

My Friend is Struggling With... - Mental Health

Main Scripture: Matthew 7:17-20; Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:5,16

Bottom Line: Emotional health comes from the Holy Spirit.

In our first session we talked about difference between mental health and mental illness. It is possible to have a mental health diagnosis and be mentally healthy. As we have said throughout this series, a mental illness does not define who you are. Many people who have mental illness's live healthy and successful lives. This is because despite their diagnosis, they have taken steps to pursue a mentally healthy life even though they have a mental illness. Tonight we are going to talk about steps all people can take to improve their mental health.

Spiritually, when we are emotionally unhealthy, we produce rotten fruit. When we live outside of emotional health, we're actively feeding the people around us the rotten fruit we are producing. It's so important to live in the emotional health God calls us to!

Good & Bad Fruit

Is your life producing good fruit or rotten fruit? Tonight, Scripture is going to encourage us toward emotional health as we produce good fruit in the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 7:17-20 pg. 474

17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

It's easy to see if a person is emotionally healthy by their actions. Check their fruit!

What does this mean for us today?

Galatians 5:22-23 pg. 567

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

When we walk with God, we produce the fruit of the Spirit. This is the true sign of real emotional health. Healthy fruit comes from the Holy Spirit when we are in relationship with him.

Compare and contrast the fruit of the spirit with the fruit of our self. Consider the opposites of the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians. When we are emotionally unhealthy, we produce the fruit of our self: anger, bitterness, meanness, hatefulness, unreliability, reactivity, lack of self-control, etc.

The only way we can become emotionally healthy and produce the kind of fruit that Scripture calls us to is if we are sold out to Jesus. Only through transformation in the Spirit can our heart move from natural selfishness to emotional health.

Mental health comes from Jesus

John 15:1-11; 16 pg. 526

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

We produce good fruit when we remain in Jesus, our true vine. Jesus is the best place to bring us into the kind of health we need to produce good fruit.

Jesus is clear: apart from me, you can't do anything! We need to be attached to Jesus! Remain in Jesus every day through the word and worship so he can produce the kind of health we need emotionally. Jesus' vision for our lives is to produce good and lasting fruit so that our lives and the people around us can experience blessing.

Application: Remain in Jesus.

If you feel distanced from Jesus, it's time to reattach yourself to the vine. Only in the presence of Jesus and in relationship with the Holy Spirit can you hope to find emotional health and stability. When we find it in God, we produce good fruit that blesses us and everyone around us!

- **Ask for forgiveness** - Confess to God in prayer where you know you have messed up and ask him to forgive you. Make a commitment to God and yourself that you will take steps to do better
- **Believe** - Have faith that God loves you and has forgiven you

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- **Commit to attach yourself to Jesus:**
 - Commit to regular Bible reading on your own, we have plans available in the foyer. Start small read a paragraph or a chapter a day, the book of John is a great starting place.
 - Commit to worshipping Jesus. Commit to personally engaging more in church services. Commit attend church more than just on Wednesday. A Church community is vital to being spiritually healthy.
 - Commit to following Jesus. Real faith produces real change. What changes do you need in your life? Maybe you need to start doing something you shouldn't be doing, or start doing something you should. What is God saying to you about this tonight?

Small Group Questions

- What are some examples of good fruit? Name some examples of bad fruit.
- Why do mentally unhealthy people produce bad fruit? Why do those who are mentally healthy produce good fruit?
- Would you say your life produces good or bad fruit? Why?
- Is it possible for a person to produce both good and bad fruit? Explain your answer?
- How would you explain the possibility of someone having a mental health diagnosis and being mentally healthy?
- What are some of the things that cause us to stay unhealthy mentally?
- How does the Holy Spirit bring mental and emotional health into our lives?
- What role do doctors, specialists, medications, etc. play in improving mental health?
 - Does a person show a lack of faith by using these things to improve their mental health?
- How can you actively remain in Jesus to produce good fruit?
- What is one thing you will do to improve the fruit you produce?