

November 3, 2019
UNDER PRESSURE – Part 3
“What’s Behind Our Anxiety”

Stress is our *body’s* reaction to some sort of trigger, and it often leads to what’s been called the fight or flight or freeze responses.

Anxiety is an *emotional* response to triggers like stress and fear, and is characterized by feelings of tension, worry and loss of control.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV11): “⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Since anxiety is an emotional response, it’s often not the main issue but a *symptom* of some deeper issue in our lives.

Some stresses that lead to anxiety are things that happen *to us*, and they’re beyond our control, while others are the result of choices *we make* or relationship issues with others.

1 Peter 5:7 (NLT): “Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.”

Deeper issues are often the result of *sin* operating in us, that we try to bury or deny or numb or minimize or avoid.

One result of this sin is *guilt*, which often leads to anxiety as we try to cover and hide and blame others.

Genesis 3:7-8 (ESV): “⁷Then the eyes of [Adam and Eve] were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. ⁸And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.”

Genesis 3:12-13 (ESV): “¹²The man said, ‘The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.’ ¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What is this that you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”

Psalms 32:3-4 (NLT): “³When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. ⁴Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.”

Rather than confess our sin, some of us try to control every aspect of our lives.

Acts 8:3 (The Message): “And Saul just went wild, devastating the church, entering house after house after house, dragging men and women off to jail.”

Philippians 3:4-6 (NLT): “⁴...I could have confidence in my own effort if anyone could. Indeed, if others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more! ⁵I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin – a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. ⁶I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault.”

Philippians 3:7 (NLT): “I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done.”

Paul traded his own efforts to control his life and be perfect for Christ’s perfect life, giving control to him, and in doing so, he discovered he was forgiven and his relationship with God was made right so he could be himself, eliminating his guilt and reducing his anxiety.

Philippians 3:8-9 (NLT): “⁸Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ ⁹and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God’s way of making us right with himself depends on faith.”

Philippians 3:13-14 (TLB): “¹³...I am still not all I should be, but I am bringing all my energies to bear on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God is calling us up to heaven because of what Christ Jesus did for us.”

We have to keep remembering all God has done for us through Jesus Christ, and we do that by using all the means of grace that God has provided us.

Titus 2:11,15 (The Message): “¹¹God’s readiness to give and forgive is now public. Salvation’s available for everyone! ... ¹⁵Tell them all this. Build up their courage....”

Someday we’ll all stand before Jesus and give an account of our lives, everything we did, and were it not for his grace, we’d be in big trouble!

John 1:29 (NLT): "...John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'"

Jesus took my sins upon himself, so I don't have to bear them anymore.

Philippians 3:3 (NLT): "...We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us. We put no confidence in human effort"

Next Week - Under Pressure: The Need for Margin

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