

Sermon Notes

The crazy thing is, we experience stress and anxiety in so many areas of our lives that we often don't even notice it.

What are the warning signs when it comes to anxiety?

Every person is different, so it's not always easy to recognize the warning signs of anxiety.

Stress is our body and mind's response to certain situations in life.

When our thoughts or the situations in our lives make us feel frustrated, nervous, worried, or angry, our bodies and minds react. That's stress!

Stress is not always negative! Stress can be both positive and negative.

Stress is usually short-term and a reaction to something specific in our lives.

When the stressful moment is over or the situation is resolved, typically the stress goes away for the time being.

Anxiety is an overwhelming feeling of worry, unease, or fear that tends to hang around.

Anxiety generally affects us only negatively and continues after the stressful situation is no longer there. Anxiety tends to linger.

Anxiety is a consistent feeling of worry, fear, or nervousness that can interfere with the way we live our everyday lives.

When a person has anxiety, it's a feeling that leaves them overwhelmed and worried for long periods of time.

O' God, have mercy on me, for people are hounding me. My foes attack me all day long. I am constantly hounded by those who slander me, and many are boldly attacking me. (Psalm 56:1-2 NLT).

David names the thing that is stressing him out.

Feeling stressed? Overwhelmed? Anxious? Name it.

But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. I praise God for what He has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? (Psalm 56:3-4 NLT).

David's circumstances don't change, but his focus does. His situation doesn't shift, but his perspective does.

Name what, why, and who.

We can trust God no matter how we feel or where we find ourselves.

We can practice breaking the cycle of anxiety by choosing to trust God.

While anxiety can be a powerful force in our lives, God is even more powerful.

God gives us the tools to handle anxiety.

We can trust God to give us the tools we need to handle our own anxiety or to support others who are experiencing those feelings.

YOU are one of the tools God provides to help others handle stress and anxiety.

Five ways you can be there for someone you care about:

1. Be someone they can go to and trust.
2. Listen more than you talk.
3. You don't have to fix their feelings.
4. Celebrate their successes!
5. Encourage them to talk to other encouraging people.

How do you navigate feelings of stress and anxiety?

1. Identify your feelings.
2. Focus on trusting God.
3. Seek out tools God gives us.

Ideas or tools you can use:

1. Care for yourself.
2. Talk to someone.
3. Remember what's true.

God gives us the tools to handle anxiety.

There is hope. When we put out trust in God and use the tools He's given us, we can find ways to move forward. God gives us the tools to handle anxiety in our own lives and the tools to support others.

What's one tool I can use to handle my stress or anxiety or to support others who are experiencing those feelings?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the most stressful area of your life right now?
2. What is the difference between **stress** and **anxiety**?
3. What do you typically do when you feel stressed or anxious?
4. How have you seen anxiety turn into something that hurts you or someone you know?
5. How can knowing that you aren't alone in your particular struggle help you deal with it?
6. Read Psalm 56:3-4. What are the things that feel true in a stressful or anxious time that aren't? What are the things that are true about God no matter what we are experiencing inside or outside?
7. Read Philippians 4:6-7. Paul challenges us to pray and be thankful when we feel anxious. How can these two things help?
8. What's one thing you can start doing next time you feel anxious or stressed to help you cope with it better?