

Preface

Depression is one of the major health challenges of our generation, particularly in the developed world. Christians are not immune from it. Our aim in writing this short book is to equip the friends, families and church families of those suffering from depression to better help them. We hope that the mix of biblical truths, pastoral advice and medical information in this book will help readers to offer practical advice and support grounded in biblical principles to those suffering with depression. We hope that readers struggling with depression themselves may also find the book helpful – but please bear with us that this is not

intended to be a self-help book – more a source of information.

We first began thinking in depth about the issue of depression and the Christian when we became aware of how many of our own church family were battling with depression. With backgrounds in Christian student work (Sarah) and family medicine (Jayne) we put together a seminar on the topic, and eventually this has evolved into this booklet. This is far from being a comprehensive book, but we hope and pray that you will find it a useful introduction to this topic. Needless to say it probably won't match every person's experience and certainly won't be able to give a full picture of depression in all its complexity. Our hope is that it will give a bit of a handle on the subject for those who don't know much about it who may be helping others suffering with depression or suffering themselves.

We have written primarily for Christians and we will try to understand depression from both a medical and Biblical perspective. But since Jesus is Lord over every human being, we hope it will have relevance too for those who haven't yet come to know Him for themselves.