



Week 1: *Depression, Anxiety, & Community*

Week 2: **Schizophrenia and the Role of Family**

Week 3: *Holistic Living, with Danielle Strickland*

Week 4: *Q & A with Nina Cavey and Matt Kerr*

APPETIZER: Sylvia's Story

- 27% of Canadians said they would be fearful of being around someone who suffers from serious mental illness.
- Schizophrenia affects approx. 0.7% of every population globally. That's about 1 in every 150 people.
- Schizophrenia is characterized by hallucinations (hearing voices or seeing things that are not there) and delusions (fixed, false beliefs).
- Stigma, discrimination, and violation of human rights of people with schizophrenia is common.
- People with schizophrenia often also struggle with social connection, meaningful employment, financial stability, and health concerns.
- Schizophrenia is treatable through medicines and psychosocial support.
(Information from C.A.M.H., W.H.O. and Royal College of Psychiatrists)

Sylvia and her husband, Chris, live in Brampton, Ontario. She developed schizophrenia as a teenager. She hears voices – often loud, always negative, often aggressive. It never stops. Sylvia lives a good and loving life with the help of therapy, medication, friends, and most importantly, supportive friends and family (at home and at church). Sylvia not only *lives* with mental illness, she *loves* others intentionally. Her message to us: don't give up inviting and including people on the margins, even when they don't, won't, or can't respond.

DINE IN: The Upside-Down Kingdom

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

God's answer to Paul's prayer:

1. Unconditional acceptance (Embrace apart from performance)
2. Divine energy in and through vulnerability

1 Corinthians 1:25-31; 12:21-27

Romans 8:28

1 Corinthians 15:10; Philippians 4:13; Colossians 1:27-29

TAKE OUT: A Community of the Weak

TWO RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHURCHES:

1. Community religious groups can serve as places of sanctuary where persons with psychotic illnesses will be protected from stigma and discrimination.
2. Community religious groups can provide safe communities and social networks for persons with psychotic illnesses, thereby combatting loneliness and social isolation.

Community Mental Health Journal (Griffith, Myers, & Compton, 2016)

God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are.

~ The Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 1:25-31)

Our thanks to Sylvia Burnham for sharing with us this week!

Home Church Questions

HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. After reviewing Sunday's teaching, talk about what most stood out to you, new thoughts, lessons learned, or lingering questions.

HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

2. Read **2 Corinthians 12:1-10**.
 - a. Which point in this passage spoke to you the most? How did it affect you?
 - b. Paul claims to have had a heavenly experience, although he won't tell us the details. It is a personal experience for him. How do you think we should relate to modern, "I went to heaven and this is what I saw" stories, books, and movies?
 - c. Paul feels "beat up" by his thorn. Is there anything in your life these days that has you feeling the same way?
 - d. What lessons can we learn about prayer from this passage?
 - e. Instead of a secret superpower, what is your secret superweakness? Do you see God's strength operating through this? If so, how?
 - f. How do the following passages contribute to this discussion? Identify one way each passage supports or enhances our understanding of how God's strength works through our weakness: **1 Corinthians 1:25-31; 12:21-27**.

HUDDLE [Making it Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

3. Take time to meditate on Jesus' words in **verse 9**. After a few quiet minutes, feel free (but not pressured) to share anything God may be saying to you. (If time permits, repeat the same exercise for **Romans 8:28**.)