

Speaker : Senior Pastor Prince Guneratnam

Title : Stress Begins with the Inner Man

Introduction:

- God plans that we grow strong and overcome challenges of life that cause stress
- But God's plans are opposite of man's

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD” (Isaiah 55:8).

- Man is a trichotomy – body, soul and spirit
- Man puts the body first

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

- Man puts priority on the outward man, more world-conscious. Natural rather than spiritual. Therefore, stress gets better of man
- Stress is the main contributor to heart problems, cancer, lung diseases and even suicide according to Time Magazine (1983 issue).

The magazine further gives points to certain challenges in life – if one experiences:-

1.	A lost of a loved one	100 points
2.	Retrenched from a job	47 points
3.	Having a baby	39 points
4.	Vacation	13 points
5.	Christmas	12 points

If you reach 200 points in total, you are in danger of heart problems and etc.

- God's plan to handle stress will make us grow and be strong

Lessons From The Life Of Paul

- Paul had stress

“23 ...I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness — 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches” (2 Corinthians 11:23-28).

- Paul did not die prematurely

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

- Paul’s secret

- He lived “inside out”. He lived the Bible way – spirit, soul and body.
- He took care of the spiritual man first and the body or the natural man was able to handle life.

“7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4: 16-18).

What We Need To Know

- Paul lived in the light of eternity

This body is perishable. Paul looked forward to an immortal body

“50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

- Paul lived in God’s perspective of life (God’s economy)

“7 But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

- God sees and values the inner man.
- Man sees the outer man.

- Paul considered time spent building the inward man not a waste of time

Conclusion

How to build the inward man

- Feed on God’s Word

“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food” (Hebrews 5:12)

- Hear it through preaching and teaching
- Read the Word
- Study and memorize the Word
- Meditate on the Word

- Fellowship with God through prayer and worship

- Attend church

“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25).

- Christian fellowship

“14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” 17 Therefore “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.” 18 “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

- Discipline the body

“12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (Romans 6:12, 13).

“20 My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. 21 Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; 22 For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh. 23 Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:20-23).

“For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man” (Romans 7:22).