

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Week of October 22, 2017

# SMALL GROUPS

*Growing in Christ*

### BIG IDEA:

No matter your physical limitations, you can choose to get healthier.

1

### GETTING STARTED

What's a party game you enjoy playing with people? (Maybe this could be part of your small group social.)

2

### LOOKING BACK

How have you seen God at work over the last week?

Looking back on Sunday, is there anything that stood out to you, confused you, or challenged you?

(See Big Idea above)

3

### MY STORY

Why do you think people are less likely to talk about mental illness than they are to talk about other illnesses?

Rick Jass helped us better understand some of the physical aspects of mental health. How does this understanding help lift some of the stigma (negative perceptions) around mental illness?

Everybody is affected by mental illness in some way(s), whether personally, within our families, or within our community. What is one way mental illness has affected your life that you would be willing to share?

4

### DIGGING DEEPER

**1 Kings 19:1-4 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup> When Ahab got home, he told Jezebel everything Elijah had done, including the way he had killed all the prophets of Baal. <sup>2</sup> So Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: "May the gods strike me and even kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you just as you killed them." <sup>3</sup> Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there. <sup>4</sup> Then he went on alone into the wilderness, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died."

After seeing God accomplish a tremendous victory through him, Elijah "fled for his life," and then prayed for God to take his life. How can you make sense of this apparent contradiction?

What are some examples of "mountain top" spiritual experiences that can be followed by a valley?

# 4

## DIGGING DEEPER (CONTINUED)

**1 Kings 19:5-6 (NLT)** <sup>5</sup> Then he lay down and slept under the broom tree. But as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, "Get up and eat!" <sup>6</sup> He looked around and there beside his head was some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water! So he ate and drank and lay down again.

The Mental Health Resource Guide for Individuals and Families lists symptoms and warning signs of how to recognize bi-polar disorder (page 14), a mental illness characterized by episodes of extreme highs and lows. Read the warning signs of depression (lows) below, and circle any that you think Elijah was experiencing, based on the texts above.

- Feeling extremely sad or hopeless
- Being in an irritable mood
- Having no desire for once-enjoyable activities
- Sleeping too much or having trouble sleeping
- Showing changes in appetite or weight
- Having little or no energy or moving slowly
- Having problems concentrating
- Feeling aches and pains for no reason
- Finding minor decisions overwhelming
- Obsessing over feelings of loss, personal failure, guilt, or helplessness
- Having recurrent thoughts or talk of death or suicide.  
(Note: Any thoughts or talk of suicide must be taken seriously)

[From [http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/resources/resource\\_guides/Hope\\_Resource\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/resources/resource_guides/Hope_Resource_Guide.pdf)]

**Psalm 119:73 (NLT)** You made me; you created me. Now give me the sense to follow your commands.

No matter your physical limitations, you can choose to get healthier. What are some of the choices you can make to be physically and mentally healthier?

Why is your physical/mental health an important aspect of discipleship?

**Psalm 139:13-14 (NLT)** <sup>13</sup> You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.

What are some wonderfully complex aspects of our bodies and minds that we can thank God for?

**Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)** <sup>6</sup> Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup> Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

What is the difference between worry and prayer?

How can giving thanks to God lead to greater peace in our hearts and minds?

# 5

## BRINGING IT HOME

God's promise is that we will experience peace in our hearts and minds as we pray and trust in Christ. What about when that doesn't work? While our bodies are a blessing, they are also broken in many ways, including ways that affect our minds. God has gifted us with professional people who can help diagnose and treat conditions that have been barriers to His peace. Let's be a church where people can be open about their struggles, and we can encourage each other towards better health--for our own benefit and for God's greater glory.

# 6

**PRAYER REQUESTS** How can we take practical steps to being an answer to these prayers?