The Church and the Health Crisis: Where Did We Miss It? Transcript

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Opening on Faith and the Church's Role

I believe the Church exists primarily to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be a beacon on a hill in the community in which the church lives. So we are to set apart, we're to look different, not in any way, shape, or form because people who choose to follow Jesus are better than those who don't.

Anybody who truly follows Jesus knows that they are the worst of all sinners. and that they need a savior and cannot do this life without him. So if we really allow Jesus to be our savior, and the exchange we get from our generous God is the full deposit of the Holy Spirit, we now have the ability that supersedes human ability to live a life that is lockstep with the design of God.

Welcome to My MD Unscripted, where healthcare gets personal and the script gets tossed. I'm Dr. Clint Carter, ER doctor turned to direct primary care freedom fighters on a mission to challenge how our healthcare system treats patients in America.

In every episode, my expert guests and I dive into real conversations about what's broken and how we can fix it by making healthcare about people, not just managing disease.

It's time to rethink what healthcare should be and Hey guys, welcome back to the My MD Unscripted Podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Clint Carter, and I am excited about today's episode.

This one's going to be a little different than many of our others, but it's really right on point.

Podcast Introduction and Guest Background

with us. Tracy Spiaggia is a health advocate, speaker and founder of Slingshot Health Collective, where she helps individuals and families reclaim their health through a faith-centered lens with a passion for exposing the root cause of chronic disease and restoring personal responsibility, which all makes sense for this show, right?

That's on point. Tracey challenges both individuals, and institutions, especially the church. to rethink what stewardship of the body truly means. This is going to be fun.

Her work sits at the intersection of faith, lifestyle, and truth in a culture where truth is hard to come by. So Tracy, thank you for coming in. Give us a proper introduction of yourself and then answer.

You know, I think the question I want to get us started about is Why do you think the church, of all places, has not led the way in health? And then really, I guess, what makes you thing they should?

So, thanks for coming on. Oh, thank you so much for having me, doctor. I'm really excited about the topic today. So just a little background, I've been a health and wellness enthusiast my whole life, a personal trainer and a running coach and minister to young teen girls.

Started a fitness ministry and maximum security women's prison for about four and half years. Oh wow. And yeah, it was pretty cool. And then as I added in the nutrition piece came into the functional nutrition and lifestyle aspect, I started to coach from that perspective, but began specializing specifically in mental health around moms when one of my dear friends unfortunately took her life in 2007. And that's when I really just said, you know, I'm going to take all of these years of passion and knowledge and aim them at supporting mothers in a meaningful way.

I've been specializing in mental health ever since, and it's been such a blessing when, God puts eyes on the front of our face because we're supposed to live forward-facing lives.

Really, he could have obviously designed our bodies any way that he desired. And we don't have eyes on the back for a reason because we're supposed to be forward-facing creatures, trusting the Lord with the past and being excited about what he's got for us in the future.

But we have to live life forward. We don' get to living in reverse. So it's always that like, you know, Monday morning quarterback perspective where you look at what God's done in your life and how he is equipping you as you go, unbeknownst to you.

members of my family and myself included just, you know, bumping up against some mental health challenges and was able to really powerfully navigate that without the Western system kind of getting their hands on, one of the most important human beings on planet Earth to make.

And so it just has blossomed into just a raging passion of mine. to encourage people, most especially people of faith, to store their bodies as best as they possibly could, given whatever resources are available to them.

You know, our God is a God who takes two pennies and expands that year. We are thousands of years later talking about a poor woman putting two pennies into a plate as an offering to God.

So he's not so concerned or limited, which is kind of a joke to even say out loud, limited by maybe meager resources. All he asks for is our best and then he is a great gap filler.

Unfortunately, the Western medicine model is not really looking at the whole human being.

Why the Church Should Lead in Health

And it's just kind of a churn and burn type system where all symptoms feed up to pharma or surgery pretty much. I'm not saying that those are not interventions that help untold.

thousands, even millions of people, but I wonder how many could have been spared from either adverse side effects. We know that one of the leading causes of death is medical error.

I wondered how much of that could be avoided if we honored the human body as the brilliant design that it is and take a person no matter the symptom and say, let's get curious about who's in front of me.

Let me hear the totality of your story. And let's try to generate this kind of architecture, if you will, to figure out how did you end up here in my office?

What are the contributing factors aside from a blunt trauma or something like that? If somebody shows up with something more lingering or more chronic, the humane thing is to get curious around that and to realize you have something holy in front of you.

This is a human being made in the image of God that has a story to tell. And our current medical model doesn't hold space for that because it's not profitable.

I, you know, so I resonate completely with. much, if not all of that. And the part that I haven't resonated with is I hadn't digested it yet, probably.

The, you know, in our, at our place here, we're direct primary care at Miami select. So we spend time with our patients and it allows us to get a little bit deeper and into the, a, little spiritual health.

We talk about all this stressors and how can we deal with stressor? And it's like, well, I've got some other ideas as well from a spiritual aspect, how to help address that.

We certainly never go into that, just pray harder, have more faith and buckle up. That's very old school Texas bootstrap thinking that got thrown into Christianity.

Ultimately, I have found it to be an incredibly powerful part of helping people really heal. I can't wait to dig into it more. From a practical standpoint, you know, the medical system as we know it, this insurance-based process that's made to fix problems once they have caught fire and just put the fire out, it's not good at prevention, is not at wellness, its not get at wholeness.

It certainly can't address the spiritual side of anyone. I remember in my medical training it was. We were doing, I was on psychology rotation and we were going through, you know, psych wards and everyone was talking about the DSM-4 that is DSN-5 now, but the diagnosis book for psychiatric things.

And I, was like, multiple personality disorder and schizophrenia and all these other things, and it's like those all exist. But like what about like. What's the DSM-IV for demon possession or what's DSm-4 for spiritual oppression and some of that, you know, that we just, we can't address that.

That's a perfect, perfect segue, Doctor, to the topic at hand, is it isn't our medical institution's responsibility. We can't ask them to be a master of all.

So, you know, they have their fantastic, unbelievable lane of restoring human health, but that's exactly where the Church comes in and where The Church has failed us in monumental ways.

I believe The church exists primarily to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. and to be a beacon on a hill in the community in which the church lives. So we are to set apart, we're to look different, not in any way shape or form because people who choose to follow Jesus are better than those who don't.

Anybody who truly follows Jesus knows that they are the worst of all sinners. and that they need a Savior and cannot do this life without Him. So if we really allow Jesus to be our Savior, and the exchange we get from our generous God is the full deposit of the Holy Spirit, we now have the ability that supersedes human ability to live a life that is lockstep with the design of God.

We can't do that without the Holy Spirit doing it in us and through us. And so as we live that way, we ought to be curious to those who have yet to find Jesus for themselves to say, hey, how is it during this pandemic that you're not completely locked down in your house, blinds drawn, triple masked?

How is that that don't have the same level of fear that we do? Which is very justifiable fear. because it was unprecedented. But we should look different.

We should have an inner peace about us. we Should have a resolve to say no to the many miry temptations of the world, because we know that God lives in us, so we want to take good care of The temple that he's gifted us for a short time.

until we get to shed this broken body. So where has the church gone wrong? The church has gone by not leading us in the ways of stewardship, by now recognizing that the triune God exists in a body, God could have saved us any way that he chose, but he choose to put on skin and come down, be birthed of a woman, develop the same way every other human being has developed, be tempted in every way that we have been tempted and said no every single time to those temptations.

So if the body didn't matter to God, which is the most absurd notion at all, but if it didn' t matter, why would He save us in a body? So I feel like the church just doesn't ever, not only does the Church not teach on these things, because I think, by and large, churches are afraid to actually admonish the congregants and to call them out.

A good parent disciplines their child, just like it says in Scripture. But there are certain categories of life that the church capital see just doesn't want to touch the kind of taboo.

But those are the areas of our lives that keep us in prison. Those are areas that allow us to be not possessed but oppressed by demonic activity and it really mars the witness and the testimony to the onlookers because we look exactly the same.

We look the exactly same Well, and I, you know, Satan's, uh, some of Satan best tools, the line from, gosh, hold on, I'll think of the movie in a minute, but the best line, one of best lines in the movies is that the trick that devil ever played was convincing the world that he didn't exist.

Right? I mean, that's the United States. Like there's parts of world now where demonic oppression is a daily thing. People live in fear of that sort of level of oppression, But in America, He doesn't need that.

He's got us convinced that, you know, one of the things that he loves to do in the church is this Christian pride, this pride of being more devout, being holy, something like we earned.

I mean, the overarching emotion from a Christian should be one humility and gratitude from what you've been saved from. Amen. That should make you a wonderful witness to others because you've just not come in with this holier than now, Hippocratic junk that people label a Christian with these days.

Because we've been tricked into thinking that somehow we potentially earned this thing. And that takes, if you bring it into the place of like wellness and health, it's like, The overarching theme of so many churches and Christians is that we're better because we've seen the truth and we have chosen it and therefore we are the frozen chosen and not reaching out.

Stewardship, Spiritual Health, and the Body

getting into the nitty gritty and the church is for sure not going to tell people how to eat and exercise and sleep. You know, when you think about those foundational aspects of human survival and thriving, which is your food, your daily habits, you were sleep quality, and your relationship.

We live with such profound comfort here. He lulls us to sleep like rocking a little baby who's got a full belly of sweet milk. and off to sleep you go and so really it's almost like the curse of affluence is what we experience here so that's what allows for the the foot hold right that the foothold of the enemy comes in with the comfort when who's who other than people who are just so on fire are seeking the Lord on a moment by moment basis when every single thing in their life is going super smooth All bills are paid, bank accounts full, everybody's healthy.

I look good, I feel good. My partner looks good feels good kids are like, who's seeking after him? The blessing comes in the trial no matter what the shape or form.

but we live in a country of tremendous affluence, which of course translates into the comfort, and that's how he surreptitiously slips in. And that is why you start to see the manifestation of pride, because God resists the proud.

He is close to the humble and brokenhearted, but he resits the pride. So we know that we are either bearing a fingerprint or a likeness to God, or fingerprint, of likenesses to Satan.

There isn't any other entity by which we can kind of say, you remind me of. There's just black and white, there is no gray, no neutral Switzerland, it doesn't exist in the spirit world.

But if the church isn't teaching that you must take a stand, You must, what does the scriptures tell us? Choose for this day whom you will serve. As for me and my family, we will the Lord.

I said before you life and death, blessing and curse, oh that you would choose life for you and for your descendants. You know, that part of that scripture is really important because our choices aren't just about us.

We also live in this very kind of siloed, autonomous culture. where it's my life back off. And in certain respects, yes, but in other respects it is undeniable that we are all interconnected.

Your choices impact me. So even if you want to talk about something a little bit on the more shallower side of this really heavy topic is you are free to choose, just like scripture says, you were free choose but not everything is good for you.

So there's your free will, but there are going to be natural consequences to expressing that freewill in a way that harms you. But so when somebody is free to, let's just say, eat whatever they choose, I'm going go to McDonald's to start my day, Taco Bell in the middle of day.

Wrap it up with Chick-fil-A. Fine. I mean, you are free. To choose that, But you will suffer the inevitable health consequences, which will drive your usage of the medical system through the roof.

And the Medical System is largely funded by the hard paying tax, the taxpayer. So it actually does impact. me, and it impacts me even shrink that down, you know it, impacts those closest to you that your health is failing.

It impacts the energy that you have to engage with your children. it Impacts whether your amygdala is lit up because of chronic systemic inflammation and you're making these horrible choices and interacting in a really harsh and cutting way largely due to inflammation that You can't mitigate on a diet like that.

So it does. We're all interconnected. It all matters. Everybody's choices, whether good or bad, except before you lie for death, blessing and curse, it matters not just for me, but for the people I live with and love and work with, and interact with.

I can't show up with my God-given purpose in a body that's inflamed due to my own choices day by day. That's not honoring. A lot of people are making bad choices in pseudo ignorance, right?

Like they kind of know that it's not good for them to eat that way most of the time. However. I mean, most people are doing it and they feel pretty good.

And one of the best things, you know, Satan is a liar, right? And, it's harder for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for rich man to get in the kingdom of God.

What that really means is you don't feel like you need God when you are self-sufficient, quote unquote, self sufficient. You could get to the theological, whether there's anyone that's ever really self efficient.

You know, and then, so the devil says, man, you look, feel good. That tastes delicious. Let's just keep doing that. And the likely outcome of that is that you're always going to feel and you are always gonna think that's a good idea.

Um, and the reality is, the lie is that it's poisoning you slowly. And you know, if you, you were to put a test in front of most people and said, Hey, is eating fast food, three meals a day, a good idea for your long-term health?

I think 99% of the people would say, no, it probably not. Right? Like it, that knowledge is out there, but it is not a. It's not reinforced, if it's reinforced by people that you love and respect, that love, and that respect you, then you're probably not going to care, right?

Until that heart attack comes on, until you get diabetes. But even then, Doc, I'm sure you see this all the time. Even then if the doctors, the nurses, and the physician's assistants, most importantly the pastors and preachers are not, these are the authority figures in our lives.

We look to them for leadership. And if they're not impressing upon you throughout your lifespan, not only the criticalness for their own health and wellbeing, but how it does indeed ripple out into the relationships in your life and how that has an impact on society and culture at large.

If these leaders in everybody's life aren't espousing these things, it just becomes how noisy is life right now. How noisy, reel after reel, after real is saying essentially what you just said.

But it doesn't impact because for the reasons I said, the leadership isn't really sounding the alarm, but I'm in my doctorate studies right now for whole health leadership.

I don't know if you're familiar with Whole Health, but Dr. Tracy Gaudet started WholeHealth back in 2011. And she

established this amazing healthcare approach inside the VA.

They've carried it all the way through to completion and they've scaled it and replicated it. Now they're equipping Whole health leaders like myself to go out into you know, society at large and bring it into more private sectors or to doctors like yourself, or really ideally Western, truly Western practicing doctors, to try to totally upend and transform the healthcare system.

And how do they do it? By putting the human being, the person back in the driver's seat of their healthcare and helping them go in and explore who they really are.

Again, it's the sleeping baby to wake up. Wake up, wake up to your life. You actually, you know, I think that many of the systems under which, we live, they are designed to do as you're told, just do what you are told.

Right from kindergarten, right from preschool, do it as your told by the teacher, as told your parents, the pastor or the priest, or your government, so then we just kind of stay in this slumber And we never really stop and look in and say, wait a minute, who am I, where am, what am and never discover a unique anointing and purpose on your life.

That intrinsic knowing of your meaning, your aspiration and your purpose is what will drive you from the inside. It won't be an outside shoving, it'll be inside pulling, just like the Holy Spirit does when He pulls us into our life's purpose.

You know what, I never thought about it, but I suppose what I really value is my husband and my children and, my health and financial security and okay, are you living a life that actually will lead to these values being expressed and materialized in your life?

Very few people go through that type of self-awareness, self confrontation exercise. No.

Church Culture, Comfort, and Chronic Disease

And we're, and we are, you know, to the extent that, our sins will sometimes follow us, four or five generations is, most family units, family groupings live similarly, have the same lifestyles.

My parents smoke, so I smoke. This is how we ate. So this is I eat, this how my kids eat. that we're not really exercisers. My parents didn't do that, so I don't that.

And there's genetic components that they're passing down, but there is also this lifestyle philosophy. It's what's normal to them and some health nut jogging down the street makes them chuckle.

They're like, oh my gosh, get over yourself. And to some extent, maybe that guy doesn't need to get it over himself. But what we don't understand is that the choices that we're making, it's affecting the people you love the most.

Maybe my insurance premiums go up because the world's an unhealthy place. And so maybe someone distant affects me. The people that you affect the most are the people you love the more.

And that's kind of where, you know, the church isn't teaching stewardship of, of you, know the body, that temple of the Holy Spirit in a way that they could be.

But it's, I mean, to play, To come to the churches, You know to, play devil's advocate. I should, That's a super intimidating place to be like, do they preach?

Eggs are good or eggs are bad? Is it butter or is it margarine? When you get into the details, like you said, it's confusion and chaos. It's hard to know what's right.

God forbid you preach something from the pulpit today that's proven to be wrong tomorrow. But I mean, doctors do that all the time. You know, we're doing the best.

Well, doctors are trained in that. And of course, they're human beings and they are going to error. But I'm not even calling for a church to get down into the weeds like that to me.

You never can get underneath an undertaking of this magnitude and expect one person or even a small team to be able to carry it. This is where congregants should understand that maybe and vote in part of the tithing goes to have an on staff, health expert or run regular programs and teaching opportunities for people to blend their spirituality and their physical health, their emotional health their relational health.

Their financial health blend. On occasion you'll see like you know financial peace. Financial health yeah. And that's great. That's fantastic. But why aren't we doing the same thing when it comes to something Of course, we engage with money every moment, every day, but we engaged with food every moments, everyday.

And it is going to be underlying almost every chronic disease on this planet. We know anywhere from 75 to 90% of disease that is suffered today is due to diet, lifestyle factors.

So we could mitigate so much of the doctor visits and the day losing of appointments. Really, I feel like How do we really upend this kind of tick on a farm dog type of thing with insurance companies just, I mean, profiting to unconscionable levels off of the illness of people?

You see the incestuous nature between our government subsidizing corn and soy and then you see, you know, pharma, and you then see insurance. It's really just a mess.

it's a real mess, but how do, we can't kind Like how David took Goliath down with a stone and the confidence of the Lord that it would land exactly where it needed to.

We have to remind ourselves who we are in Christ, come together in small community groups and get that intrinsic fire going and start to choose differently so we no longer need the medical system to the degree that most people do.

You have, people just don't realize how much agency and influence you have over your own health, mental health relational health outcomes. You've so much, agency, but you've been told from preschool, just sit down, shut up and do as you're told, sit, down shut, up, and, do, as, you,'re, told.

And honestly, that's not, no, Jesus isn't in that in any way, shape or form. He's a God of free will and he wants you to use the beautiful intellect that he gives to do with not let it go dull and just kind of be this robot of sorts.

So I don't expect pastors, priests, and preachers to get up there and talk about nutrition per se, like as far as macronutrients or what's healthy today.

What I'm asking them to do is use the scriptures to call people to stewardship from a place of worshipping their king. That's what I am calling the church to and not to have donuts and Cheerios and juice boxes and Kona ice at every single Sunday service.

I mean, these children are so vulnerable to the deluge of sugar that comes in first thing in the morning and then when their systems become so highly dysregulated from blood sugar explosions, they're deemed the bad child.

I don't know that we can take your child or maybe your children's demon possessed. This is a problem. You should seek help. No, stop feeding them a donut.

at 8.30 in the morning on an empty stomach. If you feel like you have to have food, lead these children up in a way that they should go so when they're old they won't depart from it.

Train them up to eat the foods that God put on this planet, not that a factory spit out on a conveyor belt. Well, you know, it's, there's plenty of scripture about, that your body is the temple of the Holy spirit.

There's a plenty scripture being a good steward of what God provides. And, some people genetically kind of have a, for those that aren't Bible thumpers, um, There was a parable of a servant that had like 10 talents and five talents in one talent.

He gave the one that had 10 doubled it and the when that five doubled and one had one buried it. Cause he was scared. He was going to. So the point is, you know, my point there is like, not everybody's a 10 talent.

has a 10 talent genetics, right? Like some people are dealing with, you know, less, genetic, a home run, and you've got your MTHFRs and your COMTs and that's, I've had it all on this podcast with Dr.

Keeley. I had him go through my genetics and it was like, oof, he's like you lost the COMT lottery there. Yeah. And he was like, oh, you were kind of a fat kid, weren't you?

I'm like yeah, okay, easy, bro. But yeah. Right on. In the end, our DNA wasn't given to us by accident. It wasn' given us at this time, into this family unit, and to this world by accidentally.

It's certainly worth being a good steward of. And we, you know, for the point of this podcast, we couldn't care less about the burden on society as much as it is just your wellbeing, the life that you were created to experience the reflection of your creator that your were.

Created to be for others, right? Like to take that love and blessing and bend it out laterally to the people that come into it every day so that they might ask, Why are you different?

Can I get lunch with you? And you're like, well, you don't have to say you want to eat what I eat. But to the extent that you are well enough to do that, we're all going to die.

It's a fallen world, it's broken. Sin has a penalty and until Jesus comes back, that penalty is death. And so we are all gonna need the health system at some point.

But to the extent that our, you know, in my practice and in your practice, and then the functional side of the world, the longevity side, of medicine, we're really working hard to make people's health span equal their lifespan.

Get as healthy as possible, as long as possibly. And then fall off a cliff and go to heaven, hopefully. Right. So, I think what I love about this topic is that.

You know, God cares about, you know the way that you live, not just that. You live God is, he loves you. He created you to love him. he went out of his way to come to earth as a human.

And like you said, experience all this mess, all of this hot mess. It wasn't a hot mass till human sin to get that clear, but he always knew that was going to be the plan.

Whole Health, Purpose, and Community Change

And then He's given us the information, the wisdom to be good stewards of the bodies He has given to us. in the richest country in world, we've got the most expensive healthcare and some of the worst outcomes in first world ever.

It's like Satan's just laughing all the way to the bank, man. Cause we're so comfortable. We couldn't care less about what someone else tells us is healthy.

it's so much cheaper and easier and better tasting to get it out of package than it is to give out the produce section, you know, to some extent. to a large extent.

And that's really the conundrum, especially for people with food insecurity, people in, you know, whole food deserts, single parent homes, multiple children, moms, no man and work in two jobs to just try to provide.

That's kind of my point. If people, with means, were good stewards, they would not only feel better, first of all, eat less because your entire palate changes, your appetite kind of diminishes to a reasonable point.

You don't have this insatiability of my next sugar fix. So you're thinking clearer, now fruit of the spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, self-control, all of those things start to manifest.

And so we get to look around because we're no longer self focused the way we are when we were ill. We now can be others focused and we look around and see need and shouldn't have to tap our government all the time to step in.

It should be the neighbors. The people who live among you who can come up to you and say, are you in a difficult season? May I help? I'll cook and bring it to ya.

I've been doing this my entire adult life. So, you know, I can't carry the world on my back, nor does God have any expectation of that. I could barely carry my own life.

But my point is, if we all would show up on Sundays to a message that was sound and it was convicting, but it is gracious and kind and motivating, and then they would offer group opportunities for community, to discover what my meaning, my aspiration, and my purpose, actually curate what is called a personal health plan so that you get to determine why I want my health, what do I wanted for, then what types of practitioners do i desire to help me achieve this level of health.

It's not so prescriptive from insurance down, like no, you can't get a vitamin D test, it's clinically relevant for you kind of a thing. But frankly, if I'm eating a well-rounded diet and I understand some of the sources of vitamin D and that vitamin is a hormone, it's not so much of a nutrient.

It acts on almost all the cells in the body and blah, blah blah. So if the church had ministries or even on staff health and wellness experts who could educate the people, then the people could go out into their communities and they can take that knowing out to the community.

And what a ministry opportunity that you can have non-believing neighbors who come into your church, not to necessarily look, I don't want the church piece.

I am here though for the health piece, fabulous. That is ministry work. You don't force your beliefs, you don' even really have to go there. You show them Jesus through your life, through you affect, your disposition and educate them and train them.

And then maybe they'll start to behave in these ways and take better care of their bodies. Inflammation will come down, their forebrain will back on online and then they will start be able to consider the things of the spirit.

So it's a tremendous opportunity as far as I can tell. I like that framing to sort of pull it all together is it is a wonderful opportunity for the church, right?

So 30 plus years ago, this conversation would sound kind of wacky. Right. Like, I don't know that the clarity of information was there on the sort of the functional lifestyle medicine side.

I mean, it was always there in small circles, but it certainly wasn't, It was fringe. When I graduated medical school in 2004, the information is so readily available.

relatively universally accepted. I mean, even your insurance provider in the system agrees that eating and exercising the way that we talk about would be great.

They just don't have the time. they don' have, they, don have belief that it's worth their time, They've got eight minutes to go talk something and quite frankly, I don't have time to tell them and they don' know they have to go to the extra training to figure out what healthy actually looks like.

But they do have a time and say, hey, look, I see this is on fire on you and my system is really good at a pill that puts that fire out and I can make you feel better with that.

And let's go. Meanwhile, you're feeding the embers that cause the fire with your diet and lifestyle so that it can flare back up. I think now we're in a place where the church.

is full of medical providers and medically educated parishioners, whether that's their job or not, it's the information age. I tell my patients all the time, all of the times, I'm like, listen, you've got a kind of rare thing that you had your whole life and I've heard about three times.

You are the expert in the room on that disease process. You won't be by the end of the day, but you are right now. So let's unpack that for you. We can take a church full of people that are seeking wisdom in that way and say, okay, who wants to start the Wednesday night group on health?

Who wants start bringing in a rather, you know, it has to come from the top. But it's a great opportunity that we have a faith-based food pantry in town.

Well, why is there a independent faith based food pantry in towns? It's because the churches don't do it. The churches used to be the only place to do.

But that was a long time ago and we don´t, you know, God has provided and he will continue to provide it, none of this is taking them off guard. I think this, is a good opportunity for the truth, right?

All real truth comes from the Lord. And you know, as that truth is kind of coming to the surface now, I think there's a great opportunity for the church to step in and say, how can we help each other?

And then in the end, but they don't know how to, they would never say it this way. They would say be healthier, right? But to decrease their inflammation, increase their energy, their joy, decrease, pain, increased their mental health, the ability to take on the burdens of others, to manage their lives in a more, I would Godly, that has a lot of weight to it.

How about just in more responsible manner that's more enjoyable in For their children, for their parents, their friends and family. So I think it's a great opportunity.

Is that something that you are, I mean, you're obviously very passionate about it. Do you have like, is this thing that your going through with your masters or some other thing, like a program type approach?

Because churches buy programs. Yeah. Tell them they should care about health is one thing. Get them a problem they could digest. That might be better.

Yeah. I mean, for sure. The capstone project of the doctorate program will be the program. So at the end of this semester, I'll be halfway through, so I don't graduate with that on PhD until December of 27. But that is exactly my goal.

And the reason why I decided to go back to school at 54 years old was… You know, to have the framework to take all of this pent-up passion and, you know take the 16 years of practice and really put it into a system that is scalable and bringing it in to churches, calling pastors, priests, and pastors out, Calling them out and saying, hey, You've been pretty neglectful on this really critical topic of instruction for, as a shepherd to the sheep.

So it's time to kind of step up and I'm not asking you to become a health and wellness expert, but I am asking you to become the authority figure in the room as far as what the Lord has to say about taking good care of our bodies and why.

These are perishable containers. It's not for aesthetics. it's for a certain size on your jeans. other people well with vigor. But to be able to bring live presentation and pre-recorded presentation into churches around, I'm going to

start, of course, around where I live and have this opportunity to gather all of the data, just gather, all the of data as far as who's participating, why are they participating?

How long did they stay in? Tracking their biometrics as we go, getting some You know, subjective feedback as far as I'm also an attachment theory coach.

So like for me, you know when you talk about the relational aspect of our well-being, it's all the foundation of that is attachment. Attachment is a very difficult thing to enjoy in a secure way in the sick body as a young person.

And then if everybody experiences childhood hardship, nobody's getting out of here alive.

Building a Church-Based Health Program

So it's a matter of how the nervous system actually interpreted the inputs of stress. How did the body, like, wire itself to trust relationally or not?

So, you know, chronic inflammation is going to leave that amygdala and that fear center of the brain lit. And if it is lit, then you have childhood trauma, emotional neglect.

You have, say, abandonment, lose a parent to death, any of the ACEs, anything like that, that's only going to be more fuel for a relational fire. So, you know, there's all of these, these myriad aspects to developing and curating this beautiful, human being to usher into the world in a secure, grounded way, no matter what's going on on the outside.

That's really what Jesus is after, is an inner peace among chaos, that's what he's looking for in his followers. So yes, I do have every intention in a year from now to have my capstone project delivered and kind of boxed and ready to go.

And starting with about half dozen churches in my area to say, okay, it's time to, just like when Dr. Gaudet brought it into the VA, they started with just a few facilities and then it just scaled out.

I'm really excited about the equipping that the program is giving me and to take an entire lifetime of trying to like, you know, feel like I am shouting into the wind, but having something that is tangible, material, something to follow, a 12-week program to give you a better than layperson's understanding of why your choices matter.

Well, you know, all these churches are full of medical professionals that are looking for a way to serve with their gifts. Right? Absolutely. A curriculum that allows them a chance to sit in and probably a lot of them need some information to use, right?

Like they, well, they didn't really teach me nutrition in medical school. Let's be honest. They just didn' it. Yeah. And so, give them some data that will make perfect sense to them because it's going to fit with the knowledge they did get during school and in their practice.

And then you get to the pastors and you can hit them hard for letting their people down in a way for the last couple of hundred years, really probably 150 years or so at least.

But you could also say, hey, do you believe that Your body is the temple of the Holy spirit and you believe that we should have a stewardship responsibility to take care of our bodies.

They're going to say yes. And then you say, okay, I think I have way to help you with that. Cause that's something the church hasn't really preached in a long time and it's because it has been, it is a little touchy, but I can think of a great way.

To help your people be healthier, more, you know, God honoring, people. That's a pretty attractive offer in a place that is basically there because they love God and they others.

That is literally the point of the church. It's full of broken, sinful, prickly humans, right? Which- Who are desperate for a savior, who know that they can't do this life without him.

And even with him, we still stumble and- Oh yeah. Humanity is part of the reason that non-churchgoers don't like the church. Just goes like, look at all those sinful jerks in there acting like they're better than everybody else.

It was like okay, We've put off the wrong. We're a bunch of sinful jerks in there, just thanking God for loving us anyway. Come on in. The water's great.

And if you come out feeling healthier and you've got a little bit more mental and emotional bandwidth for the person who cuts you off on the street, you're going to represent.

Christ in a better way and you're going to be able to, you know, be a part of the kingdom in, in more exciting way. And guess what? You're gonna feel better.

Your family's gonna have better relationships. You know it's all our spiritual, our mental, or our emotional and our physical health are so tied. Everyone pretty much gets that, but a way to address that is great, man.

Tracy, thanks so much for coming on. Wow. Thanks so for having me. This was as fun as I thought it would be. It's great. You know, I'm certainly not scared to talk about Jesus in here, but we certainly went all in.

I loved it. That was great! Yeah, me too. Thank you. All right. Well, so is there any, is it too soon for people to reach out and touch base? Now I've been doing this on my own for, like I said, about 16 years now.

And I take either individuals or their entire families through really a 360 examination of who they are, how they're living, and what modifications and changes and upgrades they can make to just experience a better life overall with Jesus.

So I'd love for people to consider me as a resource, that'd be great. Yes, so for anyone who resonates with Tracy with like, you know, the sort of the whole person, spiritual, physical, emotional, mental health standpoint, Um, we're going to have all her stuff in the show notes.

If this idea of the church, um, and sort of, you know, physical health, pre, what's the right word, but taking care of their body. Well, then yeah, let's reach out.

Is there, What's, the best way for people to reach to you? I would say if they just head to my website, slingshothc for slingshothealthcoaching.com and put in even my name, you'll find me online quickly, just Tracy Spiaggia.

But yeah, You can find my on Instagram, Facebook. Okay. Man, I love it. Thank you so much for coming on. That was, that was a blast. Thanks for joining me today on My MD Unscripted.

I hope today's conversation opened your mind and inspired you to imagine a better path for your health and therefore life. If you found value in this episode, be sure to subscribe, leave a review, and share it with someone passionate about transforming healthcare.

Real change starts with real conversation, so let's keep on going. Until next time, stay well,