WHEN YOU'RE NOT OKAY

The spiritual side of mental health.

WHEN YOU'RE NOT OKAY: PART 1, KNOWN BY GOD

We all experience seasons when life feels overwhelming. Sometimes it is anxiety, depression, grief, loneliness, exhaustion, or simply feeling like we cannot keep up with everything happening around us. Yet one of the hardest things for many people to admit is that they are not okay.

For Christians, those struggles can sometimes bring additional guilt. We may wonder if our anxiety means we do not trust God enough, if our sadness means we lack faith, or if we would feel better if we simply prayed more. But Scripture tells a different story.

Some of the greatest men and women of faith experienced seasons of deep emotional pain. Elijah struggled with despair. David poured out his anguish before God. Job experienced unimaginable grief. Heman wrote about darkness and loneliness in Psalm 88.

Their stories remind us that struggling does not make us spiritually inadequate. We can be honest about our pain and still have a genuine relationship with God.

This message reminds us that our mental and spiritual lives are connected, but our struggles do not define our faith. God sees us completely, knows what we are carrying, and invites us to bring our whole selves to Him.

BIG IDEA: Your soul's desire isn't to be more knowledgeable; it's to be known.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When you were growing up, how did your family, church, or community talk about mental health? Was it something people discussed openly, or was it usually kept private?
2. CJ shared that one of the hardest things he ever said to someone was, "I'm not okay." Why do you think those three words can be so difficult to say, especially for Christians?
3. The sermon challenged the belief that struggling with mental health means someone is not spiritual enough. Why do you think that misunderstanding exists? What damage can it cause?
4. Read **Luke 10:27**. Jesus teaches us to love God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. What does this passage reveal about how God views us as whole people rather than separating our spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical lives?
5. The message discussed several practices Jesus demonstrated, including prayer, community, Sabbath, and silence. Which of these practices is most difficult for you to make time for? Why?
6. Read **Psalm 88:2–4, 18**. Heman describes feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, and surrounded by darkness. What surprises you about the fact that such an honest and painful prayer is included in Scripture?
7. Psalm 88 does not end with everything suddenly getting better. Why is it important to recognize that following God does not guarantee an immediate resolution to our emotional struggles?
8. Read **Psalm 142:1–3**. David openly tells God about his troubles and feelings of being overwhelmed. What can we learn from David about bringing our pain, frustration, and confusion honestly before God?
9. The sermon suggested thinking about mental health along a spectrum from **surviving to thriving**, rather than simply cured or sick. How might that perspective help us show greater patience, understanding, and compassion toward ourselves and others?
10. Read **1 Corinthians 8:1–3**. Paul explains that knowledge can make us proud, while love builds others up. What is the difference between knowing a lot about God and experiencing a relationship where we know we are loved by Him?

11. The message asked, “What if the reason you're here isn't to gain more knowledge, but to be more known?” How does that question challenge the way we approach church, small groups, prayer, and relationships?
12. Think about the people in your life. Is there someone who might be silently struggling right now? What could it look like to help that person feel seen, heard, and loved without immediately trying to fix everything?

MOVING FORWARD

This week, remember that you do not have to pretend everything is okay when it is not. God already knows what you are carrying. He knows the questions you are afraid to ask, the struggles you are reluctant to share, and the feelings you may not know how to explain. Instead of hiding those things, take a step toward being known.

Be honest with God. Spend time in prayer this week without pretending. Tell Him what you are actually feeling. If you are overwhelmed, tell Him. If you are grieving, tell Him. If you are struggling, tell Him.

Be honest with someone you trust. If you are carrying something heavy, consider sharing it with a trusted friend, pastor, counselor, or family member. You do not have to carry every burden alone.

Make room for healthy practices. Identify one way you can intentionally care for your mental, emotional, or spiritual well-being this week. It might be prayer, rest, Scripture, meaningful community, or seeking professional support.

Be someone who listens. If someone tells you they are not okay, resist the urge to immediately offer advice or solutions. Sometimes the most loving response is simply to listen, be present, and remind them they are not alone.

Seeking professional mental health care and leaning into your relationship with God are not competing choices. Both can be part of caring for the whole person.

The goal is not to pretend the struggle does not exist. The goal is to remember that even in the struggle, we are known and loved.

You do not have to have everything figured out to be fully known by God.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

“But whoever loves God is known by God.”
1 Corinthians 8:3 NIV