



God's Hope in a Fallen World

April 7, 2024

Text: Romans 5:12, Romans 8:18-25, John 16:33

BIG IDEA

God created us to find joy, purpose, and fulfillment; but this does not come without struggle, suffering, and sorrow. It is important to understand that suffering, while not what God wants, is part of human existence in a broken world. Some of us experience these struggles and sufferings in our mental health journey. Struggling with our mental health is not a consequence of God punishing us or a result of poor faith but is just part of the human experience. Yet, even in a broken world, where we might suffer and struggle, there is all the reason to hope because God loves you and is for you. The One Who lives in you has already overcome brokenness and is intent on walking with you through any hardship. Brokenness may come, but brokenness never wins. This is the promise we have in Jesus- hope prevails always.

Conversation Starter

- How do you deal with troubling situations in your everyday life?
 - What are some healthy and unhealthy ways you handle difficult situations?
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COMMENTARY #1

(Romans 5:12) We read here about the account of Adam's sin and

how it ushered death into the world. This is highlighted in Genesis where God said to Adam “Cursed is the ground because of you; With hard labor you shall eat from it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; Yet you shall eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread, Until you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; for you are dust and to dust you shall return.” (Genesis 3:17-19). Adam is promised that there will be struggle and suffering because of sin in the world. But despite this, Paul juxtaposes this a few chapters later.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it significant that Jesus enters Jerusalem during the time of the Passover? What was the Passover about?
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COMMENTARY #2

(Romans 8:18-25) Paul shows us that the sufferings we experience today cannot even be compared to the Glory of God that has been revealed. This reminds us of the parables of the hidden treasure (Matthew 13:44) or the Costly Pearl (Matthew 13:45-46). The Glory of God is so much more than the sufferings brought upon by sin. And because we understand this Paul writes that “we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting eagerly for our adoption. (Romans 8:23)”

Discussion Questions

1. What does Paul mean in Verse 24 “For in hope we have been saved but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?”
2. What is Paul saying we should place our hope in? Why?

3. What does it mean to be adopted by Christ? What privileges and responsibilities come with that?
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COMMENTARY #3

John 16:33 In this passage Jesus shows us the justification behind our hope. Christ has overcome the world already and suffered in our place. In Him we can have peace and hope.

Discussion Questions

1. What is Jesus meaning in His statement, “I have overcome the world”?
 2. How does knowing your Father has already won give you hope in whatever battle you’re facing?
 3. How can you fight for peace even during trials and suffering?
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GOING DEEPER

It is easy to say that the hope we have will endure through the sufferings we experience in life. But we often find ourselves slipping away from our hope, like when Peter was walking on water and began to sink. The winds pick up in our lives and we begin to drown.

1. How do we persevere through our struggles over a long time?
2. What stigmas or restrictions do we often place upon ourselves that keep us from truly holding on to our hope?
3. What brokenness do you see in the culture or society around you? What specific struggle moves your heart most?

The Bible makes it clear that Jesus is the Light that has overcome the darkness of this world; and now, that Light lives within us.

1. What responsibility do you feel as a “Light carrier” to those in

darkness?

2. How does knowing you already have the Light change how you fight in the darkness?
 3. What are ways you can show the Light in dark situations?
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *The Gift of Knowing Yourself*- David Benner
 - If you or someone you know is struggling, reach out to Asbury Church to find out about the many resources available for you!
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GROUP ACTIVITY

On a sheet of paper or a note card list out 5 struggles you are facing—where is the darkness creeping in? Then, pass the notecard to one of the other members and have them write out promises God has promised that combat the darkness. Take time to share the promises you wrote with each other. Take the paper with you throughout the week to remind you of the hope we have in Christ. You aren't fighting the battle alone.

Example:

~~I am unlovable~~ Nothing can separate me from the love of God (Rom 8:38-39)

~~The things I have done are unforgivable~~ He will create in you a new heart, wash away all sins, and redeem you by His love every single time (Psalm 51)

~~I am worthless~~ You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 134)

~~God doesn't care about me~~ God is WITH you and longs to reveal Himself to you (Gen 28:15)



Mental Health Battle

Supporting Passage

Text: I Kings 19:1-5

BIG IDEA

God created a perfect world and made us to live lives of joy, fulfillment, and purpose- but when sin came into the world that design was broken. Now, brokenness is one of the fundamental aspects of human life: regardless of age, status, or faith, at some point in our lives we all face brokenness. One of the most painful manifestations of this brokenness is the mental health battles so many of us endure. This is not a punishment from God or a sign of poor faith- it is sadly one of the results of broken humanity. Yet, God in His mercy does not leave us in this state and has given us the eternal promise that one day, every tear will be wiped away and every sorrow will cease. But more than promising us future hope, He has promised us present, enduring love that meets us in these broken places with compassion, mercy, and understanding. He does not promise that you will never walk through these valleys, but He does promise you will never walk them alone.

Conversation Starter

- What do you think God's view on mental health is? What is your understanding of mental health/struggles?
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COMMENTARY #1

(Verses 1-4) Elijah has just experienced one of the most powerful stories in the Bible where God sends down fire from Heaven to consume the altar in front of all the prophets of Baal. Then, Elijah, empowered by the Lord, defeats the 500 profits of Baal single handedly on this mountain. What an amazing victory, right? But then the wicked queen Jezebel threatens to kill Elijah and he runs over 100miles away terrified of this woman. Here, we find him after this run, exhausted, terrified, and depressed. He collapses in burnout and tells God he can't do it anymore- take me home, I give up.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever experienced major victories like this in your life? Moments where you knew you were exactly where you were supposed to be and doing what you were made to do? Explain.
 2. Why do you think Elijah ran in fear after this major victory? How often do we forget the former victories in face of current struggles?
 3. Explain a time when you faced burnout.
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COMMENTARY #2

(Verses 5-8) God does not get mad at Elijah for feeling this way, He does not accuse Elijah of lacking faith or tell Him to pray more. Rather, in gentle understanding of Elijah's humanity, God sends an angel to minister to the physical needs of His child. God understood that life is hard and that the journey was too much for Elijah to handle, so He takes time to let Elijah rest, feed him, and nourish him back to mental health.

Discussion Questions

1. How does it make you feel that God understands the fragility of humanity?
 2. Talk about the practical compassion God shows here- how has He done this for you? What are some practical ways we can care for our health?
 3. Notice how many times God calls Elijah to rest and eat; do you tend to follow this repeated pattern or do you try to rush yourself to “perform” and “do?”
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COMMENTARY #3

(Verses 9-15) God allows Elijah to speak freely about how he was feeling even if his perception was not entirely correct. God invites us to freely share our heart, struggles, doubts, and frustrations with Him as well. God knew that Elijah did not need firm rebuke or chastisement, instead, He came to Elijah in a still small voice. Amid powerful displays, miraculous signs, mighty roars- the still small voice of God proves to be the most healing of all.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever had a real conversation with God? Explain.
 2. How can we hear His whisper in the tumult of life?
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GOING DEEPER

1. What is significant about washing of feet?
2. Why do you think Peter refused at first? What was Jesus' response?
3. How does it change your perspective that Judas was in the

- seat of honor?
4. What are other times in Scripture where Jesus modeled service and humility over pride and prestige?
 5. How can you begin to implement these into your life today?
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry- John Mark Comer
 - <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/you-need-more-than-god-alone>- Sermon on Healing
 - <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/you-need-more-than-god-alone>- “You Need More Than God Alone (Article)”
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GROUP ACTIVITY

God asks Elijah “why are you here” already knowing the answer. This is an invitation for Elijah (and all of us) to pour out our hearts to God in a genuine way. He already knows our state, but He desires us to talk to Him about it, to be real and vulnerable. Take this time to answer that question from God as if He were verbally asking you right now- “why are you here? Why are you hurting? Why are you running? Why are you hiding? Tell Me what is on your heart.” This week, find someone you can trust to be real with- to share those answers with. We were never meant to make this journey alone; invite someone into your heart to hold the weight it carries with you.