

The background of the slide is a photograph of a sunset or sunrise over a body of water. The sky is filled with horizontal bands of color, ranging from deep purple and blue at the bottom to bright yellow and orange at the top. The water in the foreground is dark and reflects the colors of the sky. In the bottom left corner, there are some dark, silhouetted reeds or grasses.

What Does the Bible Teach About Mental and Emotional Health?

Thursday Indepth Bible Class of the
Trilacoochee church of Christ
April 25, 2024

God Created Us In His Image

- God created us in His image with the capacity to think and reason via the input of our senses, to emotionally react to our environment and relationships, and to choose thoughts, words, and actions in response to our thoughts and feelings.
- Gen. 1:26-28, 31 - “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth’ ... Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good...”

God Created Us In His Image

- Ecc. 7:29 - “Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes.”
- Col. 3:9-10 - “...You have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.”

God Created Us In His Image

- Genesis presents the three relationships that all humans have: their relationship to God, to each other, and to their environment.
 - This is evident in God's creative acts of making humans in His image (Gen. 1:26-27)
 - Of giving them each other as companions (1:27-28)
 - And of giving them a mandate to steward the earth (1:28-30).
- When sound and healthy, our thinking and feeling resembles that of God, although at a much more limited way, and is subject to fallibility due to bad input or faulty processing of input.

God Created Us In His Image

- God knows our thoughts and feelings; He experiences them in a perfect and holy manner.
 - Isa. 55:8-9 - “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.’”
 - Psalm 139:23-24 - “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.”

God Created Us In His Image

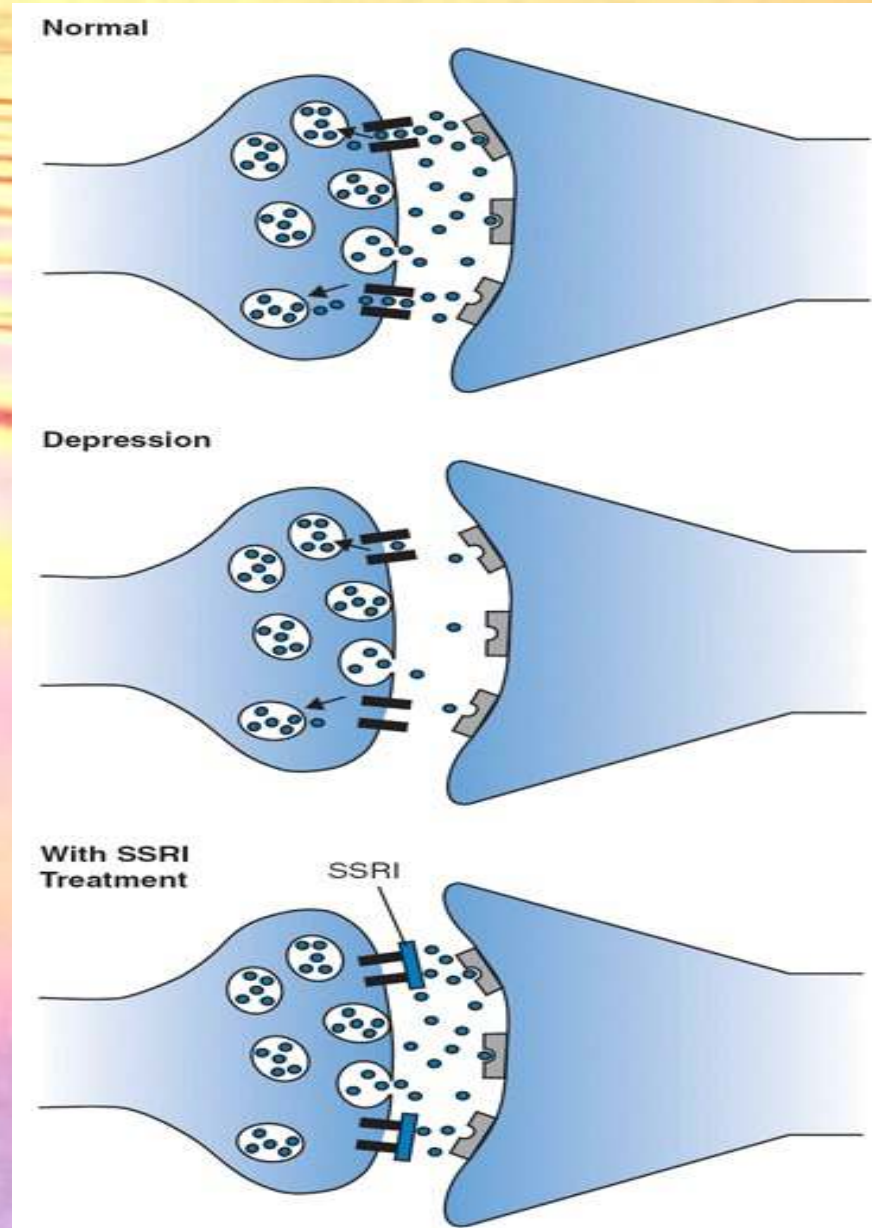
- The Bible governs all of our relationships: with God, with each other, and with the world around us.
- Just as our bodies can become ill and affect our ability to interact with God, humans, and the environment, so can our hearts and minds become ill, thus interfering with our ability to interrelate.

Mental And Emotional Disorders Are Real Illnesses

- Mental and emotional disorders are real illnesses with definable origins, serious symptoms, both acute and chronic effects, and often can respond to medical and psychological interventions and treatments.
- Frequently professed persons of faith dismiss these illnesses as:
 - Imaginary (“It’s all in your head”)
 - Manufactured excuses for indolence
 - A failure to discipline one’s self or a weak will
 - An indicator of a lack of faith, prayer, Bible study, etc.
 - The result of sin and guilt
- These illnesses, when correctly diagnosed, are genuine, disheartening, and debilitating. They cannot be feigned long term without discovery.

Causes Of Mental And Emotional Disorders

- Biologic, genetic, and organic causes



Causes Of Mental And Emotional Disorders

- Environmental factors such as head injury, poor nutrition, and exposure to toxins
- Social factors include: prolonged and severe parental discord, death of a family member or close friend, parent's mental illness, parents' criminality, ongoing overcrowding, economic hardship, abuse, neglect, and exposure to violence." (NIH Curriculum Supplement Series, National Library of Medicine, 2007)
- Long term self-destructive and sinful behaviors accompanied with unresolved guilt.

The Relationship Between the Scriptures and Treating Mental and Emotional Disorders

- In this study, we will consider Bible characters who wrestled with their hearts and minds while living in this fallen world; we will examine how prayer and scripture will help us understand the need for compassion for those who suffer, as well as what the word of God can do to help them overcome.
- The recent changing landscape in the mental health industry has led to the inclusion of the patient's personal faith in the clinical setting.

What Can We Do?

- Practice active listening.
- Encouragement makes a difference.
- Be honest with and about yourself.
- Don't hesitate to seek or recommend professional help.

Does The Bible Address Mental Health Issues?

- Rom. 8:6 - "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."
- Gal. 6:2 - "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."
- Phil. 4:8 - "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things."
- 1Peter 5:7 - "Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."
- Col. 3:2 - "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."

Bible Heroes Who Suffered In Heart And Mind

- Jeremiah - Lam. 3:1-33
- Elijah - 1Kings 19:1-19
- King Saul - 1Sam. 18:10, 16:14, 23, 19:9, 24
- King David - Psalm 55:1-23; 2Sam. 11-13; 1Sam. 21:10-15; Psalm 38, 42
- Naomi - Ruth 1-4
- Jonah - Jonah 1-4
- Job and hopelessness, loss, anguish - Job 1-42

Identifying Struggles With Mental And Emotional Health

- Frequently and long term feelings of restlessness and agitation
- Sudden or lasting changes in appetite or eating habits; no appetite or excessive, compulsive overeating
- Withdrawing from family, friends, or church; an inexplicable desire to isolate
- Living a life inconsistent with one's values; noteworthy changes in moral conduct or risk taking
- Serious changes in sleep patterns; sleeping too much or unable to sleep
- Constant guilt and shame regarding past events that have been resolved or forgiven

Identifying Struggles With Mental And Emotional Health

- Feeling unmotivated or hopeless more often than not
- Loss of interest in activities that one once enjoyed
- Feeling forgetful or having difficulty concentrating
- Endlessly re-living past events either through daydreams, nightmares, or flashbacks
- Suicide ideation
- It is not necessary for one to have all of these symptoms to manifest a mental or emotional disorder

How To Maintain Good Mental And Emotional Health

- Spend time with God.
 - Psalm 63:1-2 - "O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory."
 - Psalm 27:4 - "One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple."
 - 1Chron. 16:11 - "Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore!"

How To Maintain Good Mental And Emotional Health

- Use self-examination to identify thoughts and feelings.
 - 1Cor. 11:28 - "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup."
 - 2Cor. 13:5 - "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? --unless indeed you are disqualified."
 - Gal. 6:4 - "But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."
 - 2Cor. 10:5 - "Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

How To Maintain Good Mental And Emotional Health

- Spend time with spiritual and supportive people.
 - 1Thes. 5:11, 14 - "Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing... Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all."

How To Maintain Good Mental And Emotional Health

- Rom. 12:9-16 - "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion."

How To Maintain Good Mental And Emotional Health

- Seek professional help when suffering from a mental or emotional disorder.
- Suffering from these illnesses should not be a source of shame, even if the ignorance of others intrudes on our thinking. One should be no more ashamed of contracting a mental or emotional disorder than they would be of having a heart condition, diabetes, or cancer.

How To Maintain Good Mental And Emotional Health

- Jesus often went away from His disciples to spend time in prayer alone with God; thus He refreshed His heart and mind for the work ahead of Him. If Jesus thought it important to take care of His spirit, heart, and state of mind, then shouldn't we do the same?
 - Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46 - "And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there."
 - Luke 6:12 - "Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."
 - John 15:20 - "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."

How To Maintain Good Mental And Emotional Health

- Mental and emotional health problems can be debilitating, but with the right help, one can start to feel better and become enabled to function for the Lord, for others, and for themselves.
 - Rom. 12:2 - "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."