


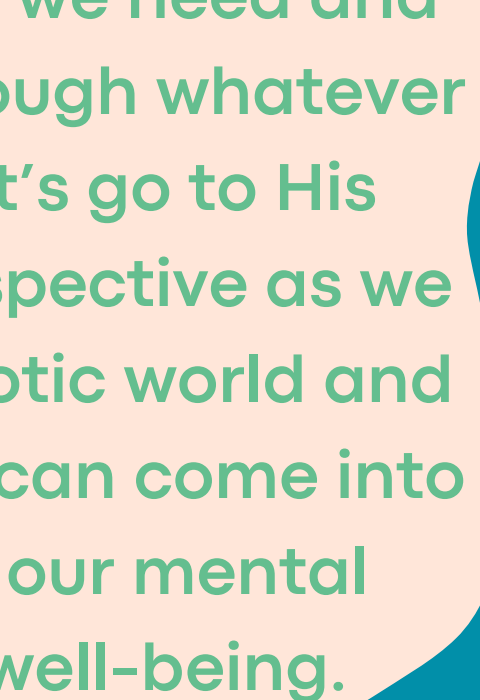
A 5-Week Bible Study on
Exploring
Mental Health
& Faith
with Your Children

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Mental health is something that so many of us struggle with in our very fast-paced world. We now know that with the rise of technology, there has also been an increase in the incidence of mental illness in youth.

Thankfully, as we all struggle to navigate this new technology-filled world, God knows what we need and is faithful to help us through whatever struggles we face. Let's go to His Word for hope and perspective as we each navigate this chaotic world and all the hard things that can come into our lives that impact our mental health and physical well-being.




Week 1: ***God Is a God of Peace***

*You will keep in perfect peace
those whose minds are steadfast,
because they trust in you.*


- Isaiah 26:3

It's important for us to remember that God is a giver of peace. When we experience fear, anxiety, depression, or panic, we are struggling with the chaos that is a result of being separated from God's perfect kingdom. The good news is this is not our home and God is preparing a forever home for us in which no tears will be shed and fear will not be a part of our existence. The best is yet to come!





Sometimes those hard feelings come because our bodies are unwell and we need the help of doctors to learn new skills and give our minds the right tools it needs to guard against the extremes of mental illness. Other times we need to be reminded that God is strong and promises to protect us like a shield (Psalm 5:12). When we find ourselves in bed afraid of the future we can trust God promises to be with us each and every day that lies ahead of us. God wants us to be able to walk with him free of fear, extreme sadness, hopelessness, loneliness, shame, and more. He keeps us in perfect peace when we trust him in our lives.



Week 1 Prayer

God, we thank you that you are a God of peace. You desire for us to be brave and trust you with the future. Give us the tools we need to push back against the chaos of this world that works to make us feel unsafe and unwell. Show us the skills we need to grow and help us find the right support for our bodies that we need to feel peaceful. When those hard feelings come into our minds, remind us through your Holy Spirit that you protect us like a shield! You are always with us and we never have to face a new day without you. Keep us in perfect peace and help us to trust you! Amen



Week 2: Our Feelings Are Safe with Him

*Throw all your anxiety onto him,
because he cares about you.*


- 1 Peter 5:7

God is a safe place for ALL of our feelings.

He understands what it is to be human. To cry. To be afraid. To wish things went a different way. To be disappointed. To forgive. To love. To die. And all the other crazy complex feelings we humans have to navigate.

There is no feeling too big or too scary for Jesus! He walked in our shoes and he felt what it is to be human. We don't have to be ashamed of those dark moments when our minds and bodies struggle to feel his peace. What we can do is bring those heavy and hard emotions to God through prayer. He is always ready and willing to listen to us.






The beautiful thing is that when we share with God what is on our minds and hearts he promises to provide for us his comforting Holy Spirit to help us as we process those tough emotions.

John 14:26 Amplified version says, “But the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthenener, Standby), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name [in My place, to represent Me and act on My behalf], He will teach you all things. And He will help you remember everything that I have told you.”

We have God’s power available to us anytime we need it! You don’t have to feel trapped, alone, or ashamed of being a person who feels many emotions day-to-day. What you can feel is seen, strengthened, stood by, and understood as you cast your cares onto the Lord.



Week 2 Prayer

Jesus, we thank you that you know what it is to be human! While on Earth you wept for the loss of a friend, sweat out blood due to the great grief and fear you felt as you prepared to go to the cross, and you felt all that it is to be a person. We thank you that you are a safe place we can go when our minds and bodies are struggling to feel safe and well. You welcome our cries and meet us with your comforting Holy Spirit. Give us strength, hope, peace, and joy when we need it.

Amen.



Week 3: ***God Heals Us***


*He heals the brokenhearted and
binds up their wounds.*

- Psalm 147:3

When we experience something really hard, it's easy to feel hopeless because our bodies have trouble recovering from those super heavy circumstances.


In our home, two of our beautiful kids have joined our family through foster care and adoption. That means that some really tough and sad things happened in their lives making it necessary for them to leave their first families and come into our family.





Maybe you or someone you know has also gone through those kinds of terrible, never should have been this way, kinds of things, and you're having a hard time feeling God's peace because you've been through a lot of chaos. This is a common struggle for all people when we've seen and felt deep sadness.

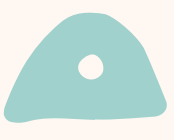
The good news is that God can turn all those things into something beautiful. The Bible tells us that he sees those who have experienced heartbreak, and he comes to take care of our wounds. He doesn't minimize our losses, he doesn't tell us that we should have never gotten hurt in the first place, and he doesn't get upset with us for being upset. Instead, he comes to our side, just like a nurse with a bandage, and patiently tends to our wounds. The good thing is that wounds that are cared for heal. God is our great healer and no bad thing is bigger than God's goodness.





Week 3 Prayer

*God, we thank you that
you are the healer we and
those we love need. There
is no bad thing that is
greater than your
goodness and grace. We
invite your grace to re-
write our stories, heal our
broken hearts, and make
beauty out of our ashes.
Amen.*




Week 4: ***God Loves Us***

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

- Romans 5:8


Many times we feel these tough feelings because we struggle to really know with certainty that God loves us and has good plans for our lives. It's easy to feel afraid, discouraged, depressed, or isolated when we feel like God has forgotten us. Oftentimes the enemy of our souls wants to convince us that God is not really for us and that we are truly alone in this scary world.

The reality is that we are daily in need of God in order to have the wisdom required to make choices that bring us closer to the good and beautiful things God has made.



Sometimes things around us want to pull us away from God and make us feel like only the dark things have power over us but that is a lie. God is greater than the darkness. We have to hold tight to his loving arms everyday and he will give us what we need to overcome the trials that come our way in this life.

He loves us. He loved us before we decided to let him into our hearts and make him our God. He loves us when we do bad things, when we do good things, when we are afraid, and when we are glad. He gave up his life so that the bad things in this world would not have the final say! We can never be separated from his love. Remember that next time the hard feelings try to make you believe that you are alone. You are never alone and are always loved.



Week 4 Prayer

Father, we thank you that you love us! You sent your Son to die for us while we were yet sinners. Your love is unconditional and we can never, ever be separated from your love. Help us to remember to cling to you when the darkness creeps into our lives. We say no to the lie that wants us to believe we are alone and unseen. Help us stand firm on the truth that we are your child, loved, chosen, and seen. Thank you for loving us well. Amen.



Week 5: **God Forgives and** **Helps Us Say Sorry**




If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- 1 John 1:9


Here is the deal, when our brains and bodies are unwell we often struggle to always act and react in the ways God would like us to. Fear, sadness, trauma, and other mental struggles can cause us to be mean to others, to make mistakes, and to drift away from God's best from our lives.

The good news is that God is faithful to forgive our sins when we confess them to Him. God also gives us the strength and courage to say sorry to others when we know we've hurt them in some way.



He is the God of second, third, fourth, and one-hundredth chances. He never gives up on us and we are never too broken for him to be able to forgive us and mend the story of our lives.

Don't let shame over how you reacted or anger over how someone else made you feel when they were mentally unwell keep you stuck. Hand those mistakes over to Jesus and ask him to give you a fresh start. Ask Him to show you how to live in a more healthy way and to give you the strength to forgive when you've been hurt. We all need so much grace in this life! Thankfully God is grace and we never have to feel like we need to force him to give us the thing he loves to give us.



Week 5 Prayer

*Father, your forgiveness is such a gift! Let us not be too proud to ask for your forgiveness, to say sorry, and to forgive those who may have hurt us. Set us free from unhealthy patterns that may cause us to not love others around us well. Show us how to start fresh with you, washed clean by your blood. Let us grab onto your grace every day.
Amen.*



Amanda Idleman is a writer whose passion is to encourage others to live joyfully. She writes devotions for My Daily Bible Verse Devotional and Podcast, Crosswalk Couples Devotional, the Daily Devotional App, she has work published with Her View from Home, on the MOPS Blog, and is a regular contributor for [Crosswalk.com](https://www.crosswalk.com). She has most recently published a devotional, [Comfort: A 30 Day Devotional Exploring God's Heart of Love for Mommas](#). You can find out more about Amanda on her [Facebook Page](#) or follow her on [Instagram](#).