. This is the hyper mental type who is just going all the time. He's just hustling at work and zapping along.

This type is prone to depression because he has inability to focus on things, and the mental spinning of the wheels is just exhaustive. When you get exhausted mentally, just like physically, you're a candidate for depression.

1. **Rejection**

Next is rejection. Rejection indicates that you have a lack of occupation with Christ. You're not accepted by someone whose esteem you desire. Does it bother you that somebody doesn't invite you to their home? Does it bother you that some people go off and have fun together, and they don't include you? You're not accepted by certain people that you consider important.

Well, don't ever forget that, when that bothers you, you're saying that those people are more important to you than the fact that you're accepted by God. If the Lord Jesus Christ has accepted you, what difference does it make what Charlie Boozer thinks of you? If God has accepted you, what difference does it make what anybody else thinks of you? It only makes a difference when you are sitting there thinking about yourself. You're eating away, preoccupied with yourself. That's when it makes a difference. But when your eyes are on the Lord, and you're occupied with the Lord, it doesn't make any difference whether they include you or not. When they include you, you can commend them for having the good sense and the privilege. When they don't, it's their loss.

Often you're depressed over the rejection of someone whose acceptance you think is a lot more gratifying than it really is. Sometimes you get accepted by those people, and you wish you hadn't been. I know.

1. **Inadequate Goals**

Another one is an inadequate goal. You have a lack of capacity for life. You're going exactly nowhere. You've completed a big project, then everything is let down, and you don't follow that project with something else. That's like the cycles of growing old. You've reached certain goals in life, and if you don't arise to a new horizon, you're going to be in trouble of maintaining the level of happiness that God says He expects of you. Therefore, your goals should be constantly extended. You never come to the end of the line. You keep moving on.

This condition is indicated when someone says, "I have nothing to look forward to" – that kind of complaint. It indicates the fact that you lack the Holy Spirit's vision, because the Holy Spirit never runs out of a plan for your life. He never runs out of new horizons for you to conquer. When you start centering your thoughts on what God has in His plan for you, you won't be suffering from inadequate goals. There will always be something that is a significant thing that you're pursuing in life. If the goal you have in life is to buy the newspaper this afternoon and see what all the dumb ads have to say of the sales that are going on tomorrow morning, you're going to run out of goals. Your goals are going to have to be in more depth, and with more significance than that.

We still haven't come to the cure for depression. There is a very definite solution by the Word of God for depression, and I don't mean some rinky tink grocery list of ten points where you follow certain steps. It's going to be a little more biblical than that, but this was necessary background to brief you and to inform you on just what we're dealing with here, because these are the kinds of things that we face that can trigger depression; these are the stages of life we're in; and, these are the cycles we face. All of these things are involved in creating unhappiness for us, and thus to counter God's command to us to be happy.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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