**Mental Health Myths**

**MYTH: If we will just pray and read the Bible, we won't have any mental health struggles.**

TRUTH: God can do miracles in our mental health. God can do and still does miracles of physical healing. But in this time between the initial coming of the Kingdom of God and its fulfillment at the return of Jesus, we are not in full control. We live in the time when the kingdom of God has been inaugurated but has not fully come. That's why we still pray, “come kingdom of God” in the Lord's prayer. In this in-between time, the kingdom is here, and sometimes we see the evidence of the kingdom of God in healings and miracles. However, sometimes we must wait for healing. We don't know why we don't always receive a miracle, but it's probably not because you aren't Christian enough! We do not condemn one another as not Christian enough, or as not having enough faith when we face physical health challenges, nor should we condemn those facing mental health challenges.

**MYTH: Psychiatric meds are bad.**

TRUTH**:** We shouldn't look down on medication that has been proven to be helpful to many people struggling with anxiety and other mental health issues. The Word of God says that we have been created as spirit, soul, and body. The fact that it takes something as powerful as the word of God to separate between soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:12) speaks to their unity. Medication that affects our minds should not be looked down upon any more than medication that addresses a physical need.

**MYTH: Mental health struggles are shameful.**

TRUTH**:** Mental health struggles are not shameful! Whatever the reason for it, our culture is plagued by mental health issues which have only worsened in the past few years. Fortunately, people are becoming more willing to talk about mental health issues. The church should be a safe place for such discussions, and we should not be guilty of compounding the shame many people still feel. I hope that our church can play a role in getting rid of any stigma or shame associated with struggling with mental health, and that we can become a safe place where we can ask for prayer for a mental issue.

**MYTH: Mental health struggles are demonic.**

TRUTH**:** There is no doubt that enemy can take advantage of our weaknesses, including our mental health struggles. However, I have a good friend who works in the mental health field who has had significant experience with people who are demonized. He shared with me recently that, in his experience, most of the time people are dealing with mental health issues, not demons. Sometimes we want a quick fix--just to cast out a demon and be done with the situation or the person. We should be reluctant to always put the blame on a demon. Let’s be balanced about this.

**MYTH: Mental health struggles are a result of our sin.**

TRUTH: We are always looking to blame somebody. Part of this is motivated by an attempt to put God in a box: "God always does things this way, and only this way." Our worldview may say, “If I can do all the right things, I will not suffer.” This was the problem with Job's friends, who wanted to explain that Job's problems were a result of Job's sins. The Bible clearly says that Satan attacked Job because of how righteous Job was, but Job's friends thought they had it all figured out. Personally, I believe it’s rarely if ever legitimate to ask, “What sin caused this?” In John 9, Jesus' own disciples wanted to know whose sin caused the man to be born blind. Jesus' response was that neither this man's sin nor his parents' sin was the reason for his blindness; the blindness was an opportunity for God to display his work! Jesus didn’t point to Bartimaeus’ sin, he simply healed him.

**In any struggle we face, God has an opportunity to receive glory as we rely on him to work through it, to overcome it, or to heal it.**