

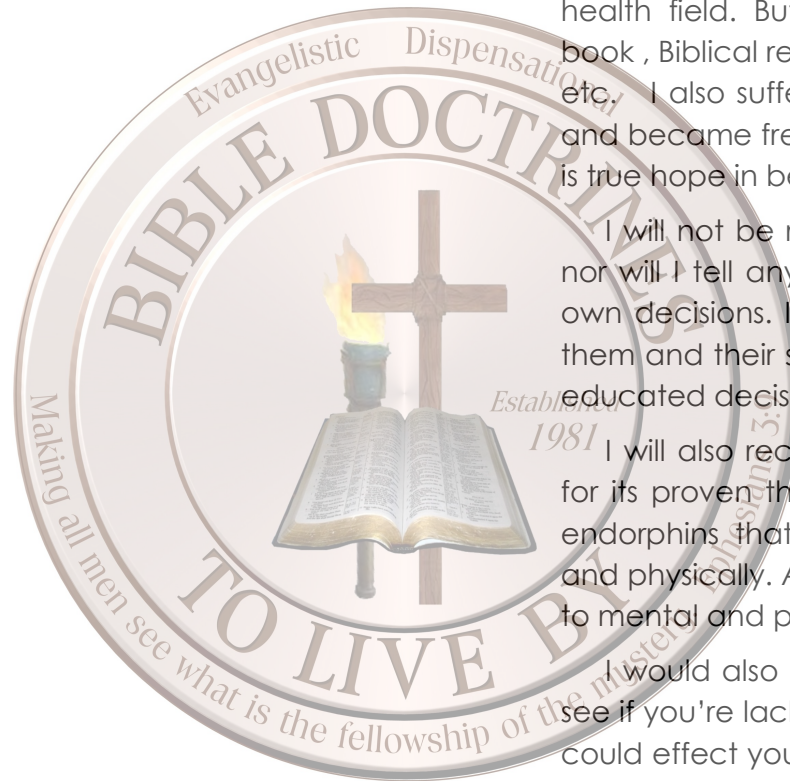
Forward

I am not a spiritual guru, nor an expert in the mental health field. But I have done much research for this book, Biblical research, mental health, physical health, etc. I also suffered from severe depression years ago, and became free from it. So I can guarantee you, there is true hope in being set free from depression.

I will not be recommending taking depression meds nor will I tell anyone not to. Adults need to make their own decisions. I will only share well known facts about them and their side effects, so you can make your own educated decision.

I will also recommend starting an exercise program, for its proven that exercise relieves stress, and releases endorphins that makes a person feel better mentally and physically. A good sleeping routine is also important to mental and physical health.

I would also recommend a medical test, in order to see if you're lacking certain vitamins in your system, that could effect you mentally, such as a lack of vitamin D3. Then, you can see if you need healthy natural supplements. In the wintertime, some people suffer from depression because of a lack of sunlight. The sunlight produces Vitamin D in our system. Vitamin D is the only vitamin that our bodies produce through sunlight. If our



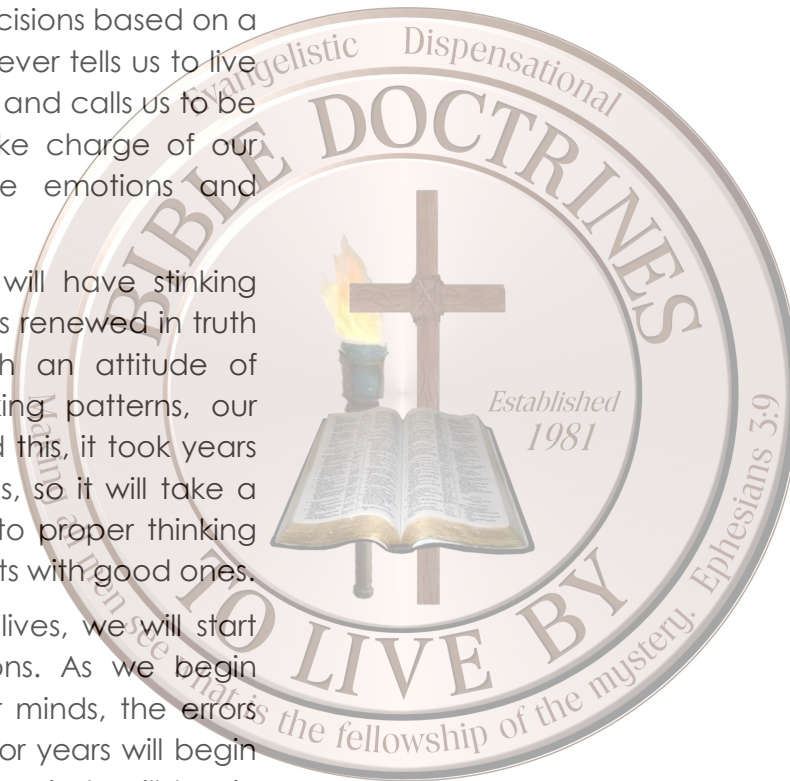
bodies produce it, think how important it must be to us.

Laughter is also very important for our emotional and mental health. So is social interaction with others, they are part of our soul's needs. Yet, when someone is depressed, they seem to isolate themselves from others. We seem to go too much by our feelings, rather than being responsible to make healthy decisions based on a choice of our will. God, in His Word, never tells us to live by our feelings. He treats us like adults and calls us to be a responsible adult. We need to take charge of our thinking because thoughts produce emotions and desires.

If we have stinking thinking, we will have stinking emotions. We need to have our minds renewed in truth and exchange stinking thinking with an attitude of gratitude. As we change our thinking patterns, our emotions will respond. But understand this, it took years to develop improper thinking patterns, so it will take a little time to transform our thinking into proper thinking patterns. Its about replacing bad habits with good ones.

As we start applying truth to our lives, we will start noticing a difference in our emotions. As we begin putting in and practicing truth in our minds, the errors that have been programed in there for years will begin getting pushed out by truth, and our minds will begin getting transformed by God's truth.

God created man and woman, and He understands us and what makes us tick. God is infinite in His knowledge and wisdom. As we look for answers in His



Mankind's Problem

In the Body of Christ there is neither black nor white, male nor female, greek nor barbarian.

I'm not highly educated secularly, but I'll tell you something: God showed me some very important things in His Word. Take it from me, God can use just regular people. Our Apostle Paul wrote that God uses the foolish things of this world to confound the wise of this world. Just to give you a little of my background. I grew up in the worst neighborhood in the Southside of Chicago. I grew up in a gang-infested area, got involved with drugs and the street life.

When I trusted in Christ as my Savior, I was saved. I was freed and had the joy of the Lord. I didn't want to get high. I started going to church (sad to say, later I learned that they were teaching legalism).

After six months, something happened: I got really hurt and I went back to my old thinking patterns and responses of the flesh. I had gotten saved when I was about 18 or 19, and except for those first six months, I didn't go more than six months without getting high. You would've said I wasn't a Christian but Christ said He'd never leave us nor forsake us.

It wasn't until I understood the grace of God that I learned of my identity in Christ. By learning how to rightly divide God's Word in context, I had learned that we're

were His followers by seeing the way they loved one another.

So, this week, why don't you begin to ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of all that you've learned from God's Word through these studies. I know it's a lot to take in, which is why it's also good to read this book again every so often. I have a couple of books that I try to re-read yearly.

When your thoughts begin to dwell on the past or worry about the future, make an active effort to thank God for your life today, and continue to trust Him for your life tomorrow, and just rejoice in Him (the joy of the Lord is my strength). Start giving thanks in all circumstances that you face, trusting God that He's faithful to work all things together for your good. Then you will be rejoicing in life, instead of being depressed, angry, or anxious. God's wonderful will for us is that we rejoice in the Lord.

If you did not get anything else from this chapter, remember the main points:

Live in the present; thank God for today.

When something happens, you have a choice: "Thank you, God," which is the spiritual response, or get angry and spiral down to depression.

Forget your past. There is nothing you can do about it. You do not have to reopen it. All you are going to do is be as angry and unforgiving. God calls us to forgive, Love does not bring up the past.

We do not need to fear the future. We can live our lives every day through faith, dependent on the Holy Spirit to empower us. A thankful attitude of gratitude

God's Word Has Answers

After I came to understand God's grace, I had my own business training dogs professionally. I went to my clients' home and taught them how to train their dogs. I made my own hours, so I could stay up late studying God's Word and reading good sound Grace teaching books. I was able to do that for years, staying up late at night studying. My uncle once told me, "If you were going to college, you would have a couple of degrees by now with all the studying you do." It is always best to study directly God's Word. Yet, there were also a lot of different solid grace teachers that helped me. When using these other books, the key is to be a Berean, meaning to compare them with Scriptures daily to see if what those books taught me were true.

Like me back then, if your single (unmarried), enjoy your singleness. You have the time to study. I know it's rough; you have emotions and desires. Know who you are in Christ: that you are complete in Him (Col.2:10) and that no one else is capable of making you feel unconditionally loved and accepted. Singles sometimes think that if I could only find someone then they will make them happy. From personally experience, I can tell you that what will happen is that you will drain them trying to get your spiritual needs met by them. First, you need to learn spiritual needs are met in Christ and your

they're not on Christ. He doesn't care if your main focus is your church ministry (busy but barren). He doesn't care what it is, as long as it is not on Jesus. When you are focused on Jesus, you will experience love, joy, and peace as you depend on Him. The Holy Spirit will produce that in us and also self-control. Whatever you are dependent on will control you. The enemy doesn't want you to depend on Christ in you; he doesn't want you to keep your eyes fixed on Christ.

Don't get me wrong, it is good to be involved in ministries. In our ministry (Grace and Truth Ministry), we do a lot of outreach. It is also good to be involved with people, but when that starts controlling you instead of the Spirit of God, that is when we get into trouble. That is a problem.

Colossians 3:1-2 says, "Set your mind on things above. Walk in the ways of God ... putting off the old, and put on the new." In other words, be who you really are. Work out what is true inwardly. You are a new creation in Christ Jesus. Grow in that understanding as you learn your new identity, which we learn by reading our Apostle Paul's epistles, Romans through Philemon.

We never have to give up. What God began in us, He is going to finish. You are not going to make all the right choices every time. You are going to make mistakes at times, but God still loves you. When you fall down, God does not say, "Oh, I'm gonna get you, now! I've been waiting for you to do that, and now I'm going to punish you." Do you do that to your kids? If you do, then you are wrong. You know what God says, in so many words, "Get up. Wipe off your knees. Let the love

effects. If anyone chooses to want to get off their meds, they have to be under the supervision of their doctor in order to wean themselves off those powerful mind and chemical altering drugs.

If we have a problem with fear or anxiety or depression, we will have a chemical imbalance, because that is how our body responds to fear. When someone is in danger, they get a adrenaline dump. It's called the "fight or flight defense mechanism." It helps us to run from danger or to stay and fight. For short amounts of time, it's a good thing. But when we stay in a stressful and fearful condition in our minds for long periods, it can wreak havoc on our bodies. Stress can cause a lot of serious health problems.

I believe most psychologists and psychiatrists truly want to help people, just as I do. Yet, the problem with psychobabble is its secular atheistic roots (Sigmund Freud, B.F. Skinner, Carl Rogers) and humanistic secular philosophies. The Holy Spirit through our Apostle Paul warns us in Colossians 2:8, "Beware lest anyone cheat you through human philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ." Psalms 1:1a says, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly"

My premise in writing this book is based on 2 Timothy 3:16,17. Our Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, writes that all scripture is God-breathed and profitable (useful) for doctrine (teaching), for reproof, for correction, for instruction. Then He writes that we

Coming Out Of and Staying Free From Depression

For Christ died for your sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous. "He [God] made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we may become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). God made you alive who were dead in your sins (Eph. 2:1).

Dear believer, you're alive spiritually; you were dead in Adam, separated from the life and control of God. God, for Christ's sake and through His blood, forgave all of your sins (past, present, future). So, part of your identity is that you are now forgiven. You stand in forgiveness. You don't get forgiven over and over. "Forgiven" is part of your identity in Christ.

"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins...according to the riches of God's grace (Eph.1:7). There is no condemnation for you. God made you complete in Christ (Col. 2:10). You have righteousness—not on your own, not in your flesh, not by your behavior. God gave you that gift as part of your identity in Christ. It is a gift. He justifies you. He declares you perfect and holy in His sight, accepted in His Beloved Son (Eph. 1:6). He completely reconciled you to Himself through His death, and He completely saves you eternally.

God doesn't do things half way. He doesn't just save you until you mess up. Whatever God tells you; He does

it. When He says He saved you, you are eternally saved. God does not throw you away the first time you mess up; that would not be salvation. Your salvation is not based upon confessing your sins and beg for forgiveness. God is not constantly throwing you out and bringing you back.

Salvation is God putting you in the boat, the man who was drowning, and takes you to land. God completely saves us. It is called eternal life. It is not probation. You now have eternal life. In that life, you are given forgiveness, righteousness, holiness, redemption. In Christ, you are a child of God now. You might not always act like it, but it doesn't change who you are. It doesn't change how God sees you.

Knowing this, it just doesn't make sense to do the things we used to do as an unsaved lost person because you are now a child of God. God wants you to accept the totality of His love for you because it is this love that will begin changing your behavior. Jesus said, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Remain in my love" (John 15:9). What does Jesus want you to do? Remain in His love—rely, depend on His unconditional love. He wants to bring you to a place where you confidently say, "I am convinced, that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:38-39). He want you to know that. Even our Apostle Paul said that he learned it. We also need to learn that, as we study God's Word rightly divided.

Christ himself revealed to Paul in the Dispensation of Grace, the truth of Grace. But guess what? Paul said I am convinced. Paul had to go through some things in

Steps To Freedom From Depression

In this chapter. I'm going to help you see how you can be free from depression by learning to live in the present, one day at a time, and how to begin controlling your thought life by replacing truth where error has dominated. Remember this:, your emotions respond to your thoughts. So, what does humanistic psychology or psychiatry do? They try to deal with your emotions. They say, "You've got emotional problems." No, you don't! You've got thinking problems, improper thinking patterns. Your emotions are working fine; they are predictable. They respond to your thoughts. Psychobabble is trying to deal with the fruit of the problem, but never gets to the root of the problem. Many times they tell their clients what they have been taught on the subject of depression, anxiety, and fear. They counsel them and tell them they have a chemical imbalance, so they put them on powerful mind altering drugs, which have many side effects (just read the side effects on the prescription bottle). I have worked in a Rehab Center and have seen firsthand the side effects of the mind altering and chemical altering meds they were on.

As I wrote earlier, I'm not trying to tell anyone to stop taking their medications, that's an individual choice. If they choose to stay on those drugs or if they choose to get off them, I'm just stating some facts about the side

forgiven." Do you know that God has forgiven you for all your sins (past, present and future sins) on the cross over 2,000 years ago. Forgiveness is different than trust; forgiveness is given freely, trust has to be earned. We need to turn those who have harmed us over to God; it's not like they're getting away with it. God can deal with them better than you. And you can thank God that He brought you through that, instead of being bitter. God can bring beauty from ashes. You can thank Him that He gave you the ability and choice to forgive, and don't forget that He has equipped you with the Holy Spirit. It's not that you have to forgive; it's that you want to forgive. That's what grace is all about.

And guess what will happen? You'll cleanse all that erosion and bitterness inside you. Otherwise, it's your own individual fault, you can't blame it on them that you stay bitter and unhappy. Today, you can have problems because of something that happened 20 years ago because you haven't applied God's Word of truth to the details of your life. It's not what happens to us, it's how we respond that counts. Whether we respond in thanksgiving, trusting God to work all things together for our good, or whether we respond in anger. I hope you see, it's up to us.

How about your childhood and upbringing? You say, "If I hadn't grown up poor, I would be okay today." You've got rich kids saying, "I'm ashamed of my parents. They are rich."

4. Some people say, "If I was only married, I'd be happy." Other people say, "If I wasn't married, I'd be happy." Get the two together, you might find an answer.

You say, "If I were at another job, I'd be happy." Or, "If I didn't live here, I'd be happy." The problem is wherever you go, you have to take you with you. If you're unhappy here, you'll be unhappy there. If you don't have joy when you're single, you won't have it when you're married. If you don't have it in your marriage, then you're not going to have it out of your marriage.

Some people say, "I can't enjoy my life because I'm married to an unbeliever or someone who isn't who they should be in the Lord." I see some people who have the joy of the Lord despite being married to an unbeliever, even though they're not in the best situation. Do you know why? They're focusing on the Lord, and they have joy and peace. They're thanking God that He's working all things together for their good.

Our misery comes from within, not from without. Jesus said that it's not what goes into a man that defiles him, but what comes out. God's Word says that God made you a new creation in Christ, if you've trusted in Christ, He made you His child. He knows you better than anyone. It makes sense to begin listening to what He has to say about you, doesn't it? You know, it's like two Cadillacs