

Mental Health Month at a Church?!

- Churches are silent on many topics that are important.
- Many of us have friends and family members who struggle.
- A lot of us struggle.
- As a psychologist I have been brought into inner life of many people.

I Struggle with Depression But Helped by...

- competent counsellors who move beyond the superficial
- supportive and insightful spouse who cares about the inner life
- self-understanding and self acceptance
- people I can be open with because they take inner life seriously
- practical strategies for all aspects of life

I Struggle with Depression But Helped by...

- biblical perspective on pain and hope that takes humanness seriously
- recognition that God is not confined to the so-called 'spiritual' realm
- as much as is possible/appropriate, avoiding 'highly spiritual' Christians
- medication
- acknowledging the mysterious and complex nature of depression

In Canada

- 20% of population experience mental illness
- 500,000 people per week will not attend work due to mental illness
- \$51 billion spent annually on mental illness
- 11 people die of suicide every day

Cultural Responses: Surface Attitudes

- “You ought to/should.....”
- “Just.....”
- “If people would only.....”
- “Have you ever tried.....?”

“It is what it is.”

- Number of articles- “stupid”
- Tautology- fault of style- saying same thing twice in different words
- Resigned acceptance- not much can be done
- Ending a sentence- I don't want to go into my inner life or explore further
- Shuts down conversation- I don't want to go into your inner life

Cultural Responses: Deeper Longings

Pursuit Of Happiness

Avoidance Of Hurt

Desire For Hope

Reflecting

As you listen to parts of Pharrell Williams song 'Happy' and 21 Pilots song 'Screen,' what do you hear about the cultural longings to pursue happiness, avoid hurt, and desire hope?

Pharrell Williams
Happy



**Screen
Twenty One Pilots**

Reflecting

As you listen to parts of Pharrell Williams song 'Happy' and 21 Pilots song 'Screen,' what do you hear about the cultural longings to pursue happiness, avoid hurt, and desire hope?

Hope

- Having happiness does not guarantee hope, any more than having pain does not mean you have no hope.
- For those of us who are pointed toward God, we recognize that our mental life may have happiness or pain but we fall back constantly on to the hope He provides.
- Whether our mental health is good or bad, we are invited to consider the source of our hope.

Job's Experience

Recognition that hope is a struggle, even with God, when life is bleak.

Oh, that I might have my request, that God would grant what I **hope** for, that God would be willing to crush me, to let loose his hand and cut me off...What strength do I have, that I should still hope? (Job 6:8, 11)

Recognition that there is an ultimate hope with God in the middle of the pain.

Job's Friend Bildad- Such is the destiny of all who forget God; so perishes the **hope** of the godless. What they trust in is fragile; what they rely on is a spider's web. They lean on the web, but it gives way, they cling to it, but it does not hold. (Job 8-13-15)

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