WHEN YOU'RE NOT OKAY

The spiritual side of mental health.

WHEN YOU'RE NOT OKAY: PART 2, WHEN EVERYONE COMES TO YOU

Have you ever pulled into your driveway after a long day and just sat in your vehicle for a few minutes before going inside? Not because you don't love the people waiting for you, but because you know that once you walk through the door, someone will need something from you.

Many of us know what it feels like to carry more than we should. We have responsibilities at work, needs at home, commitments at church, and people depending on us. Sometimes we take on too much because we care. Other times, we take on too much because we are afraid of disappointing someone or admitting that we need help.

In Exodus 18, Moses finds himself in a similar situation. He is doing important work, helping God's people and settling their disputes. But his father-in-law, Jethro, recognizes something Moses has overlooked: the way he is carrying the responsibility is not sustainable.

Jethro's advice reminds us that being faithful does not mean doing everything ourselves. God never intended for us to carry every responsibility alone.

BIG IDEA: We can serve faithfully without carrying everything ourselves.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever sat in your driveway, stayed late at work, or taken the long way home because you needed a few minutes before facing another responsibility? What does that tell us about the pace of everyday life?
2. "When somebody needs me, how much of my response comes from love, and how much comes from fear about what might happen if I don't come through?" How can we recognize the difference?
3. Read **Exodus 18:7–12**. Moses told Jethro about both God's faithfulness and the hardships Israel had experienced. Why is it sometimes easier to talk about our blessings and successes than our struggles?
4. Pastor Jimmy encouraged us to tell the whole story when someone asks how we are doing. What keeps people from admitting they are overwhelmed, exhausted, or struggling?
5. Read **Exodus 18:13–18**. Jethro recognized that Moses was wearing himself out, but he also noticed the effect on the people waiting for help. How can carrying too much responsibility negatively affect the people we are trying to serve?
6. Sometimes we take on responsibilities because we enjoy being needed. Other times, we believe nobody else can do the job correctly. Which of those is more tempting for you? Why?
7. Read **Exodus 18:19–22**. Jethro encouraged Moses to identify trustworthy people and share the responsibility. Why is asking for help or delegating responsibility difficult for some people?
8. Moses still had important responsibilities that belonged to him. How do we determine what is truly ours to carry and what we should allow others to help us carry?
9. Read **Exodus 18:23–26**. Moses listened to Jethro and made changes. Why is receiving advice sometimes harder than giving it? Who has permission to speak honestly into your life when they see you taking on too much?
10. Read **Matthew 11:28–30**. Jesus invites those who are weary and burdened to come to Him for rest. How is the rest Jesus offers different from simply taking a day off or going on vacation?
11. "Being needed can come to feel like being loved." How can our desire to feel valuable or important cause us to take on responsibilities God never intended us to carry?

12. Think about your current responsibilities at home, work, church, or in your relationships. What is one burden you may need to share, one boundary you need to establish, or one conversation you need to have?

MOVING FORWARD

This week, take an honest look at the responsibilities you are carrying. Do not just look at what is on your calendar. Think about the emotional and mental weight that comes with everything people expect from you.

Ask yourself four questions:

What am I carrying? Identify the responsibilities, expectations, and concerns that are weighing you down.

What is actually mine to carry? Some things are responsibilities God has entrusted to you. Others may be things you have taken on because you struggle to say no or because nobody else has stepped forward.

Who could help me carry the load? Think about someone you could ask for help, a responsibility you could share, or a person you could equip to take ownership of something.

What needs to change this week? Maybe you need to establish a boundary, protect time with your family, ask for help, or have an honest conversation about how you are doing.

Remember, Moses wasn't wrong for wanting to help people. The problem was that he was trying to help everyone by himself.

You can love people without meeting every need. You can serve faithfully without saying yes to everything. And you can acknowledge your limitations without feeling like you have failed.

If exhaustion or emotional strain becomes persistent or affects your health, seeking support from a qualified professional can also be an important step.

God has called us to be faithful, not to carry everything alone.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

"They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you."
Exodus 18:22 NLT