

Encounter Church
Sunday August 27, 2023

Poison Control
Overcoming Toxic Stress and Anxiety

Anxiety is your body's natural response to stress. It's a feeling of fear or apprehension about what's to come.

Some signs of anxiety. A sense of doom. Panic attacks. Depression. Headaches. Irritability. Breathing problems. Pounding heart. Upset stomach. Extreme fatigue. Increase in blood pressure. Muscle ache and other pain. Chest pain. Insomnia. Social isolation.

WHAT IS STRESS? Stress can be defined as a state of worry or mental tension.

Stress affects both the mind and the body. Too much stress can cause physical and mental health problems.

Stress makes it hard for us to relax and can come with a range of emotions, including anxiety and irritability.

When stressed, we may find it difficult to concentrate. We may experience headaches or other body pains, an upset stomach or trouble sleeping.

We may find we lose our appetite or eat more than usual.

Chronic stress can worsen pre-existing health problems and may increase our desire to self medicate.

55% of Americans live with stress everyday.

More than 1 in 4 adults reported anticipating more stress at the start of 2023.

Three-quarters of adults say their stress levels have increased over the past year and that they have experienced health impacts due to stress.

The studies agree that stress levels are up.

Stress and Anxiety are toxic to your spirit, soul and body!

1 Thessalonians 5:23- “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you through and through [that is, separate you from profane and vulgar things, make you pure and whole and undamaged—consecrated to Him—set apart for His purpose]; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept complete and [be found] blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

3 John 1:2- “Beloved friend, I pray that you are prospering in every way and that you continually enjoy good health, just as your soul is prospering.”

LAST MONDAY (August 21) in early morning prayer I heard this in my spirit.

“I don’t think God is as anxious as I am!” That led to the next statement in my spirit.

“Be careful of self-inflicted stress and anxiety!”

Philippians 4:6-7- “Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”

So many times we stop right here and we put all the responsibility on God for taking care of our stress and anxiety!

CERTAINLY IT BEGINS WITH GOD!

Matthew 6:33-34- “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

It begins with God but we also need to participate with God! We need to do our part in managing our life in a healthy way!

IT’S CALLED STEWARDSHIP! IT BEGINS WITH GOD!

Genesis 1:1- “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

God is the absolute owner of everything!

Stewardship- ***“Managing everything God has entrusted to me for His glory!”***

My relationships. My time. My possessions. My calling. My money. My work. My sleep.

In every one of these areas we need MARGIN! As the manager of my life I need margin in every area!

WHAT IS MARGIN?

Margin can be defined as the space between our load and our limits. It's the breathing room we all need in our lives.

It's the buffer between where you are on your rope, and the end of your rope. When a person has margin in their life, they can weather the storm.

They can get pushed toward the end of their rope, but still have enough left at the end to hang on.

But when a person is at the end of their rope, they have no margin. One little thing can push them past the edge. And they fall. Hard.

WITHOUT MARGIN IN OUR LIFE WE WILL HAVE SELF-INFLICTED STRESS AND ANXIETY!

WITHOUT MARGIN WE CAN NEVER REALLY GIVE OUR BEST TO WHAT GOD HAS BLESSED US WITH!

WITHOUT MARGIN WE WILL BE UNHEALTHY WHEN GOD WANTS TO GIVE US HEALTH!

TWO SPECIFIC AREAS I BELIEVE GOD WANTS US TO TALK ABOUT TODAY:

1. Time

Some of us might be saying that yes we need to manage our time a little better. But we all have 24 hours in a day.

What need to manage is our priorities! When it comes to your time what takes priority?

GOD FIRST! Remember this is where it starts!

If you will put God first everyday He will help you with the rest of the day!

The rest of my day is going to flow out of my relationship with God!

Ephesians 5:16- "making the very most of your time [on earth, recognizing and taking advantage of each opportunity and using it with wisdom and diligence], because the days are [filled with] evil."

WHAT AM I DOING WITH MY TIME? DO I HAVE MARGIN IN MY TIME?

Psalm 127:2- "It really is senseless to work so hard from early morning till late at night,

toiling to make a living for fear of not having enough. God can provide for his devoted lovers even while they sleep!"

Are you building margin into your time at work?

Are you taking a day off to rest? The Bible calls it a "sabbath!"

Mark 6:30-32- "The apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry tour and told him all they had done and taught. Then Jesus said, "Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile." He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat. So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone."

Even Jesus had margin in his time!

2. Finances

Again, GOD FIRST! 90% with God's blessing goes much further than 100% without God's blessing!

Malachi 3:10-11- "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the Lord of hosts;"

BUT AM I LEAVING MARGIN IN MY FINANCES?

Proverbs 21:20- "There is precious treasure and oil in the house of the wise [who prepare for the future], But a short-sighted and foolish man swallows it up and wastes it."

If your income increases does your spending increase as well?

Are you at the end of your rope in your finances or have you left margin there in managing your money.

DOES GOD REALLY CARE HOW I MANAGE MY MONEY?

Luke 16:10-12- ""If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?"

It matters to God how we manage our finances!

Hebrews 13:5- “Don’t be obsessed with money but live content with what you have, for you always have God’s presence. For hasn’t he promised you, “I will never leave you, never! And I will not loosen my grip on your life!”

The number one cause of stress and anxiety in America is finances!

BUT IT DOESN’T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY.

Live with margin in your finances!

Live with margin in your time!

Let’s do our part to end self-inflicted stress and anxiety!

CONCLUSION: Remember I said it all starts with with? Well it ends with God as well.

Matthew 11:28-30- “Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this message?

Has there been any self-inflicted stress and anxiety?