

## Is Depression Always a Medical Problem – Another View

Advertisements for anti-depression drugs are constantly smattered across the tube today. They are accompanied with the possible advantages of taking one drug or another to relieve this common malady. By law such ads are followed with a list of contraindications (possible side effects) some which sound much worse than the depression itself. Along with these ads is a little noticed disclaimer or shall we refer to it as a simple honest statement about depression. That statement is that the cause for common depression is not fully known. I use the word common here for an important purpose. Surely some depression is in fact caused by chemical imbalance or emotional shock of some kind. No one could argue that point. It is said that up to twenty million Americans have some sort of depression. It seems to be a modern phenomenon in our history as a nation. There are few records of this malady prior to the early twentieth century. Depression prior to the modern era was often referred to as melancholy. Abraham Lincoln was said to suffer deep bouts of melancholy that were offset with times of joviality and levity. Perhaps a change in his attitude was his own way of making adjustments or a behavioral self medication of sorts. Few studies conducted on depression include a side by side comparison with other countries or cultures. Some countries have virtually no sizable number of reported cases of depression. Often these are the poorest countries in the world. A lot could be deduced from this about how much money; affluence and materialism have to do with making Americans happy and well balanced. In thirty five years of studying the Bible I have never heard one preacher or theologian worth his salt ever approach the causes for depression based on a biblical view. Not only does the Bible explain the cause of depression but it provides a complete answer to it as well. No, it is not a miracle or a divine healing it is simply a profound change in a life that pushes the depression out sometimes instantly and in some cases more slowly. First let's look at the cause for most general depression in people according to the Bible. Contrary to the general consensus God doesn't just wink at unbelief but he is actively engaged in convicting the unbeliever to answer his call to salvation. His dogged pursuit is fired not just by the fact that they are sinners but because he loves every human being that is born in a way that is beyond our imagination. God is trying to love people into his kingdom not drag them into it. To do this he has to make them fully aware of their separation from him. It is a present pressure applied by God's Holy Spirit. Jesus spoke of this matter and he said in no uncertain terms that it is one of the Holy Spirit's primary works while he is in the world. He said in John's gospel "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove (convict) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Jn. 16:7, 8. Believers often say they came under the conviction of the Holy Spirit and that is what finally brought them to pray and accept the salvation God is offering. Unbelievers say they're depressed, moody or in some inexplicable state of mind. That the conviction described by the believer and the depression felt by the unbeliever is one and the same thing is verified by the countless millions over the centuries that ceased to experience the depression soon after they yielded to God. I have seen this result countless times in the past more than three decades. This first hand experience and the scriptural support have convinced me beyond doubt that millions of people are suffering needlessly. I would never advise anyone not to see their doctor for a complete examination of their depression. If it does happen to be a chemical imbalance or related to an emotional experience then the question is answered. If this does not answer the question then seeking God for his salvation should be the next move in their lives. In fact it should be the first move in their lives. Speaking for myself I think living apart from Jesus' love and having no certain hope of the future would indeed be very depressing. I'm glad I answered that question many years ago.

## About the Author

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