

My sister had a severe heart attack last Monday after accompanying a dear friend to the ER where her friend's daughter was being treated after being brutally beaten by her ex-husband and his new wife.

Stress cardiomyopathy starts abruptly and unpredictably, with symptoms of chest pain and, often, shortness of breath, usually triggered by an emotionally or physically stressful event, and with a predilection for women older than 50 years of age (only 10% in men).

This condition can occur following a variety of emotional stressors such as grief (e.g. death of a loved one), fear, extreme anger, and surprise. It can also occur following numerous physical stressors to the body such as stroke, seizure, difficulty breathing (such as a flare of asthma or emphysema), or significant bleeding

Broken Heart Syndrome

"The first several patients we saw, many of them had [just experienced] the death of a loved one, a spouse, a parent. Some people started having symptoms at a funeral".

But other patients had just gone through a trauma like a car accident or a mugging. Another woman landed in the intensive care unit on her 60th birthday after being startled by well-wishers shouting "Surprise!"

Perhaps one of the most difficult of all of God's commands is to cast all our burdens on the Lord (1Pet 5.7).

Some of us deal with stress better than others but we need to listen to our Lord as we deal with stress and anxiety.

Matt 6:25 "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing? 26 "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?

27 "And which of you by being
anxious can add a single cubit to his
life's span? 28" And why are you
anxious about clothing? Observe
how the lilies of the field grow; they
do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I
say to you that even Solomon in all
his glory did not clothe himself like
one of these.

30 "But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith? 31 "Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?'

Mat 11:28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. (29) "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. (30) "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

A little bit of worry is sometimes valuable –
we call that care or concern.

2Co 11:28 Apart from such external things,
there is the daily pressure upon me of concern
for all the churches.

Php 2:20 For I have no one else of kindred
spirit who will genuinely be concerned for
your welfare.

Too much anxiety builds stress and causes a multitude of physical illnesses – high blood pressure, ulcers, insomnia – or perhaps just nail biting.

Pro 12:25 Anxiety in the heart of a man weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad.

As Jesus called the Jews to repent,
He advised them about their
anxieties.

Mt 6.34 "Therefore do not be
anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow
will care for itself. Each day has
enough trouble of its own.

Food, clothing and shelter have been promised to those who seek His kingdom and His righteousness. We don't have to be overly concerned about these things, but we will have to do our part in obtaining them.

2Th 3:10 For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat.

We have to draw a distinction between what we can control and what we can't control. God wants us to plan our lives but He doesn't want us to worry about things that are beyond our control.

On planning, Jesus asks in Luke
14:28 "For which one of you,
when he wants to build a tower,
does not first sit down and
calculate the cost, to see if he has
enough to complete it?"

Jesus continues about planning,
Luke 14:31 "Or what king, when
he sets out to meet another king
in battle, will not first sit down
and take counsel whether he is
strong enough with ten thousand
men to encounter the one coming
against him with twenty
thousand?

As Jesus points out, we must carefully consider every aspect of our lives and for those things over which we have control, we must plan in order to be good Christians.

What about things over which we have no control? Have you thought about what you would do in a great disaster, whether from the destruction of things around you, the death of a loved one or from physical illness?

In listening to the planning that's going into preparing for a hurricane or some other dread event, some think -- couldn't more have been done to prevent the despair in the present disaster. You might think that everyone should have their own personal plan for what would happen if they got cancer, but there are some things that might happen to us for which we simply cannot plan.

That's when we must lay our cares on the Lord

Tornadoes, hurricanes, forest
fires, typhoons, earthquakes,
terrific snow storms?

If you live in an area prone to one
of these, you know to take steps
to survive.

Phil 4:6 Be anxious for nothing,
but in everything by prayer and
supplication with thanksgiving let
your requests be made known to
God.

However, we do have to be
careful in our requests.

James 4:1 What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

Worry and stress cause more disease than any other single factor. That would mean that Jesus' comments on anxiety are unquestionably the greatest prescription for our health the world has ever known.

1 Pet 5:7 casting all your anxiety
upon Him, because He cares for
you.

1Pe 5:7 Casting all your care
upon him; for he careth for you.

Perhaps you have someone you trust completely. Even they may let you down. We have but one friend who will never fail us.

Heb 13:6 so that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What shall man do to me?"

We must realize that we will go beyond the toil and trouble of this life. While here, we serve the Lord with patience, but in that land beyond the river, all tears, sorrows and worries will be wiped away.

So we really have only one thing
to worry about.

Rev 21:6 And He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7 "He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.

We clearly have to be concerned about our relationship with God.

All other things fall in the category of plan, but don't worry.

Have you become a child of God?

Col 2:10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; (11) and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; (12) having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.