

CARING FOR THE **DEPRESSED**

TEACHING & COUNSELING PACKET

A CareLeader.org resource



TABLE OF CONTENTS

In this packet you will find several teaching and counseling tools. We encourage you to use this free resource to care for those struggling with depression and to teach others about the nature of depression. For more in-depth information, please refer to the *Caring for the Depressed* ebook on CareLeader.org.

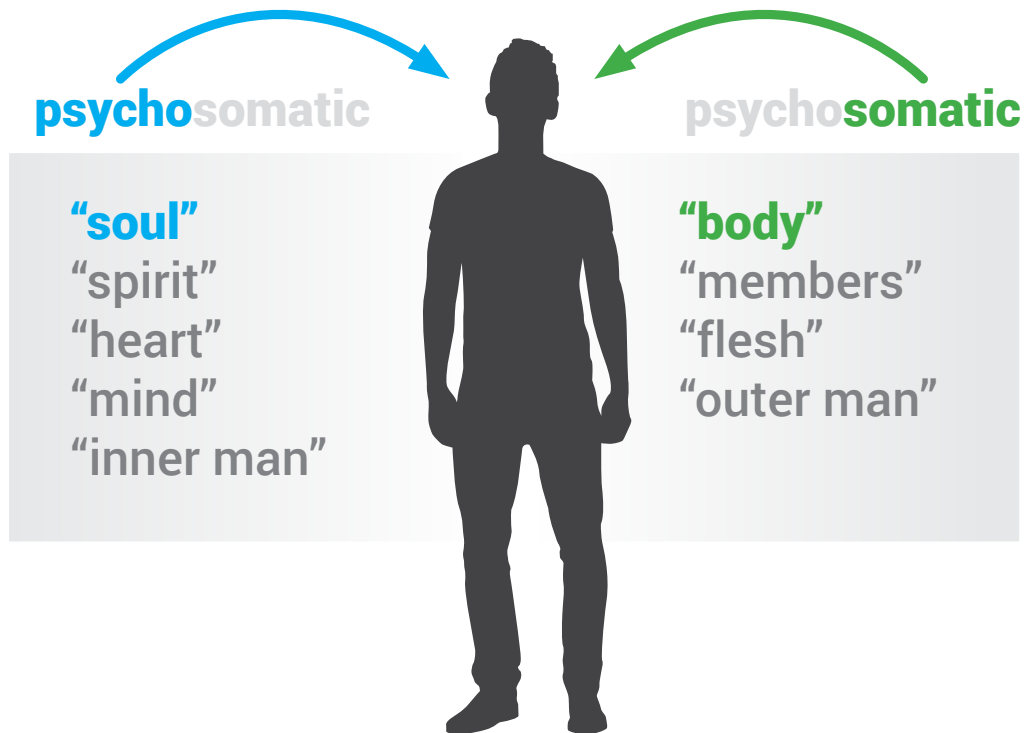
Understanding human nature holistically	1
<i>This graphic illustrates how the Bible presents humans as creatures who experience life through their bodies and in relationship to their Creator.</i>	
Understanding depression holistically	2
<i>This graphic illustrates how depression reflects our psychosomatic design. Some symptoms associated with depression are issues associated with the “heart” in Scripture (reflecting one’s relationship with God). Other symptoms are issues associated with the body’s functioning.</i>	
Body & heart interaction	
The “heart” and body are intricately interactive	3
<i>This graphic can be used to show how our experiences in life have both material and immaterial dimensions.</i>	
The body can affect the “heart” and the “heart” can affect the body	4
<i>These graphics use examples from everyday life to show how the body affects the “heart” and how the “heart” affects the body.</i>	
Slippery slope of depression	
Slippery slope guide	5
<i>This graphic uses the image of a slippery slope to describe the depths that a person struggling with depression might experience and suggests strategies you could use with the person at each level.</i>	
Where are you?	6
<i>This graphic again uses a slippery slope image for starting a conversation with a depressed person. Use this to help a person show you what stage of depression he’s in.</i>	
Pastoral care questionnaire	7
<i>This graphic is a set of key questions to help you understand a person’s struggle with depression in terms of the relevant “heart” issues and body issues that might need to be addressed. The section on body issues can be filled in and clipped so that the counselee can take it to a physician for consultation.</i>	

All graphics and information in this packet originated from the *Caring for the Depressed* ebook on CareLeader.org.

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN NATURE HOLISTICALLY

Human nature should be understood biblically in terms of both material (physical) and immaterial (spiritual) dimensions. One's relationship with God is tied to the condition of the "heart" (inner person).

Humans are created as **psychosomatic** creatures

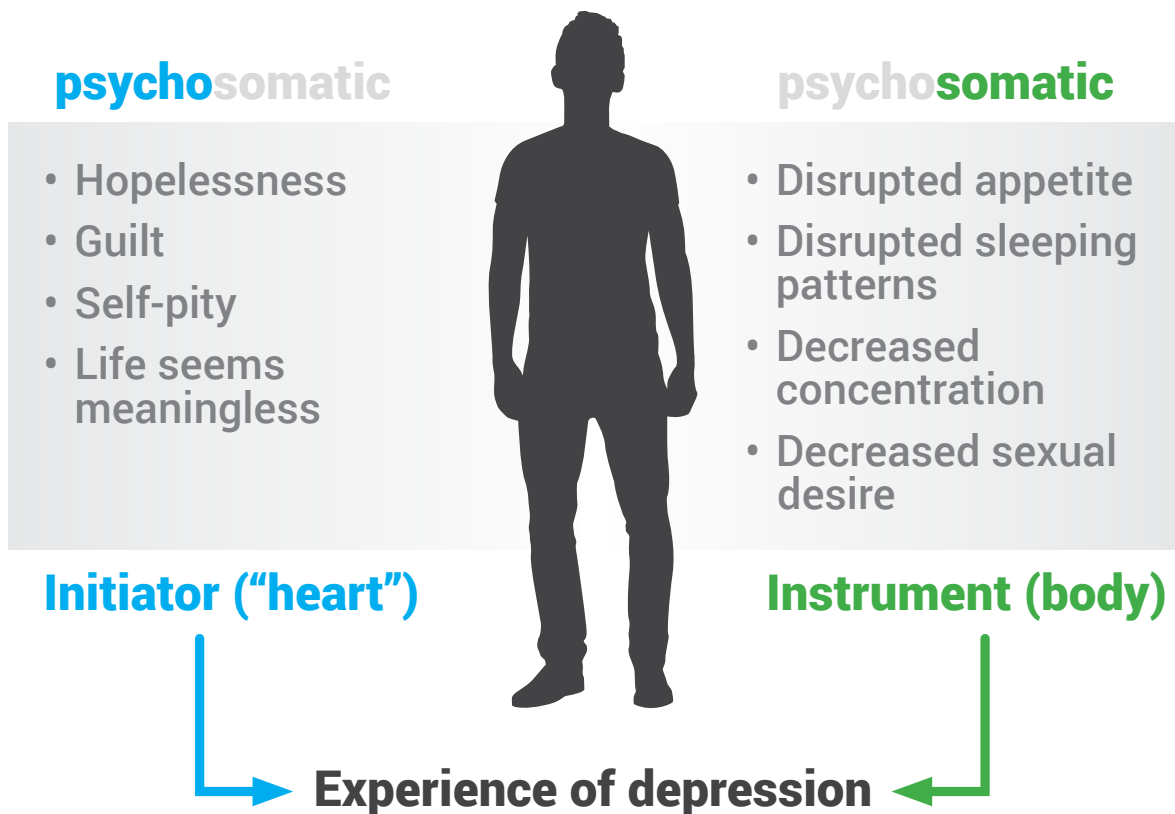


For more information, see the *Caring for the Depressed* ebook (pp. 1–8).

UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION HOLISTICALLY

Depression should be understood biblically in terms of both material (physical) and immaterial (spiritual) dimensions. One's relationship with God is tied to the condition of the "heart" (inner person).

Depression as a **psychosomatic** experience



For more information, see the *Caring for the Depressed* ebook (pp. 8–9).

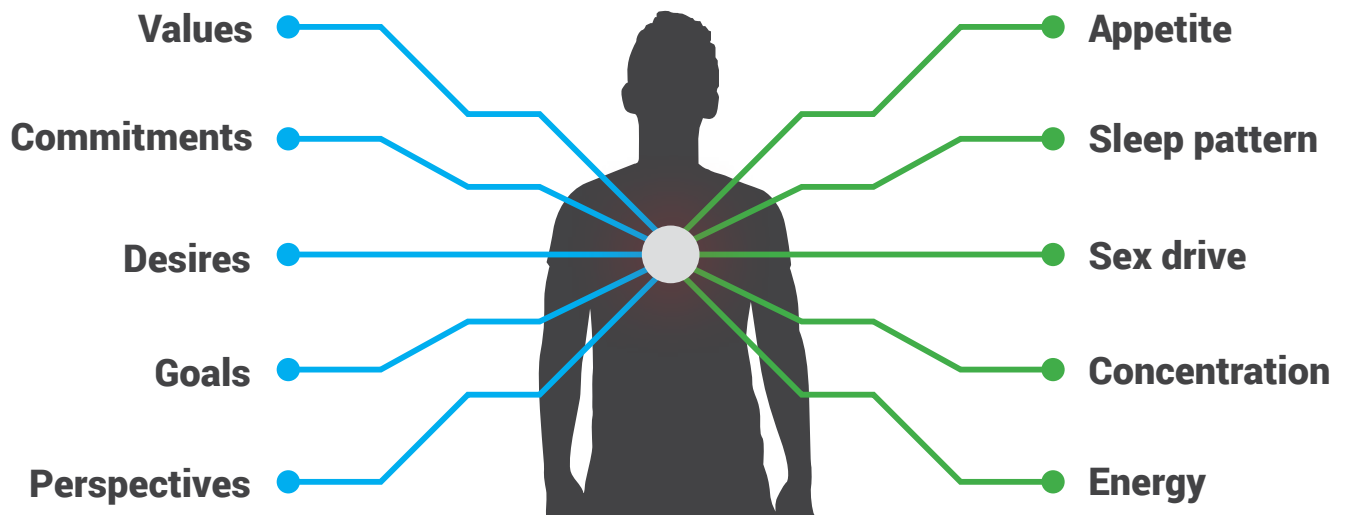
BODY & HEART INTERACTION

By God's design, the "heart" (in biblical terms, the immaterial dimension) and the body (the material dimension) are intimately interactive, and thus, both contribute to our experiences in life.

The "**heart**" and **body** are intricately interactive

Out of the "**heart**"

Through the **body**



For more information, see the *Caring for the Depressed* ebook (pp. 7–8).

BODY & HEART INTERACTION

By God's design, the "heart" (in biblical terms, the immaterial dimension) and the body (the material dimension) are intimately interactive, and thus, both contribute to our experiences in life.

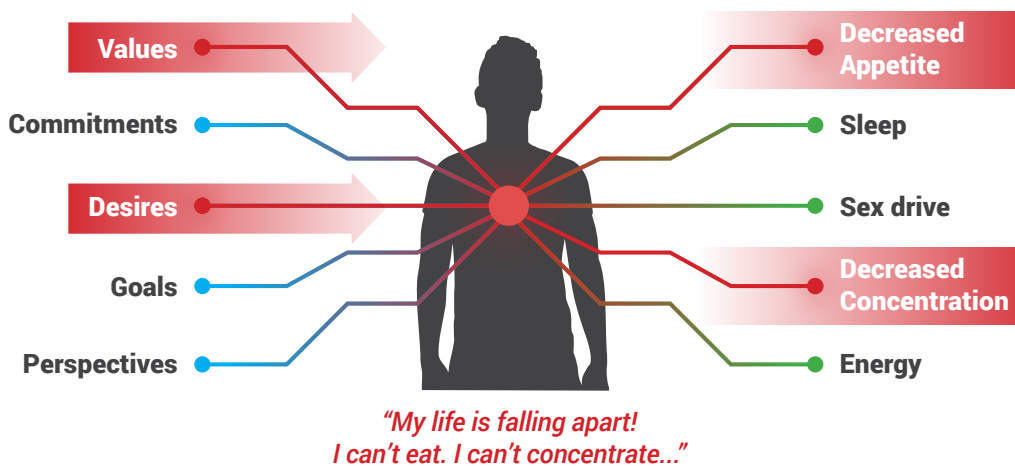
The **body** can affect the "heart"



JIM'S EXPERIENCE

For the past year Jim has struggled with **lethargy**, **weight gain**, and **very low motivation** to do anything. He has had to force himself to go to work. He has wondered if God is angry with him, but that frustrates him, because he cannot think of a reason why. He just received a diagnosis of an underactive thyroid gland.

The "heart" can affect the **body**



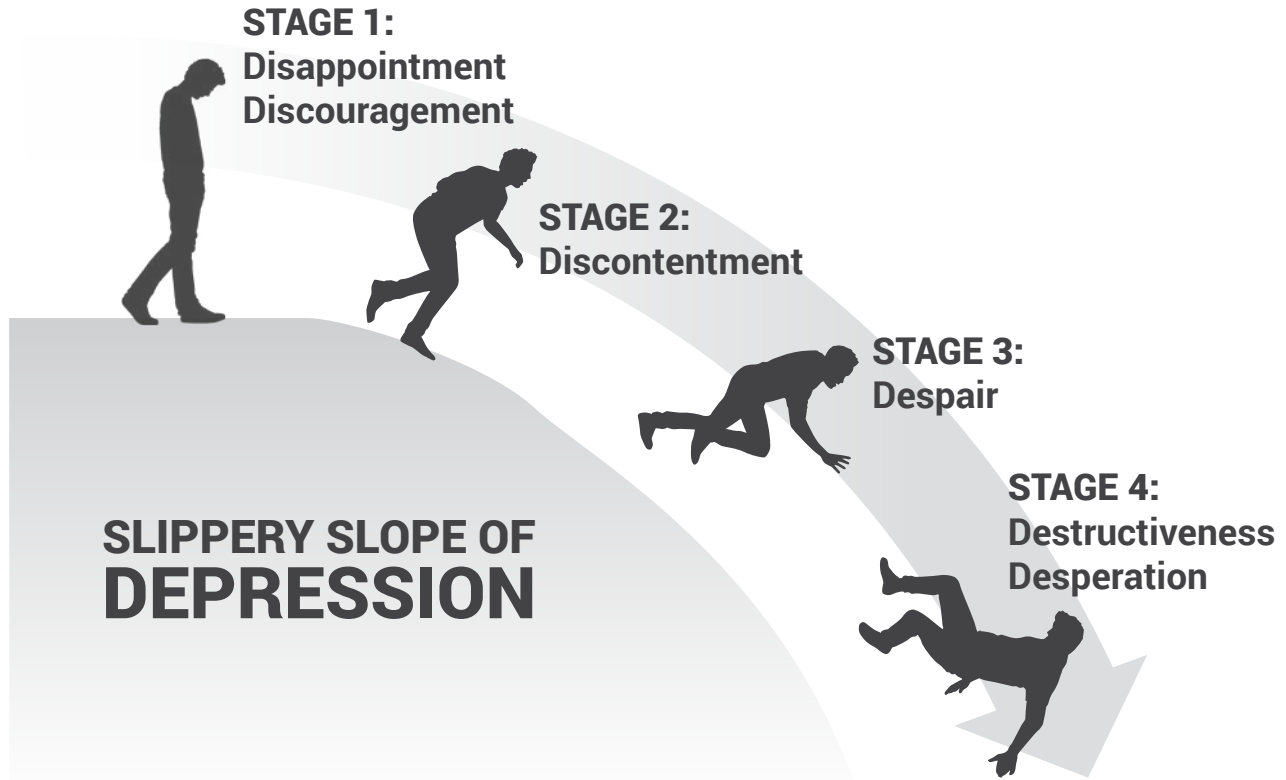
ABIGAIL'S EXPERIENCE

For the past six months 16-year-old Abigail has felt depressed. Her parents have decided to divorce. She **worries** about her mom's ill health and really **regrets** an unsettled argument they have had. She had been an A student and active in school and church activities. Now, she is a C student, has little appetite, and has few social contacts.

For more information, see the *Caring for the Depressed* ebook (pp. 7–8).

SLIPPERY SLOPE GUIDE

Use the guide below to understand the counselee's experience with depression.



STAGE 1: Disappointment Discouragement

What's going on?

Something unexpected and unwanted has occurred.

What to do:

- Ask questions about the person's struggle.
- Listen attentively for affected goals and desires.
- Ask about the person's perception of God's role.

STAGE 2: Discontentment

What's going on?

There's an unbiblical response to the disappointment.

What to do:

- Listen for "perceived rights."
- Listen for what the person has lost.
- Listen for any blessings that have been lost sight of.

STAGE 3: Despair

What's going on?

The person sees no way out, is giving up, and is losing hope.

What to do:

- Suggest medical evaluation.
- Ask about relationships.
- Ask about fulfilling responsibilities and physical activity.
- Listen for unbiblical and unrealistic thinking.

STAGE 4: Destructiveness Desperation

What's going on?

There's deepening hopelessness and a reduced fear of death/harm.

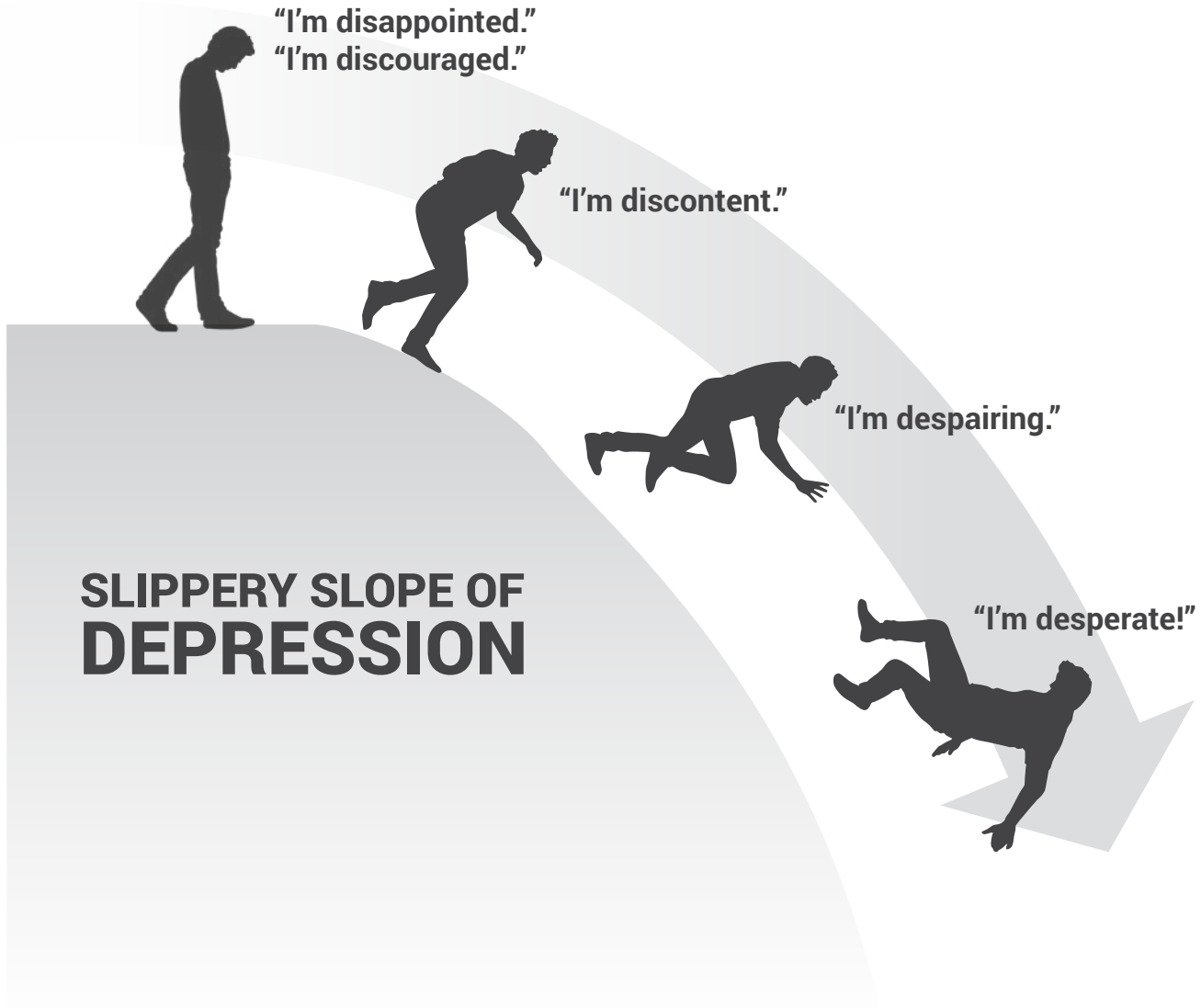
What to do:

- Ask about thoughts and plans of suicide.
- Ask about loneliness or feeling like a burden.
- Ask about what would need to change to bring hope and peace.

For more information, see the *Caring for the Depressed* ebook (pp. 12–33).

WHERE ARE YOU?

Place an X on the slope where you feel you are right now.



PASTORAL CARE QUESTIONNAIRE

Use the questionnaire below to understand the issues related to a counselee's experience with depression. The section on body issues can be filled in and clipped so that the counselee can take it to a physician for consultation.

HEART ISSUES

1. Are there particular disappointments, discouragements, or losses that occupy your mind when you feel depressed?
2. Are you having any relationship problems at this time? What are they? How long have you had these problems?
3. Do you struggle with thoughts of worthlessness or having no purpose in your life? Tell me about the struggle.
4. Do you have struggles with thoughts of hopelessness? Tell about some times when those thoughts were particularly strong/troubling.
5. Have you thought about harming yourself or others? Have you made any plans to do this? Have you taken any steps in your plan?
6. Have you thought much about God in the midst of your struggle with depression? What have been your thoughts? What questions might you like to ask Him?

 FOR THE DOCTOR

BODY ISSUES

In your experience of depression ...

1. Have you experienced any change in your sleeping patterns? What has changed? How has it affected your life?
2. Have you experienced any change in your appetite? What has changed? How has it affected you?
3. Have you experienced any change in your sex drive (either your desire or physical arousal)? What has changed?
4. Have you had difficulty concentrating or making decisions? Can you give me an example?

DOWNLOAD THE BOOK

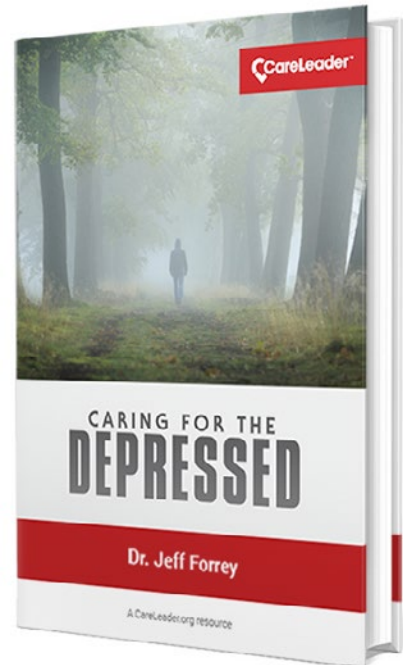
All information and graphics in this packet originated from the *Caring for the Depressed* ebook on CareLeader.org.

CARING FOR THE DEPRESSED

If you have ministered to people for any length of time, you undoubtedly have talked to someone who struggles with depression. Depression is one of the most common sources of distress in our fallen world. It is also a complex experience for people to understand and talk about. In this book, we consider how we might understand the experience of depression in terms of what the Bible says about us and about life in a fallen world. We provide a tool to help you talk through this experience with people and suggest keys for helping them respond in ways that honor the Lord.

To download this ebook for free, go to:

<http://www.careleader.org/free-ebook-download-caring-depressed/>



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Jeff Forrey, PhD, is senior writer and content developer for Church Initiative. Prior to this role, he was a biblical counselor and trainer of counselors in St. Louis, MO, and in Arlington Heights, IL. He also has taught biblical counseling at several institutions, including Evangelical Theological College, Westminster Theological Seminary, and Reformed Theological Seminary. He has contributed to the *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, and *Scripture and Counseling*.