

***A Biblical Perspective
on Depression***

Psalm 32 & Psalm 77

Pastor Robert Hammond
LONG HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

Introduction

- We see in Scripture that God's people sometimes experience times of great depression, e.g. David
- While we acknowledge that medical problems *may* cause depression, we observe that the Bible associates depression with sinful focus on self and/or other unconfessed sin
- Therefore, Christians should ask the LORD to help them examine their hearts before seeking medical attention for depression
- The Biblical prescription for spiritual depression is repentance, confession and restoration to the LORD's blessings of His guidance and joy
- Christians must be willing to lovingly admonish a depressed brother or sister, i.e. to exhort them to confess prideful focus on self and/or other sins – and to be restored in their relationship with the LORD



*Asaph's Depression
Observed in Psalm 77*

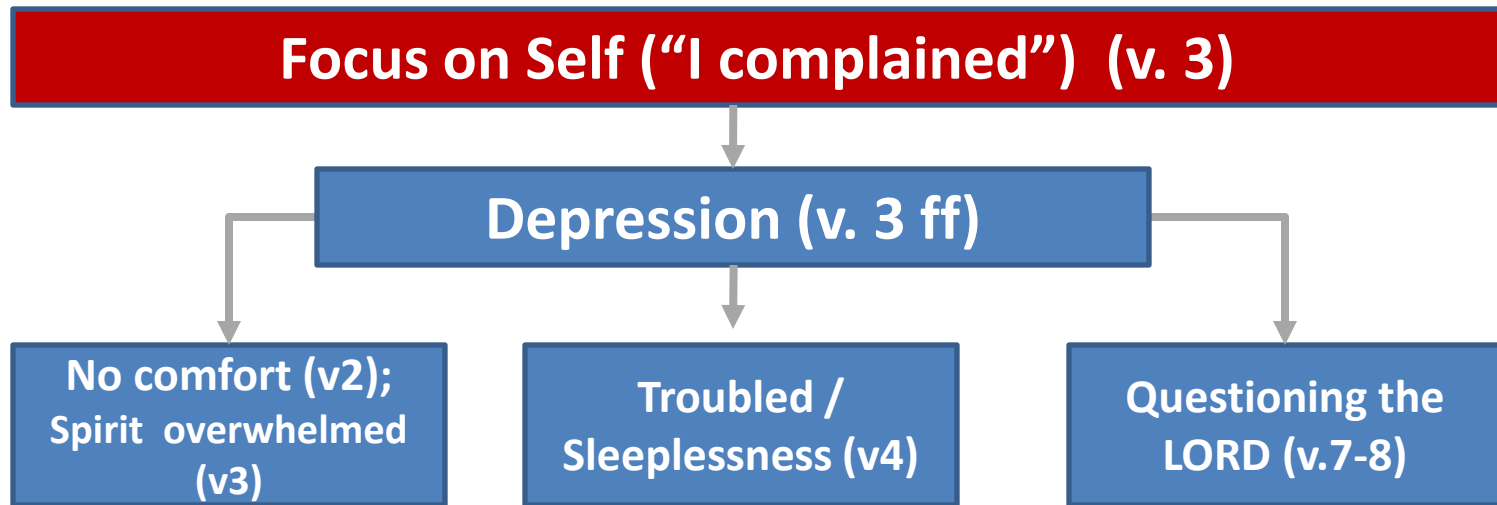
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The Text of Psalm 77 (KJV)

- Psalm 77:1-20 Psalm 77:1 <To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm of Asaph.> I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me. ² In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: **my soul refused to be comforted.** ³ I remembered God, and was troubled: **I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed.** Selah. ⁴ Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. ⁵ I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. ⁶ I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. ⁷ Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? ⁸ Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? ⁹ Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. ¹⁰ And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. ¹¹ I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. ¹² I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. ¹³ Thy way, O God, is ¹ in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? ¹⁴ Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people. ¹⁵ Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah. ¹⁶ The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. ¹⁷ The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. ¹⁸ The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. ¹⁹ Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not ¹ known. ²⁰ Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

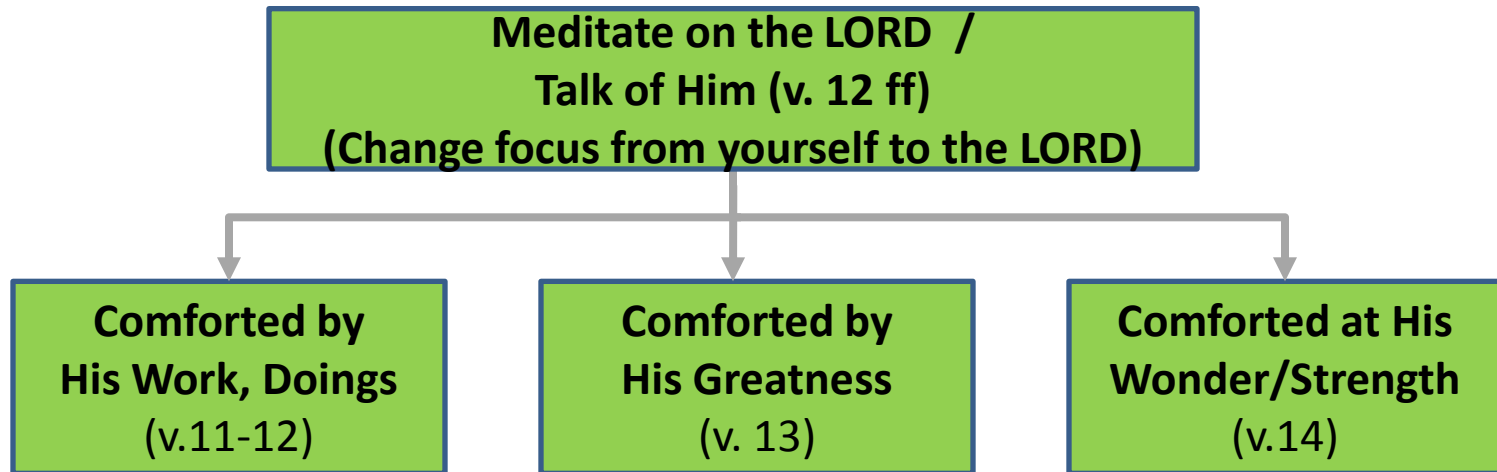
The Cause of Depression Observed in Psalm 77 (A Psalm of Asaph)

The Psalmist's focus on himself (his complaining) led to a depression that was characterized by lack of comfort, overwhelmed spirit, sleeplessness and questioning the Lord.



The Bible's Answer to Depression Observed in Psalm 77 (Asaph)

The Psalmist's depression resolved when he changed his focus from himself to his LORD. He meditated on the LORD and "talk(ed) of Him. As a result, he was comforted.



*David's Depression
Observed in Psalm 32*

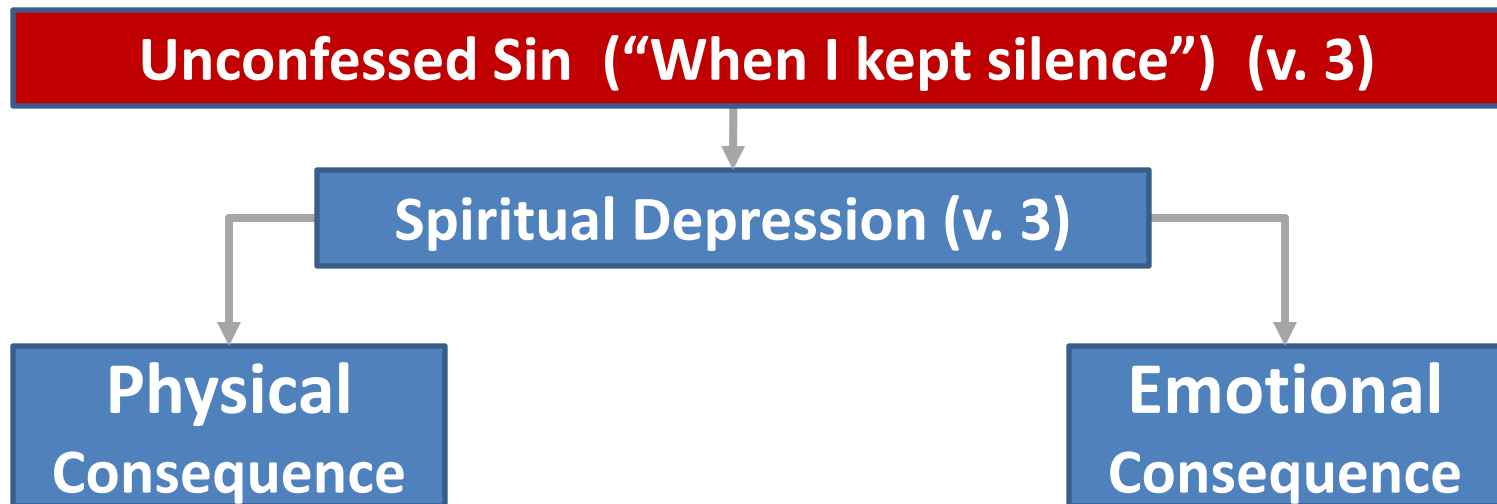
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The Text of Psalm 32 (KJV)

- Psalm 32:1-11 <A Psalm of David, Maschil.> Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. ² Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. ³ **When I kept silence**, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. ⁴ For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. ⁵ **I acknowledged my sin unto thee**, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will **confess** my transgressions unto the LORD; and **thou forgavest** the iniquity of my sin. Selah. ⁶ For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. ⁷ Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah. ⁸ I will **instruct** thee and **teach** thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will **guide** thee with mine eye. ⁹ Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. ¹⁰ Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. ¹¹ Be **glad** in the LORD, and **rejoice**, ye righteous: and shout for **joy**, all ye that are upright in heart.

The Cause of Depression Observed in Psalm 32 (A Psalm of David)

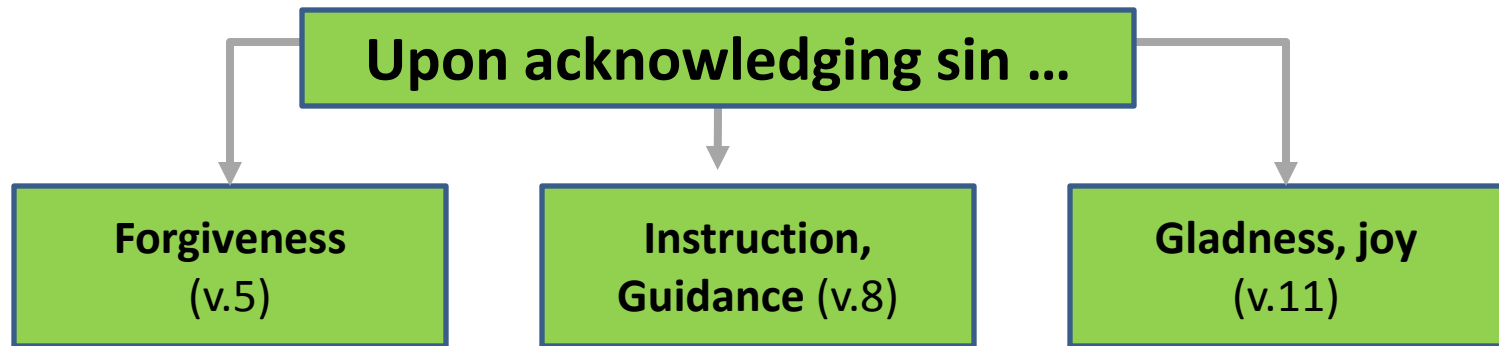
David's unconfessed sin led to a depression that was characterized by both emotional and physical problems.



The Bible's Answer to Depression

Psalm 32 (A Psalm of David)

David's depression resolved when he "acknowledged" his sin to the LORD. He received spiritual blessings of forgiveness, instruction / guidance from the LORD and gladness / rejoicing / joy (v. 11).



Conclusions

- While we acknowledge that some medical problems can cause depression and anxiety, Christians should understand that depression commonly stems from a sinful focus on self and/or other unconfessed sins
- Depression can be manifest as both emotional and physical symptoms
- The solution to spiritual depression and anxiety is to:
 - Repent of sinful focus on self and turn one's focus back to the LORD
 - Ask the LORD to reveal any other sin
 - Confess sin.
 - Receive the Lord's forgiveness, instruction and joy (Ps. 32:11)
- Christians should rejoice at the opportunity to lovingly admonish a depressed brother- or sister-in-Christ. A loving admonishment to repent of *sinful focus on self* is a loving admonishment indeed!

How Can I Be Sure of Heaven?

1. Acknowledge to God that you have sinned against Him. The Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" (Romans 3:23).
2. Realize that our sin separates you from God. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)
3. Understand that Christ died on the cross and paid for all our sins. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.." (Ephesians 2:8-9).
4. The Bible teaches that, in order to receive forgiveness of sins, we must repent and place our faith in Christ alone for salvation. To repent is simply to make a conscious decision to turn away from sin and to turn toward Christ. The Bible says that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). God promises eternal life

Questions?

Pastor Robert Hammond
LONG HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
100 Middlebrooks Ave
Trumbull, CT 06611

Hammond.robert@gmail.com

Phone: 203-208-3450