



## WEEKLY STUDY

### WEEK 2

We continued our series on mental health this week. The key takeaway was this: *It's okay to not be okay.* While that may work against the grain of what's commonly accepted, it is a vital confession. If we are to receive God's grace and discover His best life for us, we have to admit that we are not Him. The gift we have in Jesus Christ is one of limitless love. We have been pursued by Jesus and we can have our life in him—when we recognize that we are not okay on our own.

Peace of Christ,  
Dr. Mark Youngman  
Pastor of Discipleship

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

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### DAILY STUDY

#### MONDAY: 2 CORINTHIANS 11.27-31

*I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.<sup>28</sup> Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.<sup>29</sup> Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?*

<sup>30</sup>*If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.* <sup>31</sup>*The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying.*

- In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul lays out a treatise on suffering and the importance of recognizing human weakness before God. He seems to know his own tendency to puff himself up, but by naming his weakness, Paul is allowing God to receive glory. This world encourages us to hide our weaknesses in hopes that others won't use them against us. **Can you name a time when you were either forced or chose to reveal one of your own weaknesses? What impact did it have on you and those around you?**
- *Jesus, you know everything about me. You see me more clearly than I see myself. If I boast today, may I boast from my own weaknesses and may I point to your grace and glory. Amen.*

## TUESDAY: ROMANS 7.24-25 (The Message)

*I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question?*

<sup>25</sup> *The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different.*

- The human condition is that we need help. It's okay to need God. In fact, recognizing our need for God is the starting place for faith. If we believe that we can save ourselves, then we will perpetually find ourselves trying "everything" that doesn't help. To be able to notice AND proclaim that we are at the end of our rope, is the very thing that allows us to see what Jesus Christ can do. **Do you know what it feels like to be at the end of your rope? Do you relate to the tension of the push and pull of wanting to serve God, but also being drawn to sin?**
- *Thank you God, for sending Jesus who can and does do what I need in order to have things set right in my life. Amen.*

## WEDNESDAY: GALATIANS 5.17

*For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.*

- What a basic but profound teaching from Paul! It helps to admit that we live in tension. It helps to admit that we don't have it all figured out on our own. On our own, we would choose the way of the flesh and do whatever we want. We would follow our arrow, we would go our own way. The good news is that when we follow Jesus, the desires of our heart can change and align with the Spirit of God. **Are you able to discern the difference between the desires of the flesh and the direction of the Spirit? What helps you to notice the difference?**
- *Holy Spirit of God, come and reform my desires that I might pursue your direction in all circumstances. Amen.*

## THURSDAY: PSALM 103.13-18

*As a father has compassion on his children,  
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;*

<sup>14</sup> *for he knows how we are formed,  
he remembers that we are dust.*

<sup>15</sup> *The life of mortals is like grass,  
they flourish like a flower of the field;*

<sup>16</sup> *the wind blows over it and it is gone,  
and its place remembers it no more.*

<sup>17</sup> *But from everlasting to everlasting  
the Lord's love is with those who fear him,  
and his righteousness with their children's children—*

<sup>18</sup> *with those who keep his covenant  
and remember to obey his precepts.*

- Our life on earth is finite. God knows that He formed us from the dust and to dust we shall return. Yet his love remains and he shows compassion for us. His love and compassion led Jesus to the cross and out of the tomb. His love and compassion meet broken “not okay” people and offer us life. **Read this passage again and insert the singular “me” in place of “his children” and so on. How does it feel to claim that this covenant promise is for you?**
- *God, give me strength to remember and obey your way. May my children's children know and receive your compassion. Amen.*

### FRIDAY: 1 PETER 5.5-7

*In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,*

*“God opposes the proud  
but shows favor to the humble.”*

*<sup>6</sup>Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. <sup>7</sup>Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

- We all carry anxiety in different ways. It can drive some of us to over-perform, and it can freeze others of us in our tracks. However we respond to stress and disappointment, God invites us to cast it all on him...*because he cares for us*. It requires a degree of humility to do that, and 1 Peter affirms that God shows favor to us in our humility. **Where in your life are you needing to clothe yourself in humility before others? How is that different from humbling yourself “under God’s mighty hand”?**
- *Humble me, Lord Jesus. May I choose to clothe myself in humility towards others. Come and lift me up. Amen.*

### SATURDAY: ROMANS 8.1-4

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

- This promise of God that was communicated through Paul is at the heart of the Gospel (good news). He had just laid out his own inability to do the things he wants to do and avoid the things that need to be avoided. When you are in Christ, you are free from the law of sin and death. You are free from condemnation. **Have you accepted this promise in Jesus Christ? Have you ever forgotten that promise and assumed that you were once again condemned?**
- *Lord, all I can say is thank you, thank you, thank you for setting me free. Amen.,*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Dive into these three points adapted from Chris Hodges' book *Out of the Cave*.

### 1. Love without Limits. (Romans 8.1-4)

From Pastor Jacob's sermon: *"There is nothing one of my daughters can do that can make her not my daughter. There is nothing you can do where God says that you are not his child. Depression and anxiety lie to us about our connection to God and people. If you stay in the darkness long. Things that are really true will fade and you will think love has limits."*

- Do you live like God's love for you is limitless? What would that look like?
- What relationships in your life reflect this gift from God?

### 2. Acknowledgment without Embarrassment. (1 Peter 5.5-7)

From Pastor Jacob's sermon: *"Paul, (says) I'm at the end of my rope! I've tried everything! Nothing's helping! He (was) just acknowledging. Why? He knows stuff in the light brings power. He's just flipping on light switches."*

- The only way to acknowledge your weaknesses without embarrassment is to have confidence that doing so can lead to light switches coming on. Which of your relationships allow for vulnerability and risk? Which ones do not feel safe enough to acknowledge your own weaknesses? How are these relationships different?

### 3. Compassionate Care without Compromise.

From Pastor Jacob's sermon: *"Compassionate Care Without Compromise means you can care for yourself but you don't compromise that this is not your final landing place. You are moving to a good and more peaceful place. You can see how this applies to loving someone close to you dealing with mental health issues. You offer all the compassionate care, but you don't compromise that we are headed to a better place. This is what Jesus does, he fully acknowledges the broken place we are in, no condemnation, but sets us free from the law of sin and death. If you are helping your child - love with no limits, acknowledge without embarrassment. I think the generation parenting right now is really good at this. You let your kids share and your kids know they can share, and compassionate care without compromise which means you are caring, but not compromising that you are going to help them get to healing."*

- Compassionate Care is not the same as complacency. Instead, it's full of expectancy. What are some examples of compassionate care **with** compromise (where there is no thought of moving forward?). What are some examples of compassionate care without compromise?