

## **Counseling those Living with Chronic Physical Challenges**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Begin with a biblical view of suffering.

- <sup>19</sup> Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.  
*Psalm 34:19 (ESV)*
- <sup>33</sup> I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."  
*John 16:33 (ESV)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Issues related to chronic physical challenges.

- <sup>16</sup> "And now my soul is poured out within me; days of affliction have taken hold of me. <sup>17</sup> The night racks my bones, and the pain that gnaws me takes no rest. <sup>18</sup> With great force my garment is disfigured; it binds me about like the collar of my tunic. <sup>19</sup> God has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes. <sup>20</sup> I cry to you for help and you do not answer me; I stand, and you only look at me. <sup>21</sup> You have turned cruel to me; with the might of your hand you persecute me. <sup>22</sup> You lift me up on the wind; you make me ride on it, and you toss me about in the roar of the storm. <sup>23</sup>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Issues related to chronic physical challenges.

- For I know that you will bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living. <sup>24</sup> Yet does not one in a heap of ruins stretch out his hand, and in his disaster cry for help? <sup>25</sup> Did not I weep for him whose day was hard? Was not my soul grieved for the needy? <sup>26</sup> But when I hoped for good, evil came, and when I waited for light, darkness came. <sup>27</sup> My inward parts are in turmoil and never still; days of affliction come to meet me. <sup>28</sup> I go about darkened, but not by the sun; I stand up in the assembly and cry for help. <sup>29</sup> I am a brother of jackals and a companion of ostriches. <sup>30</sup> My skin turns black and falls from me, and my bones burn with heat. <sup>31</sup> My lyre is turned to mourning, and my pipe to the voice of those who weep. *Job 30:16-31 (ESV)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Issues related to chronic physical challenges.

- Pain
- Sadness
- Grief
- Exhaustion
- Limited activity and/or mobility
- Financial challenges
- Loss of independence
- Loneliness

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Some sinful reactions to chronic physical challenges.

- Frustration
- Sense of entitlement     Job 30:25-26
- Anger
- Unhealthy self-focus     Job 14:21-22
- Skewed view of God     Job 30:19-21
- Jealousy
- Marriage tensions
- Manipulation
- Hopelessness Job 6:8-13; Proverbs 18:14

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Chronic physical challenges may be  
God's judgment for persistent sin.**

- <sup>58</sup> "If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the LORD your God, <sup>59</sup> then the LORD will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting. <sup>60</sup> And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. <sup>61</sup> Every sickness also and every affliction that is not recorded in the book of this law, the LORD will bring upon you, until you are destroyed. *Deuteronomy 28:58-61 (ESV)*
- *(See Psalm 38)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Chronic physical challenges may be  
God's judgment for persistent sin.**

God's judgment comes after prolonged, persistent resistance to both God's revealed instruction and many opportunities to turn back to Him.

The counselee may need to learn about the reality of God's judgment as taught in Scripture in order to connect these dots.

The counselee may have a skewed view of the character of God such as the idea that God's love would keep Him from bringing judgment on His people.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Restoration is the purpose of God's  
judgment.**

- <sup>14</sup> Again, though I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' yet if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, <sup>15</sup> if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and walks in the statutes of life, not doing injustice, he shall surely live; he shall not die. <sup>16</sup> None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he shall surely live. *Ezekiel 33:14-16 (ESV)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Many chronic physical challenges are not related to specific sin.

- <sup>1</sup> As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.  
<sup>2</sup> And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"  
<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him."  
*John 9:1-3 (ESV)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Many chronic physical challenges are not related to specific sin.

Provides an opportunity for people to see the glory of God.

Through a supernatural act of God that brings complete healing such as the man born blind.

Through God's innumerable expressions of sustaining grace as He walks with a person through these difficult seasons.

(An example was giving by one of those at the session of her husband who modeled the love of Christ to the church in his care for her during such a season of life that it gave both her and others a greater understanding of this kind of love.)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

God is aware of our afflictions and we can praise Him in the midst of them.

- <sup>22</sup> I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you: <sup>23</sup> You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! <sup>24</sup> For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him."  
*Psalms 22:22-24 (ESV)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

The Word of God is vital in the face of chronic physical challenges.

- <sup>92</sup> If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. <sup>93</sup> I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life.

*Psalm 119:92-93 (ESV)*

– *The scripture will bring a person to :*

- *A biblical and therefore true and accurate view of God*
- *A correct understanding of what God has and has not promised*
- *A correct perspective of your present circumstances in light of eternity.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Trust God that His grace is sufficient for any challenge we face.

- <sup>7</sup> So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. <sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. *2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (ESV)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Help bring into perspective the temporal and the eternal.

- <sup>16</sup> So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup> as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. *2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (ESV)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Help bring into perspective the temporal and the eternal.**

- <sup>1</sup> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup> He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." *Revelation 21:1-4 (ESV)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---