

The issue of mental health is relevant to Redemption Church. Mental health is a crucial topic to discuss because it directly impacts spiritual growth, relationships, and overall well-being.

Mental health is a critical issue affecting millions of individuals and communities worldwide. In the United States alone, approximately 23% of adults experience mental illness annually, equating to nearly 60 million people. Alarmingly, more than 5% of the U.S. adult population, or 12.8 million individuals, report experiencing serious thoughts of suicide each year. ([Mental Health America](#))

Despite the prevalence of mental health challenges, societal stigma often leads to silence and reluctance in seeking help, even within faith communities.

This sermon series, "Unshackled: Breaking Free from Mental Health Stigmas and Finding Freedom," aims to address these challenges head-on by:

- **Raising Awareness:** Educating the congregation about the realities of mental health issues to foster understanding and compassion.
- **Encouraging Open Dialogue:** Creating a safe space for individuals to share their experiences and struggles without fear of judgment.
- **Establishing Support Systems:** Initiating a congregational care ministry dedicated to providing ongoing support, resources, and prayer for those affected by mental health challenges.
- **Look for answers:** Answers can be found in God's word and in Christian community.

By integrating biblical teachings with practical applications, this series seeks to break the chains of stigma and guide individuals toward emotional and spiritual wholeness.

Here is a 4 week Message Series outline.

Title: **Unshackled: Breaking free from mental health stigmas and finding freedom.**

Week 1: Breaking the Silence – God’s Heart for Your Mental Health

Main Scriptures:

- Deuteronomy 6:5-7 – "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength..."
- Mark 12:30 – "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

Overview:

- The importance of addressing mental health in the church.
- Understanding mental health from a biblical perspective.
- Addressing stigma and myths surrounding mental health in faith communities.
- The power of community in healing & restoration.
 - A. Encouraging open conversations
 - B. Providing resources and support
 - C. God's comfort in times of struggle (Psalm 34:17-18) (Close to brokenhearted)
- B.** Create a Congregational Care Ministry – push for interest

Additional Scriptures for Further Study:

- Isaiah 41:10 – "Do not fear, for I am with you..."
- Matthew 11:28-30 – "Come, all you who are weary..."

Call to Action

- A. Break the silence: Text #BROKENHEARTED to 469-467-8111 to start an open conversation about your mental health struggle. Your church community will receive you.
- B. Educate yourself: Commit to learning more about mental health challenges and how they intersect with faith.
- C. Offer support: Reach out to someone you know who may be struggling with mental health issues, offering a listening ear and compassionate presence.
- D. Pray about joining our Congregational Care Ministry.

Week 2: The Battle Within – Finding God in Our Struggles

Main Scriptures:

- Psalms selections – David's experiences with depression.
- 1 Kings 19:4-18 – Elijah's burnout and despair.

Testimony Videos:

#1 “The struggle is real.” VIDEO TESTIMONY from Charles C. who has struggled with bipolar disorder and anxiety.

#2 “Is God mad at me?” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10) (God’s power is available to the weak) VIDEO Testimony: Close with a final word from Charles about finding strength when he was weakest and considering suicide. He found “God was not mad at him, but madly in love with him.”

Overview:

- Acknowledging the internal struggles of mental health.
- Biblical examples of emotional struggles. (David, Elijah)
- Common mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD.
- Finding God in our struggles through prayer, meditation, and Scripture.
- Coping strategies rooted in faith.

Additional Scriptures for Further Study:

- Psalm 23:4 – “Even though I walk through the darkest valley...”
- **2 Timothy 1:7** – “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline.”

Call to Action

A. Are you struggling? Reach out to your church. Be willing to reach out to a health care professional. (Have Health Care professional info on hand)

B. Is your heart stirred with this subject of caring for others? Participate in or support the church's care ministry

C. Invite someone to pray with you while we sing a song about “Healing” (Healer by Kari Job)

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yzejd6r9DwE&ab_channel=ForGodSoLoved777)

Week 3: Breaking the Chains – Overcoming Negative Thought Patterns

Main Scriptures:

- Philippians 4:8-9 – "Whatever is true, whatever is noble..."
- Numbers 13:33 – "We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes..."

Overview:

- Understanding the negativity loop and its impact on emotions and behaviors.
- Biblical perspective on thoughts and the power of renewing the mind.
- Strategies for overcoming negative thought patterns.
- The role of community in breaking negative cycles.

Additional Scriptures for Further Study:

- 2 Corinthians 10:5 – "Take captive every thought..."
- Isaiah 26:3 – "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast..."

Call to Action

- A. Identify one negative thought pattern you want to change. INVITE someone in your congregation to help you replace a negative thought.
- B. Adopt positive affirmations. Have someone pray positive affirmations over you.
- C. Seek support from a friend, family member, or mental health professional

Week 4: Healing from Trauma – Finding Redemption in Brokenness

Main Scriptures:

- **Romans 8:28** – "All things work together for the good..." (Acknowledge the misuse of this verse)
- **2 Corinthians 12:9-10** – "My grace is sufficient for you..."

Overview:

- Acknowledging the prevalence of trauma and defining its impact.
- Understanding trauma responses and the three types of trauma.
- The Apostle Paul as an example of overcoming trauma. ([Paul Copes With Trauma](#))
- Steps to healing: processing pain, pressing into God, and pursuing purpose.

Additional Scriptures for Further Study:

- **Lamentations 3:22-23** – "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed..."
- **Romans 8:37-39** – "Nothing can separate us from the love of God..."

Call to Action:

1. Identify one area of trauma in your life that you need to start processing.
2. Where are you on the path to redemption? What is your next step? Text us at 469-467-8111 and we will help you take that step.
3. Join a Connect Group or find a safe community where you can share your story and find support.

Books and Online Resources

Books:

1. **"The Anxiety Opportunity" – Curtis Chang (2023)** – A biblical perspective on anxiety as a tool for spiritual growth.
2. **"Try Softer" – Aundi Kolber** – A faith-based approach to overcoming trauma and negative thought patterns.
3. **"Soul Care" – Dr. Rob Reimer** – Explores inner healing, emotional health, and freedom in Christ.
4. **"The Body Keeps the Score" – Bessel van der Kolk** – A secular but widely respected book on trauma and healing.
5. **"The Depression Cure" – Dr. Stephen Ilardi** – Practical, research-based steps to combat depression, including faith-based insights.

Online Articles & Websites:

1. **American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC)** – <https://aacc.net/>
2. **"The Church Cannot Ignore Mental Health Anymore" – (Great list of resources)**
<https://research.lifeway.com/2023/09/26/the-church-cant-ignore-mental-health-any-longer/>
3. **BibleProject's Podcast Episodes on Anxiety** –
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVVUPE93Gal&ab_channel=BibleProjectPodcast
4. **How Paul Copes with Trauma** - <https://faithandleadership.com/what-paul-teaches-us-about-coping-trauma>
5. **Peace of Mind Message Series by Life Church** -
<https://www.life.church/media/peace-of-mind/>

CONCLUSION:

Mental health is not just a personal issue—it is a communal and spiritual matter that the church must address with compassion and action. By breaking the silence, acknowledging struggles, renewing our minds, and healing from trauma, we create an environment where people can find hope and restoration in Christ. This series is not just about awareness—it is about transformation. As a church, we are called to walk alongside one another, offering

support, love, and biblical truth. Let us move forward with a renewed commitment to breaking mental health stigmas and embracing the freedom that comes through Christ.

ARTICLE FOR NEWSLETTER/BLOG

Breaking the Silence: The Church's Role in Mental Health

In today's world, mental health is an issue that affects millions of people, yet it remains a topic often avoided in faith communities. Many struggle in silence, believing that their battles with anxiety, depression, or trauma signify a lack of faith. However, the truth is that mental health is not a sign of spiritual weakness—it is a human experience, and the church has a crucial role in fostering healing and support.

A Biblical Call to Wholeness

God cares about our mental and emotional well-being just as much as our spiritual health. In **Deuteronomy 6:5-7** and **Mark 12:30**, we are called to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. This means that our mental and emotional states are essential components of our faith journey. Jesus himself ministered to those suffering emotionally, offering comfort, healing, and hope.

Breaking the Chains of Stigma

One of the biggest obstacles to addressing mental health in the church is stigma. Many still believe false narratives such as:

- Mental illness is solely a result of sin or weak faith.
- Prayer alone is the answer, without professional help.
- Seeking counseling or medication is a lack of trust in God.

The truth is, mental health struggles can affect anyone, including faithful believers. Even biblical figures like David, Elijah, and Paul experienced deep emotional suffering. **Psalm 34:17-18** reminds us that God is near to the brokenhearted and saves those crushed in spirit. The church must be a place of compassion, not condemnation.

Finding God in the Struggle

Instead of ignoring mental health challenges, we should acknowledge them and seek God's guidance in overcoming them. Scripture encourages us to renew our minds (**Romans 12:2**) and take every thought captive (**2 Corinthians 10:5**). Faith-based practices

like prayer, meditation, and gratitude can help strengthen emotional resilience. However, just as we seek medical care for physical ailments, we should also embrace therapy, counseling, and mental health resources as tools God provides for healing.

A Community of Support and Healing

Healing happens in the context of community. The early church was built on relationships, bearing one another's burdens (**Galatians 6:2**). The church should be a safe place where people can openly share their struggles and find encouragement. By forming support groups, educating members, and partnering with mental health professionals, faith communities can play an active role in breaking chains of isolation and despair.

Steps Toward Transformation

As believers, we are called not only to be hearers of the Word but doers. Here are some ways we can take action:

- **Start the conversation** – Encourage open discussions about mental health in church settings.
- **Educate and equip** – Provide resources, sermons, and workshops on mental wellness.
- **Offer support** – Create care ministries where people can seek guidance, prayer, and practical help.
- **Seek help without shame** – Encourage professional counseling and medical care as part of God's healing process.

Hope and Redemption in Christ

The journey to mental and emotional well-being is not always easy, but God promises to walk with us every step of the way. **Romans 8:37-39** reminds us that nothing can separate us from His love—not even our darkest struggles. By embracing both faith and practical support, we can create churches that truly reflect Christ's compassion, breaking the silence on mental health and leading people to freedom and restoration.

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health, reach out. You are not alone, and there is hope for healing. Let's be a church that listens, supports, and walks alongside one another in love.

Join Us for Our Mental Health Message Series

We invite you to be part of our upcoming sermon series, "**Unshackled: Breaking Free from Mental Health Stigmas and Finding Freedom.**" Over four weeks, we will explore biblical

Pastoral Care Final – Message Series on Mental Health – Chris Fluitt

truths about mental health, break down harmful stigmas, and discover the hope and healing God provides.

Join us as we seek to create a church that embraces both faith and mental well-being. You don't have to face your struggles alone—let's walk this journey together.