

The Struggle is Real, part 1  
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**Goals of the series**

- Remove stigma
- Activate compassion
- Point to hope in Christ

**Mental illness**

Medical conditions that disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life.

**Mental health**

Effective functioning in daily activities resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships, ability to adapt to change and cope with adversity

Mental illness is the sort of thing we don't like to talk about. Too often, we reduce people to caricatures and ghosts and simply pretend they don't exist. They do exist, however.  
~ Amy Simpson *Troubled Minds: Mental Illness and the Church's Mission*

**You are not alone**

- 19.1% of U.S. adults experienced mental illness in 2018.
- 4.6% of U.S. adults experienced serious mental illness in 2018.
- 16.5% of U.S. youth aged 6-17 experienced a mental health disorder in 2016
- 3.7% of U.S. adults experienced a co-occurring substance use disorder and mental illness in 2018.

**Biblical examples of mental health issues**

- 1 Samuel 16:14-23
- Daniel 4:33
- Psalm 102

I am the subject of depressions of spirit so fearful that I hope none of you ever get to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to. ~ Charles Spurgeon

**Your struggle doesn't mean Jesus doesn't care**

Luke 4:18-19 (CSB) <sup>18</sup> The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed, <sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Matthew 4:23-25 (CSB) <sup>23</sup> Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup> Then the news about him spread throughout Syria. So they brought to him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics. And he healed them. <sup>25</sup> Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

### **Your diagnosis doesn't defeat hope**

Romans 8:18-25 (CSB) <sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation eagerly waits with anticipation for God's sons to be revealed. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly, but because of him who subjected it—in the hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage to decay into the glorious freedom of God's children. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together with labor pains until now. <sup>23</sup> Not only that, but we ourselves who have the Spirit as the firstfruits—we also groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> Now in this hope we were saved, but hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? <sup>25</sup> Now if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patience.

### **Your illness is not your identity**

#### **Help for family and friends**

- Loving a person with mental illness doesn't mean you fully understand them
- Get some professional Christian counseling for yourself
- Educate yourself with good resources
- Don't quit

#### **Help for you**

- Talk to a medical professional
- Get some professional Christian counseling
- Educate yourself with good resources
- Let others into your struggle
- Don't give up because God won't give up on you

Psalms 34:18 (CSB) The LORD is near the brokenhearted; he saves those crushed in spirit.

Psalms 34:18 (MSG) If your heart is broken, you'll find God right there; if you're kicked in the gut, he'll help you catch your breath.