

OF SOUND MIND

Discussion Notes

DOWN LOW

Mat opened by saying, "our mental health has never been under greater attack."

- Do you agree? Why do you think that is?
- Do you have stories of how mental health has impacted your life or the lives of people you love?

Going through difficult times or struggling with poor mental health can make us question where God is in all of it.

- Have you felt like this?
- Do challenges with mental health affect our faith? How? Is it a barrier to friends finding faith?

Mat covered the entirety of the book of Job in his talk. So, rather than reading one chunk of the text you may want to read the three passages that gives the context to each of Mat's three points. It may also be helpful to watch the Bible Project's summary of Job on YouTube.

"WEEP WITH THOSE WHO WEEP" - Job 2:11-13

Mat explains that the most helpful thing we can do to support friend's who are struggling with poor mental health is to sit with them - not having to give answers or solutions, but just weeping with them.

- How can we do this well? Has anyone got experience of trying to support friends in this way? Or, has anyone experienced the help of a friend in your own struggles?
- How can we do this as a Hub?

"SPEAK THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD" - Job 19:7-11, 38:4-9

Later, Job's friends don't do such a good job of helping Job. Mat explained that Job and his friends developed a 'strict justice' understanding of God - the idea that if Job was suffering it must be because he had done something wrong. Job knows he hasn't so he begins to believe that God must be unjust and unfair.

- Mat explained that God tells Job in chapter 38 that he doesn't really understand what is going on. Why is this helpful to Job?
- What are the untruths that we believe about ourselves or God when it comes to our own suffering and mental health?
- How can we speak truth to our friends whilst also being kind? How do we challenge things that aren't true without falling into trying to solve all their problems?

"BRING YOUR SUFFERING TO GOD" - Job 42:7

God says that Job spoke rightly of God when he was honest about his suffering - rather than blaming himself or denying God's goodness he brought his suffering to God.

- Mat shared that there is a tension for us to hold - we know that it is totally correct for us to be confused, mourn, weep and cry out to God, yet at the same time we need to know that there is hope in Jesus. How can we balance both of these?
- How can we bring hope to our friends who are suffering? How do we bring the hope of Jesus into these situations?

This will be a live issue for several people in your Hub. It's important that there is space for people to respond on whatever level they feel comfortable. However, it is important to remind ourselves that healing and hope comes in Jesus. So, make sure you spend some time praying together at the end of your Hub time. The love and support of a community is vital, but we need to remind each other that it is in Jesus that we find hope!