

SERMON NOTES

Sunday, February 2, 2025

Holy and Whole - Relationships

May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together—spirit, soul, and body—and keep you fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (MSG)

My whole body is sick; my health is broken because of my sins. My guilt overwhelms me—it is a burden too heavy to bear...I am exhausted and completely crushed. My groans come from an anguished heart. Psalm 38:3-4, 8 (NLT)

We are made up of parts but those parts are highly interconnected!

The world has at times over-secularized physical and emotional problems, forgetting that they can have spiritual roots and spiritual solutions.

The church has at times over-spiritualized physical problems and emotional problems, treating them as primarily spiritual problems and offering overly simplified spiritual solutions (e.g., pray harder, trust God more, be more grateful, have more faith, confess more sin).

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." Genesis 2:18 (NLT)

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame. Genesis 2:24-25 (HCSB)

It is not good for humans to be alone – we cannot be holy and whole without strong and supportive relationships...But people are also the source of our wounds and it's the people in our lives that tend to trigger our wounds, fears and insecurities the most.

When we get triggered, we choose one of three paths

1. We turn against (fight)



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2. We turn away (flight)
3. We turn towards (reconnect)

Characteristics of The Church as a Healing Community

1. Compassion and Grace
Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)
2. Safety and trust (belong – believe – become)
Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you. Romans 15:7 (NIV)
3. Authenticity and vulnerability
Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. James 5:16 (NLT)
4. Deep listening
Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry. James 1:19 (NIV)
5. Encouragement and hope
So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NLT)
6. Accountability and truth-telling
Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy. Proverbs 27:6 (NLT)
7. Shared burdens and mutual support
Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? James 1:15-16 (NIV)



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*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:2 (NIV)*

Questions for thought and discussion:

1. Read Psalm 38:3-8. How does it show the interconnectedness of our different parts (spirit, soul/psyche, and body)?
2. Is David's problem in Psalm 38:3-8 primarily a spiritual, emotional, or physical problem? What spiritual solutions might be helpful?
3. Have you ever had an experience where a pastor or well-meaning Christian friend seemed to reduce your physical or emotional problems to spiritual problems (unconfessed sin, lack of faith, lack of prayer, etc)? Or made you feel guilty for suffering from a mental health problem, seeing a counselor, or taking medication?
4. Why are relationships so important to our overall health and well-being? Why are relationships so challenging?
5. Can you identify wounded or tender parts of you that get triggered in relationships? Can you identify a protector part that rises up to defend your wounded parts?
6. When you get into a conflict and a wound gets triggered, are you more likely to move against (fight) or move away from (flight) the person who triggered you? Why do you think you react the way you do? Where did you learn to protect yourself the way you do?
7. What does it look like for you to turn towards someone who has hurt you? Describe what happens on the inside and on the outside when we turn toward someone.
8. Review the seven characteristics of a healing community. What characteristics would you see as your strengths? Which ones do you see as personal weaknesses? Can you think of healing experiences or hurtful experiences that you have had with the church in the past?
9. We often use the phrase "Belong - Believe - Become." What does that phrase mean to you? Do you agree that belonging is a necessary first step to growth and change?
10. Spend time each day praying our "Holy and Whole" prayer.

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