

Integration of Mind and Spirit

An Inductive Bible Study on Mental Wellbeing

Goal of Study

“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind;’ and ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

In Luke 10:27-28 (NIV), Jesus tells a questioning lawyer that the way to experience eternal life is to love Him with all your being and to love others as ourselves. This study is aimed at helping you love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind. In order to do this, we have to be honest with ourselves and God about how we are feeling and what we are thinking.

From our time together in this study, our hope is that you feel the freedom to take all your thoughts to the Lord, even the hard ones, knowing He cares about you. Our goal is to start a conversation around mental health from a biblical worldview. We pray this will be one step in a journey of walking with Jesus in this area of your life.

Mental Health

Just as we all have physical health, we all have mental health. Being aware of our mental health wellness is vital in loving God with our minds. Everyone’s mental health is affected by sin and the brokenness of a fallen world. We will all experience stressors and situations that can lead to challenging thoughts and emotions. Sometimes, these thoughts and feelings result in anxiety, depression and mental illnesses.

“Mental illness is a condition that affects a person's thinking, feeling or mood. Such conditions may affect someone's ability to relate to others and function each day. Each person will have different experiences, even people with the same diagnosis.”

—National Alliance on Mental Illness

Dig Deep

How do we glorify God in our mental health journeys?

It starts with our minds. Our thoughts are affected by our feelings and emotions. Our thoughts, feelings and emotions all play into our mental health. It can be hard to talk about our mental health because of the stigma our culture has associated with it. Here are some questions to consider as you at look at the feelings chart:

What has your experience been with understanding your mental health?

When it comes to thinking about your mental health, with which feeling(s) do you identify?

Emotional Intelligence 2.0 Five Core Feelings

INTENSITY OF FEELINGS	HAPPY	SAD	ANGRY	AFRAID	ASHAMED
HIGH	Elated Excited Overjoyed Thrilled Exuberant Ecstatic Fired Up Passionate	Depressed Agonized Alone Hurt Dejected Hopeless Sorrowful Miserable	Furious Enraged Outraged Boiling Irate Seething Loathsome Betrayed	Terrified Horrified Scared stiff Petrified Fearful Panicky Frantic Shocked	Sorrowful Remorseful Defamed Worthless Disgraced Dishonored Mortified Admonished
MEDIUM	Cheerful Gratified Good Relieved Satisfied Glowing	Heartbroken Somber Lost Distressed Let down Melancholy	Upset Mad Defended Frustrated Agitated Disgusted	Apprehensive Frightened Threatened Insecure Uneasy Intimidated	Apologetic Unworthy Sneaky Guilty Embarrassed Secretive
LOW	Glad Contented Pleasant Tender Pleased Mellow	Unhappy Moody Blue Upset Disappointed Dissatisfied	Perturbed Annoyed Uptight Resistant Irritated Touchy	Cautious Nervous Worried Timid Unsure Anxious	Bashful Ridiculous Regretful Uncomfortable Pitied Silly

Psalm 143 (NIV)

A psalm of David.

¹ Lord, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief.

² Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you.

³ The enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in the darkness like those long dead.

⁴ So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed.

⁵ I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done.

⁶ I spread out my hands to you; I thirst for you like a parched land. [a]

⁷ Answer me quickly, Lord; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me or I will be like those who go down to the pit.

⁸ Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life.

⁹ Rescue me from my enemies, Lord, for I hide myself in you.

¹⁰ Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

¹¹ For your name's sake, Lord, preserve my life; in your righteousness, bring me out of trouble.

¹² In your unfailing love, silence my enemies; destroy all my foes, for I am your servant.

Context for Psalm 143:

Psalms has been the songbook and prayer book for countless generations of Jews and Christians over the centuries. It contains the entire range of human emotions, from the highest points of joy and thanksgiving to the lowest points of depression and loss, and everything in between. The psalms are transparent, passionate, emotive, personal, and genuine, and they provide believers with language with which to express their own deepest emotions and passions.

Unpack

1. Who was David talking to?
2. How does David describe God?
3. Mark a cross over the words/phrases that are referring to God.
4. What is the tone of these 12 verses?
5. What is David asking for? What does he want?

Connect

6. What are the timeless truths about God and about people?
7. Circle all the emotion words in the passage
Name the emotions David is experiencing (refer to the Feelings Chart if needed)
8. What is the basis for what David asks from God?
9. How would you describe David's communication with God? Do you think it's still okay to talk with God like this now? Why or why not?
10. What characteristics of God do you see in this Psalm? How are these characteristics still true of who God is today? (Hebrews 13:8--Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever).

Apply

11. Have you ever felt any of the emotions David expresses in this psalm?
12. How does it help to know you are not alone in what you feel?
13. What difference might it make to connect what you learned about God in this psalm to your pain, hurt or suffering?
14. How does David model for us how to talk/pray to God?

Meditation

God cares about our hearts, our emotions and our minds. He cares about our pain and struggle, and He is present in it. Like David, we can dwell on God's presence and character as we share with him what we are thinking or feeling. The first step is to be honest with God and ourselves.

Next Steps

It is vital that you know there are mental health resources available to you. If you are struggling you are NOT alone! Having a community around you is the best approach to mental health journey. Let's identify some of your resources.

- **Nationally and locally:** National Suicide Prevention Lifeline//1-800-273-8255 or 988
- Crisis Text Line: 741741 Text "CONNECT"
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) offers free support groups www.NAMI.org
- **Campus Mental Health Resources:** _____
- **Athletic Department Resources:** _____
- Dig deeper into the Bible
 - In the Hebrew text, 73 Psalms have "Of David" in the title, and the New Testament adds two additional references to David as author: Ps 2 (Acts 4:25-26) and Ps 95 (Heb 4:7). The psalms consist (on the surface) of human words to and about God. But the psalmists were not writing simply for themselves as private individuals. In almost all cases, they wrote with a view to others preserving and singing their words. In other words, even though many psalms are intensely personal (e.g., Pss 17; 51), their authors wrote not only to express their own private sentiments but also for the benefit of others. **Considering reading one Psalm of David a day and journaling your thoughts and personal connections with the Psalm.**
 - The Psalms also point to Jesus' suffering: Matthew 27:34-35, 43,46. What were figurative expressions of David's suffering became literal sufferings of Jesus. David prefigured Jesus as the heir to the throne that God promised (2 Samuel 7:1-16); he suffered and went through hardships before becoming king, as did Jesus. Paul affirms that all who follow Christ will share in the sufferings of Christ if they are to share in his glory (Romans 8:17-18). **Consider looking up these passages and reflecting on the sufferings of Jesus.**
- Using Psalm 143 as a model of communication with God, write your own psalm to God
- Read the story of Elijah, and spend time in I Kings 19 meditating on how God cared for Elijah in the midst of physical and emotional exhaustion.