

A Biblical Look at Depression

"Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen (depression)?"

Genesis 4.6

Rarely is depression caused by a physiological disorder though many physical problems come as a result of depression (insomnia, anorexia, obesity, fatigue, headaches, rapid heartbeat, slowed metabolism, stomach & digestive illness to mention a few. (Note: Psalm 38)

Rather, pent up anger is the root of nearly all clinical depression.

Whether it is exhibited by Cain as in the beginning or Jonah many years later, one thing is clear- the anger of man produces not only a venomous hostility toward others but a toxic poison to self. (James 1.20; Hebrews 12.15; Note that Saul's anger takes him from paranoia to actual possession in 1 Samuel 18)

Those prone to anger tend to be introspective, ego-centric and self-absorbed; Displaying both:

A. High Expectations on Self - with inflated opinions of what they can accomplish and a sense of superiority over others (they tend to rely on their own goodness), their behavior is often controlling and aggressive.

Like Ahaz in Isaiah 7, they refuse to accept help & are slow to admit needs (Elijah- 1 Kings 19), & they feel they should be better (Romans 12.3) thus they are prone to burn out.

and

B. High Expectations on Others - inflated with a sense of entitlement (Romans 2), unwilling to accept personal responsibility (thus blaming others, playing the victim), are often disappointed and manipulative towards others, at times showing passive aggressive behavior (Ie. late, slow, cutting humor, innuendoes, demeaning others) usually upset over the insensitivities of others and quick to point out their failings (Martha-Luke 10:38-42) thus prone to criticize.

Anger has many faces from "sad affect" ("countenance fallen") in Genesis 4 to laughter in Proverbs 14.13 or Genesis 18.9-15; from the overachieving workaholics in Philippians 3; to the lethargic, over indulgent in 1 & 2 Thessalonians; at times masked in guilt like Naomi while others like Adam choose to play the blame game.

SCRIPTURE SAYS YOU MUST DEAL SWIFTLY WITH YOUR ANGER!!!!!!! -Release it before the sun sets (Ephesians 4.26); If it takes root, it is hard to remove (Hebrews 12.15-17)

Introspection and self analysis will not help! (Jeremiah 17.9; Psalm 19.12; 1 Corinthians 4.4)

HOW DO I DEAL SWIFTLY WITH MY ANGER?

-Admit you are angry (James 5.16)

-Humble yourself before God (James 4.6-10)

-Confess your unwillingness to trust Him (Psalm 32)

-Offer the "sacrifice of trust" (Psalm 4)

-Rejoice in the Lord (1 Peter 4.12-19; Proverbs 16.20)

-Think of good & godly things (Philippians 4.4-9)

-Overcome evil with good (Romans 12.21)

"Pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5.44)

"Engage in good deeds" (Titus 3.14) (note Proverbs 14.21)

"Give blessings... do what is right... turn away from destructive behavior (Ie. Evil)... pursue peace" (1 Peter 3.8-12; Romans 12.9-10, 17-18)

-Think right!" (Romans 12.16, Philippians 2.3-5; 4.8-9, 2 Corinthians 10.5)

-Forgive!" (Colossians 3.12-13)

The Difference Between

The Sorrow of the Godly

&

The Sorrow of the Worldly

Ecclesiastes reminds us that no one on this earth is exempt from suffering, pain and death (Ecc. 9.2)... Never-the-less Scripture clearly defines & makes distinctions between a Believer's sorrow as opposed to the unbelievers' sorrow. Some distinctions are:

For the Believer:

For Both:

For the Unbeliever:

Sorrow is temporary & comparatively insignificant

Romans 8.18

Rev. 21.4,8

Sorrow is progressive & ultimately destructive

2 Corinthians 7.10

Sorrow has great value and purpose

2 Cor 4.17; Psm 126.5,6;

Matt 5.10-12

1 Peter 4.12-19

Sorrow has no value or purpose, only produces trouble & contamination

Heb. 12.15-17

Sorrow can be relieved thru genuine caring and true faith.

1 Thess 3.7; 4.18

Romans 8.28

Sorrow is relieved thru avoidance, aggression, regression, denial, superficial fixes & lies Jeremiah 6.14; 8.6,11; Isa 57.20-21; 59.8-13

Sorrow is spiritually focused
2 Cor 11.29, Heb 10.32-36, Eph 4.30, James 4.7-10,
2 Corinthians 4.18;5.6-8

John 16.20

Luke 6.20-26 Thus the timing of sorrow will often be different as well as the object of sorrow

Sorrow is worldly focused Matt 16.26, John 11.11-15,20-26

Sorrow eternally unites
Gal 4.12-14, 1 Thess 2.17-20,
Phil 2.19-20, Romans 8.31-39

Sorrow eternally separates
Psm 16.10-11, Isa 59.1-2

Sorrow is hopeful
Psm 27.13-14; 30.5

1 Thess. 4.13

Sorrow is hopeless
Ephesians 2.12

Sorrow disciplines and brings about godly change
James 4.8-10, Luke 22.31-32,
Psm 51.5-13

2 Corinthians 7.10-11

Sorrow depresses & brings about anger, anxiety & death
Genesis 4.6-8, James 3.13-18

Sorrow strengthens faith
1 Pet 1.6-9, Job 1.21,22; 13.5,
James 1.2-4, Psm 32.6-11

Sorrow repels faith
Rev 9.20,21; 16.10-11

Sorrow is comforted by God
(note: God of all comfort)
2 Cor. 1.3-6, Psm 33.13-22

Sorrow has no true comfort
2 Thess 1.7-9; 2.8-12