

## What Does The Bible Say About Mental Health?

### **Intro:**

- Welcome everyone to our first ever PCM Semester workshop unpacking the idea of what does the Bible say about Mental Health? My name is Dan Lukhard & I serve as the Director of College Discipleship at Providence Church! Providence is a church located 15 minutes from NC State Campus! We believe in God the Father, Jesus Christ His Son, the inerrancy of the Bible & believe that Jesus is the great rescuer that we desperately need.
- If you don't attend a church in the Raleigh area we'd love to host you this Sunday for worship at 9:30am & a thing called College Gathering which is a service specifically for 18-23 year olds at 10:45am where we'll be starting a new teaching series on Peace! We offer rides that leave the Talley Tower at 9am & Lucky Tree Cafe at 9:10am.

### **Context: Why are you doing this?**

- You don't have to search long or scroll far to recognize that mental health is incredibly common & prevalent now than ever before
- Many people, both 18-23 year olds & other life stages are attempting to grapple w/ how to handle walking w/ mental health during the day-to-day
- **In 2019, The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reports that “approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. (46.6 million) experiences mental illness in a given year<sup>1</sup>.”**
- **Fear, anxiety, depression, panic attacks, anger, loneliness, phobias, disorders (personality, eating, identity, bi-polar), self-harm**
- Mental health affects our physical, social, mental, psychological & spiritual state
- Mental health - emotions - behaviors - all lead us to feeling anxious, overwhelmed & hopeless

### **Personal:**

- I don't claim to be an “expert” on this topic but I have wrestled w/ many aspects of mental health before
  - Anxiety
  - Seasons of deep discouragement & despair
  - Anger
- Counseled many many people who have walked through mental health

### **Tonight:**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nami.org/mhstats>

- Not going to solve mental health completely in our short time together but I'm hopeful we can at least take the first steps in:
  - Growing in our understanding of it
  - Begin to have conversations about it
- Hope this is helpful in providing you at least a framework of how to care for yourself & others who may be struggling w/ mental health BUT I really want us to grow in our understanding of how the Bible speaks to mental health

## HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE MENTAL HEALTH?

**Mental health deals directly with our physical, emotional, psychological, social & spiritual well-being.**

- We are holistic beings which means everything affects everything
- **When we don't physically feel well - our emotions generally aren't joyful**
- **If we feel anxious about something our mind tends to wander 100mph**
- **Knowing a loved 1 has passed - heart hurts & makes our body feel heavy**
- **When our soul isn't in a state of peace & rest, our mind knows something is off**
- Everything is intrinsically connected

**Stats on Mental Health<sup>2</sup>:**

- **21% of U.S. adults experienced mental illness in 2020 (52.9 million people). This represents 1 in 5 adults.**
- **5.6% of U.S. adults experienced serious mental illness in 2020 (14.2 million people). This represents 1 in 20 adults.**
- **16.5% of U.S. youth aged 6-17 experienced a mental health disorder in 2016 (7.7 million people)**

These statistics are eye-opening & concerning, but it's important to remember that God in His kindness hasn't left us to figure out mental health on our own

**Which leads us to ask a very important question: What does the Bible say about mental health?**

### **1. The Bible shows us the root of mental health**

- The Bible is literally God's very words to us. It's words He said or breathed out & inspired human authors to write down
- If you want to get to know God in a more intimate & personal way, then a great place to start would be to read & meditate on His Word
- You look throughout the Bible & you will see that you & I live in a broken world

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.nami.org/mhstats>

- **Burdens**
- **Hardships**
- **Trials**
- **Suffering**
- **Life is unpredictable**
- **Death is inevitable**
- **All of this stems from living in a world filled w/ sin & each of these different things lay heavy on our hearts**

**Sin was birthed when humanity sought to usurp God as the ultimate ruler, judge & creator of the world**

- **Genesis 1-2** - God, in perfect peace, harmony & rhythm, formed/created the entire world through the authority of His voice so that all might glorify Him
- **Genesis 1** - earth was w/out form & void, darkness covered the entire earth
- God begins to create:
  - Light - separates it from darkness
  - Creates land - separates it from water
  - Creates morning & evening - idea of there being multiple days, weeks, months, seasons, years
  - Food - vegetation, fruit, crops
  - Sea creatures, birds, beasts that roam the earth
  - Humanity - man & woman & He makes them in His image to reflect Himself
    - **Genesis 1:26-27** - *“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea & over the birds of the heavens & over the livestock & over all the earth & over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male & female he created them.”*
    - The crescendo of God’s creation is humanity - makes them in His image to bring about the glory He is worthy of
    - Gives them dominion over the birds, sea creatures, crops
- God creates the earth in 6 days - says it’s good - rests on the 7th day

**Summary of the creation account in Genesis 2:15-17** - *“The LORD God took the man & put him in the garden of Eden to work it & keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good & evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”*

- God has provided everything that Adam & Eve could possibly need to flourish as human beings

- Life, provision (food & shelter), authority & dominion in the garden, ability to work, has created them in His image
- God says everything you see & can touch is at your disposal except 1 thing - the Tree of knowledge of good & evil you shall not eat

**In Genesis 3 we're introduced to the crafty serpent who attempts to cause Eve to question everything God has done for her w/ the famous words - "Did God really say?"**

- Serpent has an ulterior motive
- He is trying to convince Eve that God is holding out on her & Adam & that He hasn't extended goodness & grace to them
- The serpent is trying to trick Eve into treasuring something else other than God Himself
- **This is what sin is -**
  - A lack of respect & worship of God
  - Perceive what is right in our own eyes rather than what God calls us to do
  - **Worship / Treasure something other than God**
    - **John Piper - Sinning is any feeling, thought, speech or action that comes from a heart that does not treasure God over all other things. And the bottom of sin, the root of all sinning, is such a heart — a heart that prefers anything above God, a heart that does not treasure God over all other people and all other things<sup>3</sup>.**
    - **Romans 3:23 - "for all have sinned & fall short of the glory of God"**
- **Each of us have treasured something other than God**
  - **Money, possessions, our reputation, GPA, job, sexual pleasure, desire to be accepted & respected by our peers, freedom**
  - All of these things are good things - gifts that God has given, but they were never created to be ultimate things that replace God in our lives

**Eve, combats the serpent's temptation by quoting to the serpent what God had previously told her - if we eat this fruit, we will DIE**

- **Genesis 3:4-6 - "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, & you will be like God, knowing good & evil." (REMEMBER! God has already created Adam & Eve in His image! They already have everything they need for life & godliness. They had everything they needed to be like God in terms of created in His image). So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, & that it was a delight to the eyes, & that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit & ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate."**

<sup>3</sup> John Piper - <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/what-is-sin-the-essence-and-root-of-all-sinning>

- The serpent's attempts at tempting Eve to reassure her own authority over God's authority works
- Eve eats the fruit & gives some to her husband Adam who also participates
- Adam & Eve both sin & through this great act of disobedience & rebellion, brokenness, misery, hate, discouragement, pain, hopelessness fills the earth

**Adam & Eve represented the federal heads of humanity & now through their disobedience, it has brought about pain, hurt, brokenness to all of humanity**

- **Romans 5:12 - "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, & death through sin, & so death spread to all men because all sinned—"**
- Because Adam & Eve treasured something other than God - their own authority rather than God's - sin has seeped its way into all of our hearts where we think we in fact know what is good & right for us rather than trusting in God's good & perfect design & way we should live
- **Now:**
  - **Brokenness abounds**
  - **Anxiety exists**
  - **Discouragement is real**
  - **The urge to feel known & loved even at the cost of hurting ourselves is an option**
  - **Many of us, including myself, forget our identity in God & seek to find it in our school, GPA, social circles, places of employment**
  - **Many of us feel a sense of guilt / shame over past sins or decisions**
  - **Some of us are filled w/ anger & bitterness**
  - **We doubt God's goodness to us & even doubt our own self worth as a son & daughter of the KING**
  - **We become fearful of the unknown & of circumstances outside & inside our control**
  - **Death awaits each of us**
- The solution to mental health isn't to try harder
  - It's not to pull ourselves up from our bootstraps
  - Generate enough energy to get through the day
  - To meditate on & repeat several self-help lines
  - The solution to mental health is coming to faith in Jesus & resting in a right relationship w/ God & properly using His gifts

**Want to be clear about something - for those in the room battling w/ mental health right now - don't want you to immediately jump to the conclusion that you walking through mental health is a direct correlation of the sin in your life**

- Mental health reminds us that life as we know it is broken & filled w/ despair because of sin but that God is going to use our mental health for His glory & our good
- **John 9:1-3** - *“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.’”*
- God could be using this unique season that you’re walking through right now to display His perfect peace & power in our weakness
- To draw you closer to Himself & have you depend on Him in ways you never have before

## **2. The Bible speaks to many different examples of mental health**

- Much of life’s burdens & hardships begin internally -
  - **Anger, fear, guilt**
- Other aspects of hardship are situational & circumstantial
  - **Classes we take - roommates we have - Jobs we work**
- Other parts deal more with mental or physiological
  - **Depression - Despair - Panic Attacks - for some of these, we may need to partake in God’s good gift of medicine to help us walk w/ mental illness**
  - **Medicine is a gift from the LORD when it’s administered by a professional, used w/ caution & doesn’t become a stumbling block in our relationship w/ Jesus**

**2 Peter 1:3** - *“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life & godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory & excellence”*

- God in His grace has provided all that we need to become spiritually mature & to walk w/ Jesus
- He has made available to us all that is needed to live pleasing & obedient lives to Him
- A way to rest in the majestic presence of God, despite our sin, shame, guilt, fear, brokenness, anxiety & discouragement.
- What does the Bible have to say about these issues?

**A: Anxiety** - The sense of feeling unsettled & uneasy. Worried thoughts. Weighty tension over a future event, interaction or experience<sup>4</sup>.

- Anxiety is heavy. Burden when felt, feels weighty, noticeable, hard to carry
- **Proverbs 12:25** - *“Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad.”*
- Examples of things we get anxious about:
  - **Finances - covet or lust after \$\$\$**

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<sup>4</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 274

- School - identity in GPA or grade rather than in Christ
  - In certain social circles
    - Group project partners
    - Lab partners
    - LG or CRU study
    - Roommates
    - Co-workers
    - Friends
    - Will my peers respect me?
  - Where we're going to live next school year
  - Anxious that you don't have a job after graduation - Doubt God's plan for your life or perhaps wondering if he's forgotten about you
  - Anxious about finding a spouse - Covet what others have & blame God for what we don't have
- If we're not careful, the anxiety that you & I feel about life's rhythms & decisions will cause us to doubt God & not believe or trust in His sovereign hand**
- Anxiety causes us to doubt God's promise to us that:
    - He will work all things together for His eternal glory & our good
      - May not be the way you would have done it or the outcome you would have preferred but He is working
    - He will never leave us or forsake us
  - Anxiety is what the enemy uses to cloud our vision of His glory & sovereignty like heavy rain does when we try & drive in a rainstorm

**So what does the Bible say about being anxious? Simply put... don't be**

- **Matthew 6:25-34** - *"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, & the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, & yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive & tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles (Individuals w/ out a personal relationship w/ God) seek after all these things, & your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God & his righteousness, & all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious*

*about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”*

- Do not be anxious - 3x in these verses
- This text is not calling us to neglect food, drink & clothing, but actually exhorting us to place our trust in God knowing that He will provide for us
- This text is a call to faith in God - a reliance, dependency, surrender of our entire lives to Him
- When you place your faith in God, you have no reason to be anxious because He provides for you
  - **Vs. 26** - Birds of the air - don't work to eat & God provides for them.  
*“Are you not of more value than them?”*
  - **Vs. 28** - Why are you anxious about clothing? God clothes the grass of the field & determines if it's alive / dead. If he clothes the grass, how much more will he clothe you?
  - **Vs. 27** - Being anxious doesn't add more time to the day, it just causes us to lose sight of putting our faith in God
- **Vs. 33** - *“But seek first the kingdom of God & his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”*
  - Faith belongs to God, submitting to Him as LORD of your life, recognizing He is sovereign over all things
  - When you do that, He provides in ways we could never think, ask or imagine

**Other helpful references here for you guys to spend time reflecting & meditating on:**

- Anxious from all that you're carrying? **1 Peter 5:6-7** - *“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.”*
- Anxious because you feel alone - **Isaiah 41:10** - *“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*
- Anxious by adultlike decisions you need to make - **Psalms 32:8** - *“I will instruct you & teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.”*
- May we be like David, who put his trust in God - **Psalms 56:3** - *“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.”*



**B: Sadness / Depression:** A deep feeling of sadness & disappointment that affects how you think & act<sup>5</sup>.

- Affects your physical, emotional & spiritual state.
- Lose interest in different things.
- Feel utterly hopeless & abandoned.
- Loss of energy & easily fatigued.
- Decision making incredibly hard
- “The National Institute of Mental Health stated in 2019 that between 5-10% of the total population wrestled w/ depression<sup>6</sup>.”

**Several examples in the Bible that speak to different individuals feeling a sense of sadness & depressed**

- Ps 42:3, 5, & 11 - *“My tears have been my food day & night, while they say to me all the day long, ‘Where is your God?’ Why are you cast down, O my soul, & why are you in turmoil within me?”*
- Ps. 143:4 - *“Therefore my spirit faints within me; my heart within me is appalled.”*
- Upon hearing that his son was going to die - *“David therefore sought God on behalf of the child. And David fasted & went in & lay all night on the ground.”* (2 Sam. 12:16)

**Many of us feel so discouraged & burdened by the events of life**

- Saddened by the loss of a loved 1
- Friends we know are incredibly sick
- Studying long & hard for a class but can’t seem to retain the info & do well on tests
- Perhaps we feel so discouraged by the amount of work we have to accomplish between now & May
- Discouraged by a friendship that has been more 1 sided than you would have liked
- Perhaps you’re in the room tonight & you just feel so alone & isolated from God & the rest of campus that you’re deeply discouraged

**How can we encourage someone who's feeling discouraged from God's Word?**

- We can exhort them to cry out to God in life’s hardest moments -
- Throughout the Psalms there are specific Psalms titled Psalms of Lament
  - **Lament** - “A prayer in pain that leads to trust<sup>7</sup>.” (Mark Vroegop)

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<sup>5</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 297-298

<sup>6</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 297

<sup>7</sup> Vroegop, 3

- **Psalm 10, 34, 69, 88, 102 & 143** are actual Psalms in David's life where he was at a low point. Felt so discouraged by all that was going on & he documents it in the Bible
- Every Psalm of lament ends w/ devotion & allegiance to Jesus
  
- **Psalm 34:4-5, 15, 17-18** - *"I sought the LORD, & he answered me & delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant, & their faces shall never be ashamed. The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous & his ears toward their cry. When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears & delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD is near to the brokenhearted & saves the crushed in spirit."*
  - When life's hardest moments tend to weigh us down & we feel as if we have no hope we're to cry out to God who sees us, hears us, delivers us from our troubles & reminds us of his nearing presence
  - When we feel so discouraged & anxious by life's heart aches, we cry out to God
  
- **We exhort them to remember the LORD's faithfulness - Lamentations 3:19-26** - *"Remember my affliction & my wanderings, the wormwood & the gall! My soul continually remembers it & is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, & therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD."*
  - Jeremiah witnessed his people sin against God, get wiped out by another people group because of Israel's sin, was deeply troubled at what we saw & still had the confidence to say *"I still have hope"*
  - The LORD is our portion & cup. He is all we will ever need. In moments of affliction & heartache the LORD is enough.

### **How can we come alongside those who are incredibly discouraged?**

- **We pray that they would remember their identity in the LORD**
  - The enemy uses depression as a way for people to forget that their identity first & foremost belongs to Jesus
  - Depression plays this trick convincing people that they don't matter, that their insignificant, that them being on earth is a waste when that simply is NOT TRUE
  - GOD made humanity in His image which communicates worth
  - For those in Christ, He has adopted you into His family so that they are no longer known for their sin, or occupation, being a college student, but that they're a son & daughter of a Heavenly Father

- **Ephesians 1:5** - *“he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will...”*
- **John 1:12** - *“But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,”*
- **Not a believer?**
  - Pray that they would become a believer & show that Jesus is in fact ready & available to care for them & sustain them through much hardship.
- **We pray that the LORD would renew their mind day by day**
  - Depression causes individuals who are wrestling w/ it to have irregular thought patterns
  - Their thoughts are all over the place & there usually isn't any logic or consistency with them
  - Pray & ask that God would intervene & that He would renew their mind & help them focus on things worthy of praise & true
  - **Philippians 4:8** - *“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”*
- **We draw near to those who are hurting**
  - The Christian life is about loving & serving others out of the overflow in which Christ has loved & served us
  - **Romans 12:15** - *“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.”*
    - In the little victories over hardship - we rejoice
    - In the tough defeats & discouragement that mental health can bring, we weep with those who are hurting

### **C: Suicide & Self-Harm**

- **Suicide** - The intentional act & effort of taking one's own life. They express a hopelessness & helplessness that seems “out of control<sup>8</sup>.”

### **Stats on Suicide<sup>9</sup>**

- **Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-14 & the 3rd leading cause of death among those aged 15-24 in the U.S.**
- **Suicide is the 12th leading cause of death overall in the U.S.**
- **46% of people who die by suicide had a diagnosed mental health condition**

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<sup>8</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 321

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nami.org/mhstats>

### **Is suicide in the Bible?**

- Many people throughout the Bible who committed suicide, people who weren't walking w/ the LORD, faced imminent death or were afraid
  - King Saul
  - Sampson
  - Judas Iscariot

### **What does the Bible say about suicide<sup>10</sup>?**

- **Scripture affirms the value of human life**
  - We read **Genesis 1:26-27** - which states that we're image bearers of God & are precious in His sight. He sees us as immensely valuable
- **Scripture highlights God & God alone as the giver of life**
  - Gives life, sustains life, knows when our life will end & has the authority to take our life when He so chooses
  - He is the only one that dictates when 1 is born & when 1 dies
- **Scripture prohibits murder**
  - God places an immense value on human life - womb - tomb
  - **Exodus 20:13** - *"You shall not murder."*
  - If you're looking for a license to take someone's life, the Bible is not the place to look for it

### **Is suicide sinful? Yes**

- It is a sin to suicide because it dosobeys God's command
- It goes directly against His value on human life
- Suicide is an act of rebellion because it's taking matters into your own hands & doing things your own way rather than obeying what God's Word calls us to do

### **Does suicide cost a believer their salvation? NO**

- There is more grace in God than sin in us
- In His grace, God does not allow one act of rebellion to undo His covenantal commitment to His children
- Because of Jesus, those who are believers & do commit suicide are still granted entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven
- Praise God for His glory & grace!

### **What about self harm?**

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<sup>10</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 324

- **Self-harm** - Intentional physical harm caused to one's own body<sup>11</sup>.
- Cutting one's self, scraping nails into skin, burning & hitting oneself w/ a hammer

### Ways we can encourage those who are experiencing suicidal or self-harm thoughts?

- **Talk about it**<sup>12</sup>
  - Many people believe that if we talk about someone who is considering suicide or self-harm, we may actually be leading them to commit suicide or cause self-harm
  - BUT ACTUALLY not talking about it may cause us to miss out on concerning red flags which could help us prevent suicide or self-harm of others
- **Ask good questions**
  - **What's causing you to feel this way?**
  - **Is this coming from God, the enemy, or friends?**
  - **Is there anything at home or on your possession that could aid you in committing suicide / self-harm - belt, knife, gun**
  - **Is there someone either in your apartment or a parental figure we can call?**

### How can we encourage someone who is experiencing suicidal or self-harm thoughts from God's Word?

- **Remind them that:**
  - God is sovereign over their trials
  - God is genuinely concerned & cares for His people in the midst of their trials
  - Of the hope & assurance that is found in Jesus as they walk through trials
- **Let's remind them of Jesus who is our great high priest - Hebrews 4:12-16 - *"Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy & find grace to help in time of need."***
  - Jesus felt & experienced every hardship & weakness known to human man / woman
  - He had been tempted just as we have been & he never waived or sinned
  - Advocates for us in that He not only gives us the comfort we need in our time of need but invites us to approach Him w/ confidence.

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<sup>11</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 329

<sup>12</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 325

- Let's remind them of God's faithfulness - **1 Corinthians 10:13** - *"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."*
  - When suicidal thoughts or thoughts of self-harm fill our heads, let's remind them that God will not let us be tempted beyond our ability
  - He gives us strength to endure these thoughts & reminds us that a life full of trials in the presence of Jesus is far better than no life at all
  
- Let's remind them that God is our refuge in time of need - **Psalm 46:1-3** - *"God is our refuge & strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar & foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling."*
  - Though life around you is chaotic & seem like you're standing on sinking sand, the LORD is our strong tower that we can run to & find safety  
Even in the midst of hardship or confusing thoughts

#### **D: Grief - Uniquely tied to some sort of loss, whether that be tangible or intangible<sup>13</sup>**

- Grief brings about confusion, emotional upheaval, immense pain & sadness.
- Grief is usually unpredictable because life in a broken world is unpredictable
- **People grieve over loss of:**
  - **Friends**
  - **Family**
  - **Job**
  - **Money**
  - **Good health**
  - **Stable environment / circumstance**
  
- **Those who walk through grief are usually asking questions like:**
  - **How could God cause this to happen?**
  - **Is God really good after all?**
  - **Is He truly sovereign over all things?**
  - **How can I trust in a God who allows suffering & pain & loss to exist?**
- **These questions don't necessarily indicate a lack of faith, but rather they indicate wrestling with one's faith & wanting to hold onto it. The kind of questions that are being asked are normal questions for someone who is walking through a season of grief<sup>14</sup>.**

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<sup>13</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 363

<sup>14</sup> Jones, Kellen, Green, 365

## Throughout the Bible we observe the entire trinity (Father, Son & Holy Spirit) experience grief

- **Genesis 6:5-6** - God grieved over the wickedness & rebellion of humanity
- **John 11:32-36** - Jesus wept over the loss of His friend Lazarus
- **Ephesians 4:30** - Tells us that the Holy Spirit grieves when we sin

## In what ways does the Bible speak to grief?

- **The LORD is with us in our grief - Psalm 23:4** - *“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod & your staff, they comfort me.”*
  - Don't have to navigate grief on our own or in isolation
  - Serve a God who is with us in the midst of our trials & grief
- **Jesus personally carried our own grief - Isaiah 53:3-5** - *“He was despised & rejected by men, a man of sorrows & acquainted with grief; & as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs & carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, & afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, & with his wounds we are healed.”*
- **God promises hope of future glory that will far outweigh our earthly suffering - 2 Corinthians 4:17** - *“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison...”*

## How can we care for those who are grieving?

- Affirm the individuals loss & grief
- Listen well - be slow to speak & respond
- Serve & provide in tangible ways
- Remind them of God's sovereignty & goodness & the future weight of glory

## 3. The Bible highlights Jesus as the rescuer we desperately need

- Over the last few minutes we have unpacked the weightiness that mental health brings
- It affects a ton of people, specifically those who are 18-23 years of age
- The brokenness that comes from mental health signals to us that this broken & sin-filled world is not as God designed it
- The:
  - Burdens we carry
  - Anxiousness that exists
  - Discouragement we feel
  - Trauma we've witnessed

- Hopelessness that surrounds us
- Causes us to stop & to say to God, something isn't right
- That something that isn't right is sin. It's the lawlessness that you & I have each contributed to by disobeying & rebelling against God & His Word
- Each of us have treasured something other than God Himself & this is sin
- **Romans 6:23** - *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
- Each of us have sinned against God, robbing Him of the glory, worship, praise & devotion that He is worthy of
- God cannot condone or support sin
- Our punishment because of our sin is death

### **This is where Jesus enters the story**

- Jesus left the comfort of glory & heaven & took on flesh
- He became the perfect & equal balance of fully God & fully man
- **Jesus lived the life we could not live which was a perfect life - a life without sin**
- **Jesus also died the death that you & I deserve because of our sin**
  - **Romans 5:6-8** - *"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*
- **Jesus rose from the grave 3 days later defeating sin & death & offering us abundant & eternal life through faith in Him**
  - **John 5:44** - *"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word & believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."*
  - **John 14:6** - *"I am the way, & the truth, & the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

### **Jesus is:**

- The source of all peace because HE IS JOY
- The source of all joy because HE IS JOY
- The source of all hope because HE IS HOPE
- The source of all comfort because HE IS COMFORT
- The source of all rest because HE IS REST
  - **Matthew 11:28-30** - *"Come to me, all who labor & are heavy laden, & I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, & learn from me, for I am gentle & lowly*



*in heart, & you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, & my burden is light.”*

- You can find abundant & true life in Him today by believing in Him
- Christianity:
  - Isn't the kind of religion you earn through good works - like you have to earn your way to God. Jesus came down to us & paid the price for us
  - Also isn't the kind of religion where you have to solve all of your problems & brokenness before you can come to Jesus. Jesus invites us to come to Him just as we are!

**Word of Caution:**

- Believing in Jesus doesn't mean that all your trials, hardship & suffering will stop - in fact the Bible teaches the opposite will happen
- We will continue to suffer & experience hardship, trials, suffering, hopelessness & despair
- But we trust in Jesus today knowing the suffering that we face & the hardship we endure today is preparing us for the eternal weight of glory that we will rest in when we see God our Father face to face in heaven

**Leave you with this:**

- **2 Corinthians 1:3-5** - *“Blessed be the God & Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies & God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.”*