



the message connect

The Message Connect is a devotion that goes deeper into Sunday morning's message, intentionally connecting it to our lives throughout the week. Through a 15-20 minute video and discussion guide, we challenge everyone to go deeper in their faith because we believe growing people change for God's glory and their God-honoring life purpose.

WEEK ONE: ANXIETY

Go online to ringgoldchurch.com/themessageconnect to watch this week's Message Connect video.

Key Scriptures:

Lamentations 3:1-24

All of us experience anxiety and depression to some degree. God has some very specific and helpful things to say to us about these issues.

Next Steps:

1. Start Talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

What gives you hope when you are troubled?

2. Start Thinking. Ask a thoughtful question.

What did you learn about God from the message this week?

3. Start Sharing. Here are questions to help you dig deeper into God's Word.

Lamentations 3:2-5; Lamentations 3:17-18; 2 Corinthians 1:8-9: Within society and the church, there is often a stigma applied to people experiencing mental illness in any form.

Why do you believe mental illness is stigmatized more than physical illness, even in the church?

How does knowing about the times of depression Jeremiah, Paul, and Elijah went through challenge your thoughts and feelings about Christians who experience mental illness (or your own experience with it)? Does this encourage you? Explain.

Lamentations 3:21-24; Philippians 4:8. The problem with believing negative self-talk or ruminating on negative things is this: Your mind and emotions can't always be trusted and often change.

If you knew your negative thought patterns were likely to change to more hopeful ones in the future, how would that change the way you feel about your current struggle with anxiety, depression, and any thoughts of suicide?

How does knowing your mind and emotions can't always be trusted impact the way you feel about your situation right now? During stretches of anxiety and depression, in what ways can you focus your thoughts on the things listed in Philippians 4:8?

1 Kings 19:3-7; Proverbs 12:25; 1 Peter 5:7. It is important to take care of our physical bodies and receive support from others. There is no quick fix in the process to improve mental health. We need to have patience with ourselves through the process, while learning to transfer our anxieties over to God.

In the struggle with anxiety and depression, what are some ways you can care for your physical health (sleep, exercise, eating habits, medication, etc.) to positively impact your mental health?

How can you reach out to trusted others (friends, your group, mentors, counselors, therapists, psychologists, etc.) to increase your emotional support network?

How can you give yourself more grace and patience as you walk through anxiety and depression?

What is a way you can transfer some of the weight of your cares over to God?

Remember: Anxiety and depression are a tunnel, not a pit. God will walk us through it and even out of it, but it does take time to heal. Never put a period where God puts a comma.

4. Start Praying. Be bold, and pray with power.

Take some time to pray over identified action steps and life issues. Pray that God would continue to actively grow and mature you in Christ.

5. Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week

What is God saying to you through his word? What are you going to do about it, and when?

For more information about taking the next steps in your faith, visit: ringgoldchurch.com/nextsteps.

LET OUR PASTORS LEAD YOUR DISCUSSION.

Our Pastors have created The Message Connect video for the *Living On The Edge* message series. Go deeper and wider in your faith walk with us by going to ringgoldchurch.com/messageconnect.