



Enough is our Concordia University Texas theme for the 2023-2024 academic year.

CONNECT

with self and others:

- 1. Share a time when you had toxic thoughts. What were they?
- 2. How do you deal with those thoughts?
- 3. How can God help us combat those thoughts? What does he tell us?

NOTES: _____

ENGAGE

the word:

These past two weeks, we have been working through the book The 4 Habits of Finding Joy-Filled People by Marcus Warner and Chris Coursey. This week, we focus on the final part of the book: 'Attacking Toxic Thoughts - Habit #4.'

What are toxic thoughts? How can we handle them? What does the Bible say about toxic thoughts? These are all questions that came to my mind when I was reading through Habit #4

The bottom line is this, when something good or bad happens to us, we automatically turn to the worst. We usually turn to anger or big emotions even if the event is not worth those big emotions. We get ANTS: Automatic Negative Thoughts. ANTS are the flood of thoughts that we feel during big emotions. How can we handle them? We need to be anteaters. God invites us to combat those thoughts, to fight through them, and allow us to find this sense of security in our emotions and control of our thoughts.

READ
Ephesians 6: 16-20 (ESV)



¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

- Ephesians 6: 16-20 (ESV)

NOTES: _____

Sometimes, the things that are going on in our minds may seem unwinnable. However, those thoughts may have a deeper spiritual meaning. But to fight a spiritual battle, you may need spiritual strategies.

Whenever toxic thoughts are running through your head, I want you to ask yourself these two questions:

1. What lie is the Devil trying to get me to believe today?
 - My sin is unforgivable.
 - I am not loved by anyone.
 - My worth is in my secular status.
2. What is the truth God wants me to hold on to instead?
 - I am forgiven.
 - God will always love me.
 - My worth is constant through Jesus.

The Devil can never take away the truth that Jesus came down from heaven to defeat death for you. As we go throughout this semester, let us remind each other that these are the profound truths.

READ
Matthew 4: 1-11

Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

⁴ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted^[a] by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'^[b]"

⁵ Then the Devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'^[c]"

⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'^[d]"

⁸ Again, the Devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'^[e]"

¹¹ Then the Devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

QUESTIONS:

1. How was God tempted by the Devil?
2. How does the Devil tempt you?
3. How did Jesus resist the temptations? And what does that then mean for your life of attacking toxic thoughts?

SHARE

apply to your life:

Identify toxic motivators:

When we turn to emotions other than joy, these emotions can influence our decision making and behaviors. You're going to look at possible replacements for these motivators and explore how Joy and desire-driven motivators could look.

I use _(emotion)_ to motivate me or others. Instead of _(emotion)_, I can use joy in this way:

- a. Sadness
- b. Anxiety and fear
- c. Disgust
- d. Shame
- e. Anger
- f. Despair and hopelessness
- g. The threat of loss and attachment pain

1. When was a time you recovered from an upset or big emotional event?

2. Share your thoughts or discoveries from this. resonates with you?

PRAYER:

Dear God, thank You for every time You have forgiven me. You have saved me from my own thoughts that might have gone against Yours. Please lead me in a direction that follows You and Your word. Lead me through the waters to safety and to a joy-filled life built around You. Amen.

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