

Overcoming Depression

by Neil T. Anderson

Neil T. Anderson's sermon addresses the complexities of depression, emphasizing the church's role in providing support and the importance of faith in the healing process.

Duration: 1:13:28

Scripture: Psalm 34:18, Psalm 42:11, Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 11:28-30, John 16:33, Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 10:5, Philippians 4:8, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Depression", "Hope in Christ", "Overcoming Depression"

Description

Neil T. Anderson addresses the pervasive issue of depression, sharing personal experiences and emphasizing the importance of understanding both the emotional and spiritual dimensions of mental health. He highlights the need for the church to be a place of mercy and grace, contrasting it with secular approaches that often lack true healing. Anderson encourages believers to recognize that depression can stem from distorted thinking and emphasizes the power of Christ to bring hope and transformation. He also discusses the biological aspects of depression, advocating for a holistic approach that includes both spiritual and medical support. Ultimately, he asserts that the truth of God's Word is essential for overcoming despair and finding freedom.

Transcript

This is a subject on depression, and before we go to prayer about that, it's kind of fascinating because I'm trying to finish a book on it. I was supposed to finish it over Christmas, but I had rotator cuff surgery on my shoulder, I had a cancerous mole taken off, and I had to dismiss one of the most loyal employees I've ever had. I was so physically impaired and depressed I couldn't write it.

So let's pray. Father, thank you for your presence here, for your love for us. And Father, we just look to you to be the source of life and truth, and acknowledge that, Father, and pray that you just fill us with your grace and your mercy.

That what we have to say here would be eternally true and profitable for reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. So we'll thank you for it now, in Jesus' name. Amen.

I remember several years ago, when I was a pastor, that we had a gal in our church named Marty, and Marty was clinically depressed. I mean, that was her classification. And one day my wife went to Marty and said, Marty, why don't you go see Neil? And she said, him? He's always up.

Well, isn't that who you should see then? I mean, if you were sick, would you find the most snivelly, emaciated, wasted doctor in town and ask him what their health secret is? I mean, if you're down, you should probably learn from what somebody's doing who is up, right? But that's not the problem. The problem is, as I see it, she couldn't believe that somebody who is always up could understand and enter in and empathize with somebody who is always down. Now, there's some truth to that.

I want to state that up front. And I've observed this about the church, that when I go to God, I receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. And I want to suggest that our churches are not always perceived as a house of mercy.

A local 12-step program, a secular counselor, a local bar may show more mercy than what we've seen in a lot of our churches. But I don't think they have any grace to help in time of need. I don't think they have an adequate answer to really help these people get out of that.

A lot of emotion, a lot of empathy, a lot of catharsis. But is there an answer? And in most cases, not. There's a lot of coping skills that you learn to somehow learn to live with your limitations.

I think we've got a lot more to offer than that. Well, how can I go to God, by the way? I mean, after all, would he really understand? I mean, if he wants a new wife, he can create one. Right? Is he ever depressed? No.

The joy of the Lord is our strength. So he's never depressed. Could he understand? Ah, remember Jesus, folks? See, that's the context in Hebrews.

We don't have a high priest who cannot identify with us. He's been tempted in every way. He's the man of sorrows.

He's suffered pain. You think you've got problems? He had the whole world against him. You think you've shed to the point of death? He was crucified.

So, yeah, I think he understands. We've got the Psalms to somewhat prove that. One of his prophets.

And yet there's a stigma in our churches that we don't know how to respond to somebody who's got some kind of mental problem. Physical ones we're pretty good at. You know, you broke your leg? Oh, I'll sign your cast.

And I'll help get some meals for you at your house. You know, we really are pretty good at responding to people who have physical problems. But emotional ones? Boy, they're depressed.

Well, do you enjoy being around depressed people? No, they don't enjoy being around you either. That's the interesting thing about it. They want to withdraw.

See, that's part of their problem. But we don't know how to respond. We can't sign their brain.

And that's really true. I mean, we're very deficient as a body of Christ to know how to respond to somebody who's suffering emotionally. And yet we are in the presence of a blues epidemic.

I do not say that lightly. A study was done, oh, the end of the 70s, 80s, about 1980 or something like that. And according to their study was that depression has increased tenfold in the century in which we're living in.

In the last ten years, from 1985 to 1995, I just read this in our local paper, the number of doctor visits in which patients receive prescriptions for mental problems rose from 32.7 million to 45.6 million. Visits in which depression was diagnosed rose from 11 million to 20.4 million. Almost doubled in ten years.

Now keep in mind, not everybody goes to a medical doctor to be treated for depression, but doubled medications just for depression, you're talking a huge percentage of your population. Bipolar illnesses are estimated to be about 0.5 to 1% of a population. General depression about 10%.

Well, frankly, that's what, 10%? 226 million people who are presently depressed. And a lot of them are going to your churches. Some of them are pastors.

And yet, it's kind of fascinating to me, that is an emotional problem. It is seen as a downer. Well, if you were a good Christian, then surely you wouldn't be depressed.

If you were doing right, you wouldn't be depressed. And I said, I'll tell you something, a person who is struggling with depression would have a lot more identification and sympathy for the prophets of the Bible than somebody who's got a mental problem of arrogance, or pride, or self-sufficiency. You won't find a lot of companions amongst the saints in the Bible with that one, but you would find a lot.

Jeremiah was depressed. So was David. Let me read David.

Listen to this. I am benumbed and badly crushed. I groan because of the agitation of my heart.

Lord, all my desire is before you, and my sign is not hidden from you. My heart throbs. My strength fails me.

The light of my eyes, even that has gone from me. My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague, and my kinsmen stand afar off. Those who seek my life lay snares for me, and those who seek to injure me have threatened destruction, and they despise treachery all day long.

But I, like a deaf man, do not hear. I am like a mute man who does not open his mouth. Yes, I am like a man who does not hear, and in whose mouth are no arguments.

For I hope in you, O Lord, you will answer, O Lord my God. For I said, may they not rejoice over me? Who, when my foot slips, would magnify themselves against me? For I am ready to fall, and my sorrow is continually before me, and I confess my iniquity. I am full of anxiety because of my sin.

That's a depressed man. Almost every sign of depression that we've identified today are evident in that song. Let me list the major symptoms of depression.

I don't think I have time to write this down, but let me just listen. We developed a scale, one and the other, and tried to divide some way of tests to somewhat determine the severity of depression. But here are the things that really mark depression.

This is pretty well uniformly perceived. Low energy, difficulty to sleep, or 20%, that's all they can do, just sleep. Withdrawal from activities, no desire for sex, physical aches and pains, loss of appetite.

So if you've got a sex problem, an overeating problem, just get depressed. No, don't do that. Obviously, the obvious one, emotionally, is just an intense sense of sadness.

Just sad, I don't know how better to say it, sad. Despairing, that's a little different. Irritable, a low emotional talent, I just can't take it anymore.

Withdrawal from people, almost thinking that will help them, and tragically their answer is to somehow get involved again. No mental peace, consistently you'll hear that. I have no mental peace, I can't turn off my thoughts, and they're all negative or scrambled.

Low sense of worth, pessimistic towards the future, perceive their circumstances as negative and threatening to them, I'm going down, self-destructive, to the point where the thinking is I would just as soon check out. The world would be better off, my family would be better off if I wasn't here, and I'd be better off too. Let me just read a little thing I stuck in here from Leo Tolstoy, who was one of Russia's great philosophers and a Christian.

He said, the thought of suicide came to me as naturally then as the thought of improving life had come to me before. This thought was such a temptation that I had to use cunning against myself in order not to go through it with it too hastily. I did not want to be in a hurry, only because I wanted to use all my strength to untangle my thoughts.

If I could not get them untangled, I told myself I could always go ahead with it. And there I was, a fortunate man, carrying a rope from my room where I was alone every night as I undressed, so that I would not hang myself in the beam between the closets. And I quit going hunting with a gun so that I would not be able to easily attempt to rid myself of life.

I myself did not know what I wanted. I was afraid of life. I struggled to get rid of it, and yet I hoped for something from it.

And this was happening to me at a time from all indications I should have been considered a completely happy man. This was when I was not yet fifty years old. I had a good, loving, and beloved wife, fine children, and a large estate that was growing and expanding without any effort on my part.

But more than ever before, I was respected by friends and acquaintances, praised by strangers, and I could claim a certain renown without really deluding myself. In other words, his depression was not due to the circumstances of life at that time. His circumstances were incredibly favorable.

This was not an external problem. This was an internal problem. Now how do we respond to that? Here is a man who was seeking God, and he was.

And yet he found himself in this state of wanting to check out of life. Suicide thoughts are very common as we look at those issues. Now the tension that we have in depression, obviously, is when is this really truly a biological issue, and when is it a spiritual, a mental, emotional issue? And I want to just kind of address that if I can for a moment.

Matthias Eliot said, The endless cycle of idea and action, endless invention, endless experiment, brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness, knowledge of speech, but not of silence, knowledge of words, and ignorance of the word. All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance. All our ignorance brings us nearer to death.

But nearness to death, no nearer to God. Where is the life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information? The cycles of heaven in 20

centuries bring us further from God and nearer to the dust. That's kind of true.

We're living in a time when knowledge is exploding on us. I remember about 15 years ago they said knowledge is doubling every five years. Now it's two and a half.

And that's increasing so much more rapidly with the internet. I mean, what you have, you have more information in your computer sitting on your desk through the internet than any library in the world ever had 10 years ago. It's accessible to us.

I mean, an explosion of knowledge, but not wisdom. Professing ourselves to be wise, we probably have become fools. No more closer to things.

I said, with all of this knowledge, with all this medication, why is depression then on the increase and not the decrease? If we think we have an answer, then where is the proof of that? Well, let's look at the biological aspects of this thing. First of all, wouldn't it make sense that God would create my inner man to match my outer man? I mean, obviously the answer is yes. Of course, my outer man serves my inner man if you would have that.

And through my outer man, my physical person, I have five senses that relates to the world around me. I can taste, touch, smell, hear, feel, and see. And when I was created in the image of God, as we all were, but when Adam fell, we lost our relationship with God.

And at that moment, not having the presence of God in our life, or the knowledge of God's ways, we entered into this world, dead in our trespasses and sins, and we learned to live our lives independent of God. Now, we all did. We all learned differently.

Because you were born, my little computer up here was programmed from the external world initially. I'm a grandpap right now. It's one of the greatest times of my life.

Everything I ever heard about being a grandparent, it's true. Do you know why grandparents get along so great with grandchildren? They have a common enemy. Unfortunately, that's not true either.

But it is a great time of life for me. And I see my little Sammy, he comes into this world, he's got a clean slate. There's nothing programmed into his computer.

I mean, he's getting now, he's three years old. He's got a vocabulary, and he's talking. But it was all because it was assimilated from the environment in which he was raised.

Guess what language he's speaking? French. No, he's not. It's English, of course.

Because that's what he picked up from the environment. I mean, we didn't formally try to teach him that. He started to learn.

He said, subject is before the predicate. It's really interesting. Some languages of the world, it's the other way around.

Where did he learn that? He just assimilated it from the environment. And so, the heart is deceitful and desperately sick. Before I come to Christ, why? Simply because it got programmed from the world.

Now his world is a pretty good world. His flesh doesn't look that rank right now. Because all of his uncles and aunts and cousins and moms and pops and grandparents all love the Lord.

He lives in almost a cocoon. He's going to face some hard reality out there someday. I mean, we protect very carefully what he watches on television.

One night, I mean, we saw just, I wouldn't perceive it as a particularly scary movie, but this spider was going after this person. And, you know, Sammy was horrified. Well, he's going to fight a lot of spiders out there in the real world.

He hasn't seen them yet. Everybody he knows is good and kind and loves him. And it's so evident in the way he lives.

He walks down the mall. Hi, hi. He says hi to everybody.

They look at him. Then I see another kid he's raised where he doesn't know who his dad is. Never saw his dad.

And his mother has got multiple partners. And, you know, just an incredibly sick situation. Which one of those two children need Jesus the most? They both need Jesus exactly the same.

Please don't ever miss that point. But one is going to have more difficulty than the other. In terms of the development of their mind.

And the issues they're going to have to deal with later on in life. And without question. I'm saying this to you because when I come to Christ.

Nobody pushed the clear button up here. Everything that got programmed into my memory is still there. Therefore no longer be conformed to this world.

But be transformed by the renewing of our mind. And we all have to do that. And there can almost be a danger of having too much going for you at that time.

Because you don't perceive your need of Christ as much as the other one does. Even though you need to as much as the other one does. Are you with me here? That's why it's hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Not because of money is a problem. But because he is self-sufficient. And they don't see their need for total dependence upon God.

And it's hard to reach them for that reason. They don't perceive their need. They will someday.

And be there for them. That's why funerals are a great platform. They have an answer for everything in life.

And it's just amazing. You sit there and do a funeral. The first time I did that as a pastor.

They walked by and I went. Christian, non-Christian, Christian. It was just that obvious to me.

And it wasn't that they were crying. That wasn't the issue. It was just a discernment factor.

You could just see. Oh my gosh, no hope. Hope, no hope, hope, no hope.

And it's really amazing. Anyway, in the way God created us. The correlation of the outer man and the inner man is rather obvious.

You have the brain and the mind. Now there is something fundamentally different between the brain and the mind. The brain is meat.

When you die, physically, it will return to dust. And you will be outside from the body, present with the Lord. But you wouldn't be there mindless.

The mind is really a function of the soul. Now the parallel here is critical to understand. Because you have such a wonderful parallel.

Between the hardware and the software. My computer analogy. You are handed a computer.

Your computer continues to develop because it's organic. About the age of 12. Formal operation begins.

That a child at the age of 12. About that age. Can think as an adult.

And sometimes better. Actually your neurons start to die off by the millions. Now don't let that frighten you too much.

Because you have a hundred billion of them. But it really is true. That formal operation begins.

They can think as maturely as any adult can. They haven't learned as much yet. But they can think.

Have the same capacity to think. Sometimes maybe better. Do you know how you can tell if somebody is 50 years old or older? Their VCR goes 12, 12, 12.

And if you want that picker program. Ask your junior high friend to come over. He will do it for you.

And they are actually the visual orientation. That our young people are getting. If you are my age or older.

It's hard to enter into that. Because they grew up with that. And for us it's harder to perceive that.

It's just part of our learning process. Well anyway. That brain mind combination.

Now see where we are at in our culture. Is that if you've got some kind of emotional problem. Or mental problem.

Pretty much the assumption is. It's a hardware problem. I don't think so.

I think it's a software problem. I think it's a software problem. Actually can you have a hardware problem? Oh no question about that.

Organic brain syndrome. Down syndrome. Alzheimer's disease are all clearly hardware problems.

Now the question is. Do you have a more miniature hardware problem? In other words. Your serotonin.

How do we explain that? Now let me just. A little brain chemistry here for a moment. 100 billion brain cells.

Neurons. Every little brain cell. It's not like your whole mind is a computer.

Almost every little cell is a computer. It's really fascinating. There are many many dendrites input into it.

And then you have one output. Through the axon. And then there's a gap between that.

And other computers called the snaps. Synapse or however you say that. Every little brain cell that comes out.

The mitochondria. Create neurotransmitters. And they fire across.

Into other dendrites. Each little cell is connected to. Just a multitude of other cells.

If you've got 100 billion neurons. Connected to. Six or so hundred other ones.

Do you realize the complexity of this thing? It's absolutely amazing. What exists right in there. Now.

What they haven't been able to pretty well ascertain. When a person is depressed. Something has happened to the.

Production of the neurotransmitters. And you've got two different. Issues here going on.

One bipolar is different from unipolar. Bipolar manic depression. Which affects.

0.5 to 1% of our population. The brain chemistry is different. You have sodium chloride ions.

That seem to increase. In polarization. When people are manic depressed.

And they've been able to. That has been the drug of choice. For people who are typically.

Bipolar depressed. If you're not a medical doctor. It's going to go over your head right now.

For the simple reason you can't prescribe it. They'd have to see a medical doctor. To get a lithium.

And that's very carefully used. In that regard. And you can misdiagnose that one.

And do some people some damage. But for some. It's maintained life for them almost.

There's a gal. In this area. Here she herself.

Has been manic depressive all of her life. She's written several books. And she's also equated.

How much the people who have mania. Have been so incredibly artistic. And you start going back.

And looking in history. How many people have bipolar depressions. There were artists.

And musicians. And authors and writers. And highly creative.

During their periods of mania. Just dark periods. Well she had it.

And she's written several good books on it. And quite an expert. And I've used some of her resources.

In doing that. But she also resisted taking lithium. For a number of times.

Only added to her dilemma. But in one of her books. She also said.

That was not enough for her. She needed somebody to help her. Unscramble her difficulty in thoughts.
Now in the development. Of antidepressants. To help people's body chemistry.
By the way. Let's settle this right now. You've got a physical body.
That needs the doctor. And the hospital. You have a spiritual part of yourself.
That needs the church. God created both. Provided both for us.
I believe. And there are problems. That are clearly physical.
That need a physical answer for. A little more complex than that. Especially as a matter of.
Which is establishing what. In other words. It's very difficult.
To establish causation. Which came first. The chicken or the egg.
Do I have a physical problem. That originated as a spiritual. Or a mental problem.
Or do I have a mental problem. That originated as a physical problem. In other words am I depressed.
Because my neurotransmitters went haywire. Which were the first. And they've kind of fallen off the market a little bit.
It was really trying to prevent some enzyme. That would kill off the neurotransmitters. And then the tricyclic antidepressants came.
And they were big. Now you've got a lot more. Who are addressing particular neurotransmitters.
Primarily serotonin. Which you've heard a lot about. So neurotransmitters.
One of at least 40 neurotransmitters that you have. You don't have just one. But there's a variety of them.
One of mine is anywhere from. Preserving their shelf life. To stimulating the production of them.
Etcetera. Now I mean you know. This is known stuff.
And I'm a novice at this thing. I've read on it. And so I'm not ignorant about it.
But much of your. Xanax and all that kind of stuff. Today is primarily there.
Now contrast antidepressants. From tranquilizers. Or antipsychotic medication.
They're trying to. To narcotize you. Because you're all stressed out.
There is no pill that will cure anxiety. And doctors will tell you that. But you're in such a frazzled state right now.
That somehow or another. I've got to reduce that tension in your life. Hopefully so that maybe you can think better.
And function better. They will tell you that that will cure it. But it will give you some stability in your life.

But potentially antidepressants. Are not downers. They're actually the opposite.

They're trying to stimulate brain activity. So that you can think more clearly again. And today by and large.

Antidepressants. Are pretty safe. You can find out.

What any psychiatrist has. By going in the Christian. In the Christian executive bookstore.

And get a pill book. And it will tell you. What they're being prescribed for.

What dosage they would recommend. What the side effects are. What the cross effects are.

In other words if you take this medication. Don't take this or do this. And frankly if you're in ministry.

Helping people you ought to have one of those books. Because if people come in and they're medicated.

Then take a look at what they're doing.

And chances are you can work backwards. And find out what the diagnosis is. Now if you think for a moment.

That the best psychiatrists in this country. Have a precise way of measuring brain chemistry. You are wrong.

And they won't admit that. It's a guessing game by and large. Here try this.

Now first of all let's say something. Do antidepressants work? And in terms of at least. Masking or helping you with problem depression.

Yes. No question about it. I mean you'd be foolish to.

To argue against that. But. Is that the cause? Or is that the effect? Now let's look what's going on with my mind here.

A little bit. Because my mind essentially is what programs the computer. It's a software.

Coming off of your brain. And your spinal cord. Your brain primarily is your central nervous system.

Is a peripheral nervous system. But don't make this complex. And you hang with me here.

It's really quite simple. But coming off your central nervous system. Is a peripheral nervous system.

That has two very distinct channels. One is somatic. One is the autonomic.

Somatic nervous system. Is that which regulates all your. Skeletal muscular movements.

That you control over. I'm moving my hands like this. Because my mind is telling me to do that.

But I can tell it to stop. That obviously would correlate with your. Will.

Looking at your soul here. Following me? Then you have an autonomic nervous system. So called because it's automatic.

That's what regulates all your glands. You don't say to your heart. Beep, beep, beep, beep.

Or to your adrenal glands. I mean it just does that. And you have no volitional control over that.

Not directly you don't. It's just autonomic. That's why it's called that.

Regulates all of your glands. And in the same way you don't have. Volitional control over your emotions.

Think you do? Try once. I've never liked that person. But for now I'm going to like them.

I mean there's no way that you can. Will yourself to do that. And the good news is.

If we understood correctly. It's the grace of God to love one another. But that's really nothing to do with your emotions.

That really is the grace of God. To love the unlovely. To do what is right with another person.

Whether you feel like it or not. The amazing part about it is. If you do what is right.

Won't your countenance be raised. And that's amazing. If you do the loving thing for that person.

After a while you may find out. That your emotions will follow suit. But if you're waiting to do something right.

Until you feel like loving them. Your adrenal glands. Are really a God given thing.

To respond to the pressures of life. Because when the pressures of life come. Your adrenal glands.

To create a cortisol like hormone. Into your blood stream. Which is your adrenal glands.

Adrenaline. That's what it is. Or epinephrine.

This is what the other term for that is. But anyway. That's where you get your fight.

Now. If stress persists too long. Then stress for you becomes distress.

Your adrenal glands break down. They can't keep up with the system. And you probably will become sick.

Now I remember several years ago. That Holmes and Rall came out with a scale. And they artificially put.

Death of a spouse. Which they saw as the most stressful thing. That you could live through.

And artificially named that 100. And then they looked at a whole variety. Of other stressful situations.

Child, divorce. All kinds of stuff like that. And just put numbers on them.

As stress. And their point was. If you in a year's time.

Could add up all the stressful things. That you went through. And total them up.

And it came to 300. You were going to get sick. Now there's some truth to that.

But I think it missed a major. Major point. Why is it that two people.

Have different adrenal glands. Now there is some difference. But that is not the major difference.

Now the major difference. Was not the difference. In the adrenal gland.

It's right in here. Because we are not affected. By life itself.

We are affected by how we perceive life. And how we interpret that data. Here's a stressful situation.

Israelites over here. Philistines over here. And a little valley between them.

And a little blood bath here. Why don't we just send our champions out. Now the problem is.

They got a giant. You don't. And so they are all stressed out over here.

And I can understand that. And what are we going to do. They got a giant.

And David comes along and says. How dare you taunt the armies of the living God. Now here is exactly the same situation.

For both of them. David saw the giant in relationship to God. The Israelites saw the giant.

Now can faith in God. Affect us like that. And the answer is of course it can.

If you truly believe. That you can do all things through Christ. Who strengthens you.

That he will supply your needs. With God all things are possible. Don't worry about tomorrow.

Tomorrow will take care of itself. No matter what it looks like. Oh man tomorrow is really bad.

Well God is in charge of tomorrow. Well I'll be with the Lord. It's like asking somebody.

If you die. Well honestly folks. That's for the body.

Paul says for me to live as Christ has gave. Now knowing that. It's not a license to commit suicide.

Because God has required that we be a good steward. Of what he has entrusted us. But it is a freedom to live my life today.

I'm not afraid of death. I'm not looking forward to dying. That's a different deal.

I'm not afraid of death. And all of us should be at that point in our life. And then you are free to go.

And bless her heart. Because she doesn't want to suffer the loss. Of losing me.

But when I went to Bogota last fall. I got a five page letter from the government. Saying silly saying don't go.

Because they were killing people down there. And I said God called me to go. What am I worried about? And now I have another staff down there.

They got the same five letters. Five page letter. It's kind of like wow.

How do we take Bibles into that country? We may never get out. You don't have to get out. But you may have to go.

And that kind of faith however. Is almost foreign to a lot of our thinking today. I mean we are really caught up in self-preservation.

Instead of self-commitment. And we kind of go back and look at. Hudson Taylor's spiritual secret.

I said well he lost his first wife. And kids. And poverty and stress.

And avoid that at all costs. Well that's the substance of. Which legends are made of.

And that's the kind of thing. That kind of faith in Hebrews 11. Sawn in half.

And a man about which the world isn't worthy. And that's kind of true. And I said that was the lie that Satan brought.

Oh save yourself at all costs. Peter said get behind me Satan. You're putting your interest on man.

It's not God's. If God called me to go all over the world. Like I am this year.

And in the process of it I died. Praise the Lord he called me. And I died for a right cause.

And so my life is in his hands. And mine wasn't to question. Mine was to go.

Go in all the world. Make disciples. Well I'm sharing this point to say.

That what triggered the adrenaline. Into my bloodstream. Was not that external event.

And the adrenaline that went into my bloodstream. Was not initiated by my adrenal glands. You follow my thinking here? What initiated it? It's right here.

That is all true. This is your control center right in here. Now let me reduce that down.

Just a little bit here. Where does depression come from? Well we all know. We should know pretty much by now.

That by and large your emotions. Are a product of your thought life. If I can't direct my emotions.

I surely can direct my thinking. And that's where you're going to see. All your scripture given.

Finally brother whatever is true. And right and lovely. Meditate on God.

Meditation isn't the issue. It's the object of your meditation that's critical. Fix your eyes on Jesus.

The author and finisher of your faith. And so you focus. On what God said is true.

And your emotions are essentially. A product of your thought life. Since I can't directly control my emotions.

I can't directly control my thoughts. I can choose what I want to think. And scripture says.

Choose the truth. Choose to believe the truth. And let the word of Christ.

Richly dwell within you. That's what he is saying. So here's the issue.

A guy is depressed. Now question is. Let's go back to my computer.

Illustration here for a moment. Which caused which. My computer by and large.

Has no value without software. Are you aware of that? If that thing doesn't have a compiler in it. Now when you bought your computer.

If you just bought it. There was no compiler in there. For that computer to function as a computer.

And when I came into this world. My computer had a compiler in it. There was a mind that was there.

Otherwise I couldn't sustain life. So if the computer is running my body. There had to be some kind of a program in there.

For life preservation. In other words little children have a sucking instinct. And they cry if they are hungry.

And the pain comes. And so there is something created by God. At least to sustain life.

That is probably no different. They have an instinct. They can't reason like you and I can.

But they have an instinct for survival. I think God has given. I think their brain came with a computer.

Loaded with enough memory. Or enough software to survive. And we all have that survival instinct within us.

A little child does. Cry. Give me food here.

And whatever else. So we have that. But in terms of being able to rationally think and reason.

It requires programming. Now see here is the question. If I take my computer.

And the screen comes on. Because they have already put something on there. So there are a few things.

Instructions. Now if I loaded that computer. With a new program.

Would anything change in the hardware? You would have exactly the same number of components inside. Wouldn't you? But the screen would look different. Wouldn't it? Wouldn't it? Now if you actually saw what happened here.

Even though every component in there. Every transistor in there. Which are all so miniature now.

It's unbelievable. But it would actually be the same. But the electron flow would be different.

Wouldn't it? And you put a new program into your computer. You would have exactly the same number of brain cells. But if you actually read the screen.

Something would be different. Your outcome would be different. And in order for that to happen.

The path of neurotransmitters. Would have to change. Because every information.

Coming out of your brain. Is coded through those neurotransmitters. And those brain cells.

And so if you got a different product. What I'm trying to do is establish. Some sense of cause and effect here.

And it's exactly what Jesus did. When they came to him and asked for healing. He said Lord we believe.

That you could be healed. And they said Lord we believe. He said then be it done to you.

According to how you believe. Now what's really interesting here. Is that in that stage.

God did not bypass. The process of this person. Choosing to believe and think.

And I think that's true of all life. You're saved by faith. You walk by faith.

Faithfulness is required of every steward. God doesn't bypass. The devil will bypass it.

Put a thought directly in your brain. God doesn't bypass it. I don't bypass it.

That's why even in spiritual warfare. I never violate that person's mind. I never bypass their mind.

You call up a demon. You bypass it. They're out of it.

You're dialogue with a demon. Why don't you have a dialogue with them. They're a child of God.

They have the same authority you do. And I will never violate that person's mind. Bring it out of their life.

Just share with me what's going on. And because I don't even want to deal with them. I want to deal with the person.

That's their responsibility to submit to God. And resist the devil. It's their responsibility to choose the truth.

I can tell them what the truth is. But they got to choose it personally. If they don't choose it.

Be it done to them according to how they believe. And so what I'm really saying is. Is that we want people to behave properly.

Then don't miss the whole channel. That I think God has given to us. In my mind.

There is no way possible. That it can bypass the avenue. By which God affects the rest of my body.

I want good behavior here. Well that's going to come from the computer. Are you following me here? Not from my mind.

That's going to have to come from the computer. The mind cannot direct my adrenal glands. The brain.

The central nervous system has to do that. What directs the brain? The mind. It really is the inner man.

That's where you see the tension. Because you have the mind of Christ in the inner man. But you've got a whole external world over here.

A fallen world that wants you to do it it's way. And so the flesh. Essentially.

Is a part of that external world. That was all programmed externally. Your flesh.

That's the old nature as the NIV puts it then. Because that's how you learn to live your life independent of God. And the flesh wages war against the spirit.

The spirit wages war against the flesh. What do you think the battleground is? It's the mind. That's where the battleground is.

It's so evident all over scripture. That's where the battleground is. Even the poor guy in Romans 7. Who is seemingly stuck.

In my flesh I want to do this. But in my spirit this. And it tells you where it's at.

In this battle for my mind. That's where it's at. That's where truth sets us free.

And that's why you have to renew your mind. Because that's what directs the computer. Before it was externally programmed.

To direct the computer. So, now here's the big question. Which comes first? The chicken or the egg? Did my neurotransmitters stop functioning properly? And therefore I became depressed? Or did my thinking cause my neurotransmitters to function a certain way? Did a lie cause a neurological problem? Now you know what really is interesting here? There's some fascinating research from the secular world.

Where they took some rats. Created a virus. Created a sense of hopelessness.

Programmed into their minds. A sense of hopelessness. Which in their term they use depression.

Which is what depression essentially is. It's hopelessness. And they measured through beta receptors.

They were able to measure their brain chemistry. And they found out creating a sense of hopelessness. Changed brain chemistry.

And when they took away the hopelessness. And were able to measure. That the brain chemistry changed.

That's a secular study. And it comes back to us. In a sense.

And Kentrew said it's free. Now here's the tension see. By and large.

If you look at all the evidence. And most of this Christians have pretty well bought into. Here's the issue.

Severe depression. Is biochemical. Moderate depression.

Can be resolved through therapy. And then they describe the symptoms of severe depression. And I'm saying.

Man I've seen that. Day in and day out. Let me just give you a quote here.

Here's a secular guy. Martin Seligman. He said I have spent the last 20 years.

Trying to learn what causes depression. Here's what I think. Bipolar depression.

Manic depression. Is an illness of the body. Biological in origin.

Containable by drugs. Some unipolar depression too. Are partly biological.

Partly the fiercest ones. Unipolar depression. Is inherited.

If one of the two identical twins is depressed. The other is somewhat more likely to be depressed. Than if they had been fraternal twins.

This kind of unipolar depression. Can often be contained with drugs. Although not nearly as successful.

As bipolar depression can be. And as symptoms can often be relieved. By electroconvulsive therapy.

But inherited unipolar depressions. Are in the minority. This raises the question.

Of where the great number of depressions. In the last century. That have made them more vulnerable to depression.

Probably not. It is very doubtful that our brain chemistry. Or our genes have changed radically.

Over the last two generations. So a tenfold increase in depression. Is not likely to be explained on biological grounds.

I would suspect that the epidemic depression. Is so similar to all of us. Is best viewed as psychological.

My guess is that most depression. Starts with problems in living. And with specific ways of thinking.

About these problems. Essentially I agree with that. The only part I disagree with.

Is that I don't think I would uniformly say. That the severe depression. Is purely biological.

And treatment only by medication. And the gal that I told you about earlier. Who herself is bipolar depressed.

She said when I finally did submit to lithium. I also found I had to go in. To other people.

To help me scramble my thinking. Let me just give you a testimony. To respond to somebody.

Who is clearly severely depressed. And what his treatment was. He said I am writing in regards.

To your seminar in Minnesota. The day it was to start. I was to be submitted to a hospital.

For the fifth time for manic depression. I've been dealing with this for almost two years. We had gone to several doctors.

And tried about every drug they could think of. I also had shock treatments. I attempted suicide twice.

Unable to work any longer. I spent most of my days downstairs. Wishing I were dead.

Finding my next attempt. Also it was a good place to protect myself. From people in the world around me.

I had a history of self abuse. I had spent 30 odd years in jail. Or prisons.

I was a drug addict. And alcoholic. I've been in drug and alcohol treatment.

28 times. I became a Christian several years ago. But was always lived a defeated life.

Now I was a Christian. I was going back to the hospital. To try a new medication.

Or more shock treatments. My wife and friends convinced me. Your seminar would be of more value.

The hospital was concerned. Because they believed I needed medical help. As the four days of the conference progressed.

My head started to clear up. The word of God was ministering to me. Even though I was confused.

And in pain. I told one of your staff. That I was in my 11th hour.

He set up an appointment with me. The three things that motivated my life. Were low self-esteem.

Anger and bitterness. Which were the result. Of being molested by a priest.

And suffering for many years. Of physical and verbal abuse in my childhood. I can honestly say I forgave them.

God moved right in. Lifting my depression. My eyes were now open to God's truth.

I felt lighter than ever before. I did go to the hospital. But after two days.

They said I didn't need to be there. There is so much before Christ. And after Christ.

That I could go on forever. Should a Christian then take medication? First of all. Of course.

For your body. Taking a pill to cure your body. Is really commendable folks.

Taking a pill to cure your soul. Is deplorable. What bothers me.

About our whole emphasis. On medication. Think what has happened in our life.

In our lifetime. I would estimate. I just asked the doctor this week.

And he agreed. But I would estimate 85% of our people. Who are going to doctors.

Don't need to go there. They go in for every little sniff. Or cough or wheeze.

Do you know what I did? When I got a sniff. I drank chicken soup. And mom put a hot pack on me.

And I went to bed. When I got well. They say pain is an enemy.

I would submit to you. Read a book. Pain the gift nobody wants.

It's one of the best books. I've read in my lifetime. Those symptoms are telling you.

You're not living right. But I'm just saying. We have no pain.

No gain folks. After a while you got. The pain is the enemy.

I said no it's not boy. It's a gift from God. God gave you those so called negative emotions.

What they're really telling you is. Is that you're thinking wrong. About life.

It isn't the events of life that determine. It's your perception of them. We don't understand suffering.

Thank you Lord that you consider us. Worthy to suffer shame for your name. Oh suffering is intolerable.

You're doing something wrong. Must be sinning. Well read Job.

He wasn't sinning. That's not true. He didn't do anything.

The secular world is almost doing better. Than we are in that regard. So I've got a concern here.

In the sense of saying. Just like pain in your body. The ability to feel pain.

Is a signal back to your brain. To do something differently. So let me give you an illustration.

Of what I'm talking about. Let's say you ate every bit. Of that dessert last night.

And drank too much coffee. And you had acid indigestion. And pain.

Well frankly I would if you want to get to sleep. Or go throw up or do something. Now there are a lot of people.

Who live with bottles of. Pepto-Bismol in their house. Actually my dad does.

He likes the dessert. Almost after every meal. And his cholesterol.

He's 83 years old. He's still only 180. Figure that one out.

That's biological. That's inherited folks. We're dealing all the time with heartburn.

I think your body is telling you something. Stop eating that junk. It's killing you.

Isn't that true? Well I like eating that junk. But I'm going to cover the symptom. By having you know.

Antacids all over the house. I think you're learning to live wrong folks. You got a nutritional problem right now.

Your body is telling you. This isn't doing you any good. And you ought to listen to it.

People are depressed. Oh man give me a pill. Cover that depression.

I think you're thinking wrong. I think you're living wrong. I think you responded to that loss wrong.

I think you don't understand suffering correctly. All kinds of issues that need to be asked. About that stage of the game.

Something is causing that depression. Now I need to caution you along this line. People are depressed.

They have problems over periods of time. It may do lasting irreparable damage. To your neurological system.

I've known people like that. Who I think if they clean the house as best they can. They feel great.

But boy you know. They've got actually now a physical problem. That requires essentially some kind of medication.

To help them get through that. And if you've got a peptic ulcer. But a lot of that stuff has been telling us.

For a long long time. But if you've lived that long for so long. That just correcting now.

Your eating habits and your thinking. Will give you a great deal greater freedom with God. But you're going to have to probably live with the consequences.

You're going to have to live by drugs. Or whatever else. Are you with me on this one? When Christians say.

It's a lack of faith. And if you're taking any kind of medication. I think that is incredibly naive.

I mean is it a lack of faith. You know. That you don't have to eat anymore.

You know. That you God is your food. And he'll give you manna from heaven.

No he's provided you crops to eat. He provided you St. John's wort. That God probably has created.

That would be a very good thing for you. You know I swiped one guy. How did they perpetuate the notion of lithium? Well they found a whole society down in Texas.

That was relatively free of manic depresses. And you know what they rediscovered? There was a trace element of lithium in their drinking water. And so a lot of stuff they find.

Somewhat accidentally like that. Well who created lithium? God did. Who created St. John's wort? Who created the other worts? The devil did.

Anyway it was. Bad living. Whatever else.

Now caution on this thing. If you just walk out of here and say. Hey listen you're depressed sweetheart.

Because you're thinking wrong. Let me suggest first mercy. No judgments.

No criticism. Because they're not even going to come see you. Because you're all young.

And I can't overstate that. They're looking for somebody who can understand. Can empathize with them.

They're going through an emotional hell right now. I don't know how better to say it folks. I've never been depressed.

My wife was for 15 months. And I learned so much about myself during that time. It's painful.

I almost tell it with you. And much of what I am today. And learning to relate to hurting people.

Came out of actually her crisis. But she was so severely depressed. Joanne was ready to check out.

And I had to learn over that time. No pious platitudes. But to enter into that experience with her.

In a way I never had before. And so I just can't overstate. That part of being able to give the grace.

To help in time of need. Has to be preceded. By mercy.

No judgments. No criticisms. Just sit with them for a while.

Enter into their experience. And don't become like. And don't become depressed.

Because they need you. They need a way out of this thing. And if you have the grace to help in time of need.

You're right there. That depression. Is probably very simplistically.

I can say this is rooted in a lie. In the vast vast majority of cases. It could be genetic.

And I think it can predispose you. To certain strengths and weaknesses. Without question.

It's somewhat to do with temperament by the way. They struggle with depression. He makes everybody else.

Struggle with depression. That's really true. I've seen people who are just so.

Sensitive spiritually. They just grieve a lot. And they're not depressed.

They're grieving. They're hurting for other people. And they are more prone to depression.

Because of probably their own giftedness. And their temperament. And there are just some people who are pessimistic.

And they're also a minority. It took me a while to figure that one out. You know I go in.

And I see change is good. 95% of the population sees change as bad. I had to find that out about myself.

It was really interesting. I was just a stress carrier. I'd go around changing everything.

And everybody was upset with me. And if I wanted to be a change agent. I had to realize that most people.

Prefer status quo. And so I had to learn that. It took me time to learn that too.

Why? Because we can do it better. I like the way we're doing it. Why? What's wrong with you anyhow? You see what I learned in the process of that.

People need stability in their life. They just desperately need it. Because the world is flopping all over the place out there.

And they come to church. And you change the program every Sunday on them. That's unsettling to them.

To me it was exciting. To them it was unsettling. Oh we're going to try something new.

That's the problem with new wineskins. So give them an eternal anchor. They need to be firmly rooted in Christ.

They needed to enter into an eternal relationship. With a changeless God. That's where their security lies in.

But long established practice. And time honored faith. Get blended together in people's minds.

And you start advocating a different practice. They think you're fooling with their faith. You are not.

And all the old people. And the new styles of music. And everything else.

And I say most of the reason is. Is simply because they are not truly secure in Christ. Because if they were.

They would be the ones who would suspend their freedom. For the weaker brother. They would be the ones who would accommodate.

But usually they end up showing themselves. To be the weaker brother. And I'll tell you why.

Because they're rooted more in their traditions and practices. Than they are in the eternal person of God. And I see a mature saint.

Who is eternally connected. And what you wear to church is no big deal. Because they have been to Africa.

They wear loin cloths over there. And they beat on drums. Through music.

They don't have organs. And that's what the Lord says. You worship in spirit and truth.

Not in form and function. But boy you have to be secure in Christ to get to that point. And when we change something.

And culture changes around us. The old generation gets upset. And I just honestly believe.

traditions. And a lot of it, to be honest with you, is understandable. Because there are certain songs that I sang when I became a Christian that are very meaningful to me that don't mean anything to my son.

And I'm all moved. Why are you moved dad? Oh, I found Christ when I heard that song. And he said, I didn't.

I remember Carl was sitting beside me on the chair when he was about 6 years old one time and we were singing Gator songs. Something beautiful, something good. And Carl said, all my confusion be understood.

This is right. This is true. Let me just show you, how much time do we have here? Got a little more? Let me show you what wrong thinking can do.

Psalm 13. Here's another depressed song, but he gets out of it. Psalm 13, verse 1. How long, O Lord, will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart all day long? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? Now you stop right here, this guy is depressed folks.

Circumstances of life have overwhelmed him and he's depressed. Now why is he depressed? Because what he believes about God isn't true. If God is your hope all I got to do to get you depressed as a Christian is to take away your hope in God, your concept of God.

God doesn't love me. He isn't here. God's here folks.

He's only present. That's a lie. It's not true.

He's here right now. And God loves you. He demonstrated his own love for you.

He loves you more than you could ever fully comprehend. I understand this about Scripture. Most people don't because they maybe get upset with this and they say, oh God's forgotten him.

Scripture gives you a truth in record, not always in content. In other words it records things that Satan said. That's truth in record but what he said wasn't true.

Are you with me on this one? It's amazing how people don't understand the simple concept about Scripture. This is truth in record. This is what he said.

This is what he felt. This is what he believed. What he believed was wrong.

How can an omniscient God forget you much less for a moment or forever? Are you with me? But that's what he believes. And so what's he doing? He's taking counsel in his soul all day long. Any answers there? No answers there folks.

That's what happens when you start directing your thoughts inwardly like that, become self-absorbed, sit in a corner and get in a pity party. Folks you're depressed. There are no answers there and you're actually taking yourself away from the answer.

Now David doesn't stay there. He never does in these songs because he turns to God and says, wait a minute. Consider and answer me oh Lord my God and lighten my eyes.

Isn't that great? Search me oh God. Try my way. See if there's any hurtful way within me.

It's like what Ed has been trying to tell us. Go to God himself and have him enlighten your life. Show me where I'm lying folks because somewhere along this line I have believed a lie and that's the reason I feel that way.

And so he goes to God and then he says, enlighten my sleep or I will sleep the sleep of death. Here he's thinking it's almost suicidal. He's going to die.

And my enemies will say I've overcome him and my adversaries will rejoice when I'm shaken. But here's the transition. I have trusted in your loving kindness.

My heart shall rejoice in your salvation. That's actually a future concept here. And he's expressing a sense of hope.

Even though I don't feel like it now I believe someday I will. See the hope coming back here? And he said I will sing. Now that's what you can do.

Did you know that Martin Luther struggled with depression almost all of his life? And he had kind of a tenfold answer. One of them was singing. There's something about singing in music that brings to a distracted mind a sense of order.

Not just the words, the physics of sound itself. There's a harmony built in to creation that God has given us where singing is a part of that. When David played the harp, he didn't sing, he played the harp.

The evil spirit departed from Saul. When Elisha said who are you king? And he said call me a minstrel. When the minstrel played he prophesied.

I thought it was staging kind of when I went to this one church, just a new person in the ministry and I started to pray the pastoral prayer and the organ started to play. I said what are you doing that for? I've come to realize that there's tremendous value in that, of that music. Just the harmony of music.

The physics of sound hitting your eardrums as a signal to your brain with that sense of harmony. See music itself without any words, any lyrics at all can get you to want to march, want to sleep, want to jump, and you can just almost think songs that are coming to mind right now because, do you know what I'm saying? That can be sensual, can be moody, and sometimes we choose music to help us out. I remember years ago, you know I'm kind of a Gaither fan, I get to speak at the gathering this year, I'm really excited about that.

But anyway I remember putting on, was it Hallelujah? I think it was a tape that he had years ago. Boy if I ever felt like life was overbearing I would just kind of lay down in the living room and put on that tape and boy I tell you what, 99% of the time I would get up ready to go again. It had a way of bringing order back into a mind that seemed to have lost it for a period of time.

That affects your brain. They've even shown that music itself can affect cows that are milking. Have you heard this? It's true.

Because there's a physical aspect of sound, there's also some sound because of discordant sounds as well as excessive amplification that can make you a nervous wreck. That's true. It's just the physics of sound, God created that.

Moral probably isn't the issue, it's just the same way it would be immoral to scratch your finger on a blackboard. No, it's an accident, but stop it. We did a conference up in Grand Rapids last year about this time and dear friends of our ministry, Judith and Stephen King.

His name is Stephen King. He was a Christian missionary doctor and got a residency in psychiatry and his wife and they're reading my manuscript right now. I never publish anything without testing it in a variety of corners.

She did some unofficial research. I thought this was really intriguing. She gave a pre-test to people who came in and asked for an appointment.

By and large these are people that got through it. We estimate when you come to one of our conferences 85% of the people are going to get through this thing on their own at the end of the week because the Lord is a wonderful counselor. The other 15% need somebody to help them get through it.

They just can't do it by themselves. So that's the one she gave this survey. Now they're presenting problems never identified.

I mean whether it was lust or rape or incest, it wasn't identified. Which makes this test even more interesting because three months later she did a post-test and I won't give all the figures here, but they

registered a 48% improvement on depression. Now that's the whole group lumped together.

What I'm really saying is probably half of them weren't even depressed when they came. Which makes the figures even more amazing. 46% had an improvement in anxiety.

70% had an improvement in tormenting thoughts and voices. 46% had an improvement in uncontrolled habits. 55% had an improvement in inner conflicts and distress.

Now what's intriguing about that is if you show those results to the secular world and say what kind of treatment would you think it would take to bring that kind of improvement. And then get a response back from them and say, by the way that was done in one counseling session by lay people. That's rather amazing isn't it? That's amazing.

And to see what would happen if a person actually resolved their conflicts. Now I would say what skews the test here is that if several of the samples didn't come in with depression, that would show that somebody who came in depressed probably left without it. And that's been our experience in many, many areas.

It's kind of fascinating when you look at this whole area of depression. Please don't walk out of here and say that there isn't potentially a physical problem here. There is.

And thank God for medical doctors and whatever else. But they're all telling us that most of their problems originate as psychosomatic anyhow. Would there be a physical benefit for getting radically right with God? Oh sure.

For instance, I'm 92 years old. laughter That's not true. Let me just close with a testament.

This gal is here, this husband's wife is here. Are you here from the depression they gave me for this book? Let me just close. This is a good story.

She wrote on the back side. Danielle, just wanted to let you know your ministry has changed my life. This is from him now.

He said, I was raised in a good family and I feel I had a good childhood. I accepted Christ when I was 20. Married a great Christian lady when I was 22.

We had three children. Life was really good. I worked in the same type of business that my father and grandfather owned.

When I was 31, I decided to start my own business. The first two years went really well. Life seemed good.

The business I'm in is excavating and in the north part of the country, there isn't much you can do in the winter. In the late winter of that second season, my mother was diagnosed with ALS. I didn't know anything about this disorder other than there was no cure.

Last spring was one of the wettest ever, which made it very hard to do my work. We began to get behind in my bills and this started to make me depressed. I was used to being in control and now it seemed like everything I did made the problems worse.

I also lived 800 miles from my family and they blamed it on my guilt that I couldn't help with my mom. That year we ended up really behind in our bills and to add insult to injury at least I felt, my wife had a miscarriage. It seemed like everything was out of control.

The depression got worse and I thought of suicide a lot. The next season we started so far behind that I knew that there was no way I could get caught up and we didn't. My mom continued to get worse and I knew that when she died she was not going to hear because she was not a Christian going to heaven.

In October 1st my dad led my mom and himself to Christ. Finally something good happened. Then on October 8th my mom died.

She was in heaven but was still gone from us. When even the bill collectors called, whenever a bill collector called my thought was to just kill myself. There seemed to be no hope.

I was used to fixing it myself and now I couldn't fix it. Finally I decided to just end it all and started to go get a gun. On the way down the steps I was stopped and had two questions come to my mind.

One was, one which is more important. Which is more important? Having your bills paid by the insurance money or your children to have a father? Which is more important? Your bills being paid or your wife to have a husband? That was in February and now I know that I didn't want to kill myself but those thoughts wouldn't go away. I met with one of my pastors regularly.

He was good but I still couldn't see any hope. Finally in August I met with a friend that had gone to a Freedom in Christ Seminary. He sat down with me showed me in Ephesians 1, 8-21 that if I have Christ in my heart I have the power that raised Christ from the dead in me.

He asked me if I thought there was anything that power couldn't do. Of course not. He then explained in Romans 7 how the battle was in my mind and how to win that battle was by turning every thought captive to the beings of Christ.

From that moment on I have not had a problem with depression or suicide. I finally found the hope that I had been looking for. A few weeks later this friend moved away so I didn't get to learn all the things I wanted to hear about Freedom in Christ.

So I brought Victor with the dogs as a bond breaker and helping others find Freedom in Christ. I read him on the way out to Stand in the Gap in D.C. The transformation has been incredible. My wife tells me she has a new husband.

I've seen the change in my wife and the children in myself. When we read God's word it comes alive to me now. Now when I listen to the pastor's sermon I frequently cry because words touch my very soul.

He says thank you. Well that's what freedom brings for all of us. I said it's not a question of just telling the truth.

That truth has to enter into our hearts. We have to appropriate that truth in a way that truly does set us free. I think we have an answer for depression.

I think the physical cause is very minor to be honest with you. I think we have to always consider that. And I think you're going to have people who live so long a certain way that it's done lasting damage to their body and will require medication for the rest of their life to deal with that.

I still think that that's minor. I think that the major causation even by secular research is probably how we think the way we perceive life. Now you have an unbelievable potential Christian answer for our people.

The vast majority of them is. And we've seen those mood elevations shift dramatically in helping people resolve their personal and their spiritual conflicts. Christ is the answer.

Truth will set you people free. Let's pray together. Father thank you for your love.

Thank you Father for the word of God. It's a lamp unto our feet. For the Holy Spirit who is a spirit of truth who will lead us into all truth.

Father may we hide that wonderful treasure in our hearts so we won't sin against you. But also so we can be free to be the person you created us to be. God we want to have your mercy and your grace that we can be a whole person like you.

So just make us like you we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25941.mp3>

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