



Stress Less This Holiday Season – Message 3

Announcements

- **Small Group Break** // Dec 8-Jan 11 // Small group lessons will not be available during the break.
- **Above The Noise** // Starting Jan 12&13 // Go to ChurchoftheKing.com/abovethenoise and tell us if you plan to host a group during the 2019 Community Series. Avoid a call from us. ☺
- **Christmas Eve Services**// December 22-24 // Go to churchoftheking.com/christmas.

Warm-up

- Share something that just thinking about triggers stress in you?
- What do you find (or used to find) most stressful about the Holiday season?

Overview

Learn the truths about stress and the biblical keys to overcome stress during any season of life.

Word and Application

Over the last two weeks of this series, we shared how to travel light by taking God's perspective and how to allow the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of peace despite challenging circumstances. Today, we are going to learn some practical steps from The Counselor Jesus on how to overcome stress.

- Let's start by defining stress. Stress is the pressures of life and how one perceives, believes, reacts, and copes with these pressures. In other terms, *stress is what you and I feel when we become aware of the gap between our expectations and our reality.*
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rank your overall stress level, 1 being low and 10 being high? Is worry something that causes a lot of stress in your life? How about overcommitting? What do you find to be the *primary* cause of stress in your life?

Stress: 3 Basic Truths

Read the three basic truths about stress below. Share specific examples that support these statements.

1. Not all stress is harmful.
2. Too much stress is harmful.
3. What you perceive to be stressful to you...is

The Bible contains numerous scriptures that address the worry and anxiety that, if allowed, can be brought on by stress. **Read Proverbs 12:25, Philippians 4:6-7, Matthew 6:25-34, and Luke 10:41-42.**

God made us uniquely and we respond differently to levels of stress. What behavioral indicators or reactions do you display when you are anxious or under a lot of stress?

Managing Stress: 4 Things You Need to Know

1. Know Your Audience

- **Read John 6:38, John 8:15-16, John 17:4, and Matthew 6:33.** According to these scripture verses, our purpose on earth is to please and do the will of the Father, rather than ourselves.
- When you think about the stress in your life, how much of it do you think comes from not having the right priorities in the right order? Do you think that seeking God first, above everything else, would decrease stress?

2. Know Your Mission

- **Read John 17:8, John 8:14, and John 16:28.**
- Knowing your mission and goal in life is a practical key to overcoming stress. How can discovering your purpose and mission decrease anxiety in you? Share how you can apply this principle in your life.

3. Know When to Rest

- Learning to live with healthy life rhythms and patterns is key. Kerri Weem's book "Rhythms of Grace" is a great book on pacing yourself with God's tempo for your life.
- **Read Luke 5:16, Matthew 14:23, Mark 6:31, Matthew 14:13, and John 6:1.**
- Why is important for you to create routine moments of "drawing aside" as Jesus did? How can you build intentional moments of rest in your life? What would that look like?

4. Know Your Lifeline

- Staying connected with God through daily devotional time is a habit that is essential to our growth in Christ. It also helps us to reduce stress in our lives.
- **Read Psalm 55:22, 1 Samuel 30:6, and Luke 12:30-32.** What do you need to do to strengthen your lifeline with the Lord? Give one action step you can take toward this today.

Life Challenge

Identify a recent experience when you responded negatively to stress. Using today's lesson, how could you avoid this in the future? Because of this message, what will you do differently with regards to managing stress in your life?

Prayer

Father, I commit to prioritizing my life so that I seek you first above all else. Reveal to me things I need to remove that may cause unnecessary stress to me or my family. Show me how to live for you and overcome anxiety, worry, and stress. Pray for the specific needs of your group.