

The Renewed Mind - Mental Health - Pastor James Wheeler

Sunday March 17, 2024

I believe God wants to do something significant today. He wants to bring help through His Word and through some practical teaching. But I also believe the Holy Spirit will move during our time of ministry to bring breakthrough and healing for many. We are going to go right into a time of ministry at the end of the message I won't pray to end the service. Those of you not receiving ministry at the altar are released at that time.

So I would say 2 things. 1. The enemy doesn't want this. And he will resist it. 2. We need to agree together in faith and be open to what God wants to do.

Father in the name of Jesus I pray that by Your Spirit your anointing will be released - that the Spirit of God would be upon this message resulting in the delivery of good news to the poor, the release of all those in captivity, the recovery of sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed, and that each and everyone of us would be awakened to walking in the favor of the Lord and in the fullness of salvation, in wholeness, in health and in abundance of life that is our inheritance, and our destiny in the eternal kingdom of God - in Jesus name - amen.

Mental illness, and the poor state of mental health in the world right now is at epidemic proportions.

What is mental health?

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Association - Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social **well-being**. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Basically how we navigate life.

It's important because our well-being must be rooted in our identity in Christ and founded on the Truth of God's Word.

- 1 in 5 Americans suffer from a mental illness.
- Almost 6 in 10 people with mental illness seek or receive no treatment
- More than 40,000 Americans die annually from suicide.
- Mental health illness rates were significantly higher for adolescents (about 50%) and young adults (about 30%).
- Anxiety disorders are the highest reported mental health issue in the U.S. with 42.5 million Americans suffering from this illness.
- Women experience depression at roughly twice the rate of men.

- There are 4.5 million children in the United States diagnosed and **living with anxiety**.
- 322 million people worldwide **live with depression**
- Almost 800 million people suffer from mental health disorders worldwide.

Among Teenagers

- 20% of all teens suffer from depression before they reach adulthood.
- All mental health problems begin by age 14, and most cases are undetected and untreated.
- An adolescent dies from suicide every 100 minutes, making it the third leading cause of death for people ages 15 to 24.
- Female teens develop depression twice as often as their male counterparts.
- An estimated 12.8 percent of adolescents in the U.S. experience at least one episode of **major depression**
- 36% of young girls reported being **extremely anxious** daily.
- Teen depression has increased 59% since 2007.
- Those teens who suffer from depression also have a 30% chance of developing a drug problem later in life.

Factors that contribute to our mental health include:

Specific genetics and brain chemistry

Life experience such as trauma or abuse

Family History - we could say nurture or formation as well as generational patterns and curses in family blood lines

Some of the more known mental health issues include

Bipolar Disorder

Depression

Anxiety

Eating Disorders

Self Harm and Suicide to name a few.

What a message of hope we have in light of these stats. This is a great problem and we have a great God.

Looking through the lens of God's Word we should understand these are **issues of the soul**. They are spiritual in that they need to be dealt with in the spirit realm but the sickness is oppression and buffeting of your soul. They are soul sicknesses that Jesus died for.

The soul is comprised of our mind, will and our emotions and how they interpret our reality and how they affect every issue of our life. God created our minds to be so powerful that our thoughts can influence even our physiology. This literally translates into how we, "feel."

Proverbs 23:7a NASB

For as he thinks within himself, so he is.

The key here is getting a hold of this truth. That If our spirit has been made new, then our mind can be **renewed** to see and experience things God's Way. That's why we are teaching this series. Pastor Ralph laid it out well in week one and Pastor Nate laid out the importance of our identity as being found in our standing in Christ as a child of God, not in our current state of circumstance in this present life.

Our powerful minds were created to glorify God and to expand His kingdom starting now into eternity.

The goal is for our soul to be continually transformed and renewed as we conform to the Image of Christ our Creator.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 NASB

Now may the God of peace Himself **sanctify you entirely**; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our entire spirit soul and body are to glorify God and experience sanctification. So . . . The issue then is . . . how do I measure if I am in a good state of mental health?

Well the first step would be to accept what God did in Christ Jesus and confess Him as Lord and Savior. If you haven't done that let us pray with you during the altar time today. Don't leave today if you aren't sure about your salvation.

TECH ARTS SHOW SALVATION LOWER THIRD HERE FOR A MINUTE

Once you are Christ's and your spirit has been made new, then your mind can be renewed. It can grow in maturity in Christ. We call this process sanctification. It's an ever growing and maturing life to conform to Christ and to live according to His Word. Yet you may have some questions like these . . .

If I struggle in certain areas of mental health does that mean I am a failure as a Christian or that I am not saved?

If I need the help of medication, or counseling and therapy am I walking a faithless walk in the Lord?

What I want you to hear me today saying is emphatically NO! None of those things are true.

We need to understand, God does "suddenlys" yes - but also that wholeness is a journey not a destination. We will all find ourselves in different points on that journey. Our struggles aren't the same and we walk in different points of revelation and we will experience breakthrough in different seasons.

We are all in a faith fight. We all wrestle with powers and principalities. But we are in this together. You're not alone. The Body of Christ is here to not only pray for you but to walk with you. And each of our battles is unique to us based on various factors. There are natural means to accompany our faith and bring about God's perfect wholeness. Just like there are supernatural times. We just want to be sure any methods working towards wholeness for our mental health - aren't in direct opposition to the whole counsel of God in His Word.

Beware of new age mindsets and self help in denial of our Creator God's help. So today we want to say that it's **ok to admit we are in a state that doesn't feel so ok.** It's ok to **admit our struggle and to find support and help.** You are in good company if you have or are facing mental health challenges.

Elijah wanted his life to end he was in such emotional turmoil.

1 Kings 19:4 NIV

while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."

King David - the worshipper, the warrior, experienced extreme attacks of depression.

Psalms 31:9,10 NIV

9 Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am in distress;
my eyes grow weak with sorrow,
my soul and body with grief.

10 My life is consumed by anguish
and my years by groaning;
my strength fails because of my affliction, ^b
and my bones grow weak.

Even the apostle Paul faced many moments of stress, anxiety and feelings of despair.

2 Corinthians 1:8 NIV

8We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, ^a about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself.

So again -it's **ok to admit we are in a state that doesn't feel so ok**. It's ok to **admit our struggle and to find support and help**.

What isn't OK - is **marginalizing anyone's mental health challenge or unsympathetically calling it out as lacking in faith**. It isn't OK to deny reality and pretend nothing is wrong. It isn't good to hide behind Christianese and hope no one realizes you struggle with mental health because it seems like everyone else is doing OK.

And it isn't ok to just give pet answers from the Bible without providing an ongoing support system, without walking through mental health struggles with one another, without partnering in prayer and intercession, spiritual warfare, without compassion and without understanding of the reality of mental health struggles that many of us face.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 NIV

3Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of **compassion** and the God of all comfort, **4**who **comforts us in all our troubles**, (yes even mental health issues) so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. **5**For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

We will experience troubles as the enemy comes against our hope in Christ Jesus and so yes mental health issues are sufferings in Christ. This isn't just persecution from people because we are Christians, this is any buffeting or soul sickness from the enemy. Anything the devil can lie to us about.

We must acknowledge the affect of the curse of sin and the ongoing attacks of the enemy will be ever present as long as we have breath.

Galatians 4:29 NAS

29But as at that time the *son* who was born according to the flesh persecuted the one *who was born* according to the Spirit, **so it is even now**.

The sufferings and trials in our flesh, as long as we are this side of heaven, are going to war against the Truth of our covenant Promise in the Holy Spirit that says we can experience abundant life.

ME

I grew up in a Christian home. My whole family was and is saved. Still - I have struggled my whole life with depression and still do. In the past I have battled various forms of addiction including drug use, as well as tobacco and alcohol. And while I'm free from those substances now the root causes of addictive behavior still have to be warred against. I still have to contend for my freedom. Yes me Pastor James just like anyone else has to face the lies of the enemy with the Truth of God's Word. I want to share with you some of the lies the enemy has been trying to enforce in my blood line.

My grandfather was an alcoholic his entire life and a "rageaholic." Explosive anger is in my blood line and we were traumatized as children by it.

My Father was chronically depressed much of his adult life and He probably could be considered bipolar. My aunt (my dad's sister) had the same issues as my father, and my cousin - the daughter of that same aunt - took her own life in a drug overdose. She was clinically depressed and suicidal. My brother is a former alcoholic who is serving the Lord now thanks to AA and a transforming encounter with Jesus Christ. This book was very helpful to him. [Serenity: A Companion for Twelve Step Recovery](#)

Both my sisters have battled clinical depression and have had mental health issues including suicide ideation and others. My grandmother (my birth mother's mother) actually witnessed my great grandfather commit suicide. And my birth mother has lived seasons of her life in and out of mental health care facilities, coping with addictions and she is currently in an assisted living facility dealing with dementia.

By my God given shape I am an introvert. My Myers Briggs personality type is INTP - introverted, intuitive, thinking and perceiving. I have a high analytical gift as well as an artistic and creative bent. And while those are gifts and strengths from the Lord - those gifts can be prone to melancholy and depression.

In an article by the mental health association conference it was written about INTPS - They may prioritize logic over emotional expression, finding it challenging to identify and communicate their emotions effectively.

This emotional detachment can make it difficult for INTPs to process and address their emotional needs, leaving them vulnerable to internalized emotional struggles. The suppression or neglect of emotions can contribute to a sense of emptiness, increased emotional distress, and a heightened risk of depression.

I don't know what it is for you. But we all have areas of attack that the enemy wants to use against us. And so I want to share with you a simple action plan and a way to remember it. And it starts with this truth:

If we want to live free from mental health issues then our walk of freedom in Christ must be maintained by enforcing God's Truth over the lies of the enemy.

Plain and simple. Our help comes from the Lord. But we must get help. We have to uncover and recognize the lies of the enemy, take authority and get deliverance from any strongholds, and contend to walk in freedom. Here is a simple way to remember the consistent things we need to walk in order to stay mentally and emotionally healthy.

G.E.T. H.E.L.P

G - Go to the Word

To experience God's kind of life we must look to His Word to find our worth. What God says about us is the truth - anything else is a lie. Your emotions, and your feelings may be saying something very loudly and those feelings and emotions are real - but understand they will change. His Word will not. Feel the pain, feel the grief, but don't live by those feelings.

You are not living a lie. You are not a lie and you are not a liar by acknowledging struggles and circumstances. But even those very real physiological, chemical imbalances, symptoms of mental illness are present - they don't exist in the reality of heaven. In God's perfect presence those issues don't exist. And that is where we want to contend to walk fully into our standing in Christ and out of any temporary state that is holding us in bondage and oppression.

John 10:10 NLT

10The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

Psalms 46:1 NASB

God is our refuge and strength, A very ready help in trouble.

Psalm 121:2 NASB

My help *comes* from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.

Isaiah 26:3 NLT

You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!

E - Enter in to worship

Psalm 100:4 NASB

Enter His gates with thanksgiving, *And* His courtyards with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 NASB

in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 16:11 NASB

You will make known to me the way of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Everyday praise and thank God. Take inventory and thank Him for every little thing. As you worship oppression has to go, it cannot remain in the presence of God. Put on some worship music and let it pour over you.

T - Take it one day at a time.

Matthew 6:34 NASB

So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will worry about itself.

Lamentations 3:22-24 NIV

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."

Psalm 118:24 NASB

This is the day which the LORD has made; Let's rejoice and be glad in it.

H - Have fun.

Proverbs 17:22 NLT

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength.

Ecclesiastes 8:15 NLT

So I recommend having fun, because there is nothing better for people in this world than to eat, drink, and enjoy life. That way they will experience some happiness along with all the hard work God gives them under the sun.

Get those happy endorphins going! Watch some comedy, laugh with your friends. Read some jokes.

E - Edify yourself.

Don't mis understand - Abusing your body by indulging in vice isn't self care either. But Holy Spirit Word of God based self care isn't self worship. And making sure you are healthy isn't selfish. as long as you realize self isn't your answer, God is.

You care for yourself by being built up in Him. Practically this might mean creating boundaries and better time management. Keeping sabbath days etc.

1 Samuel 30:6b

But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

Psalms 43:5 NASB

Why are you in despair, my soul? And why are you restless within me? Wait for God, for I will again praise Him *For* the help of His presence, my God.

Jude 1:20 NASB

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

Acts 20:32 NASB

And now I entrust you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Learn about mental health and study, get informed so you know what you are dealing with and how to better confess God's Word and declare your deliverance and defend your freedom.

Some things to do daily for your mental health.

Exercise - walk, jog, lift weights, get up and move.

Do a hobby you enjoy that has nothing to do with your job or career.

Make plans for the future.

Spend time in nature.

L - Let people in.

2 Corinthians 7:6,7 NASB

But God, who comforts the discouraged, comforted us by the arrival of Titus; and not only by his arrival, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted among you,

1 Corinthians 12:12 NASB

For just as the body is one and yet has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

vs 25

so that there may be no division in the body, but *that* the parts may have the same care for one another. And if one part *of the body* suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if a part is honored, all the parts rejoice with it.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 NASB

And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three *strands* is not quickly torn apart.

P - Prayer always.

If you can't bring yourself to pray get someone to pray over you and pray with you. Listen to some prayers. I like to put YouTube on a channel that has soft worship and written scriptures, sometimes the ones that are read aloud. Anything you can do to get saturated in the presence of the Lord, and keeping an open dialogue with Him.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 NLT

Never stop praying.

Philippians 4:6 NASB

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

James 5:13a NASB

[13](#)Is anyone among you suffering? *Then* he must pray.

Get help today - don't wait. For independent confidential Christian mental health support

- **CALL (844) 543-324 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline CALL OR TEXT 988**

Please - Inquire about available counseling and support ministries offered here at the church. Speak to one of our pastors about counseling or referrals.