

December 18, 2022

How To Stress Less (#2)

by Ken Weliever

Matthew Rogers tells the story about a brother and sister singing "Silent Night" in their school chorus.

The little boy concluded the song with the words, "Sleep in heavenly beans."

His sister elbowed him and said. "No, it's not beans. It's peas!"

I suppose for many people during the holiday season, the song might as well end with beans or peas. Because the stress of the season is anything but peace.

Think about all there is to do that adds to your already stressful life.

- Shopping for gifts.
- Attending holiday parties
- Fighting traffic.
- Crowded stores.
- Putting up decoration
- Wrapping gifts
- Baking cookies.
- Cooking meals.
- Those 3 stressful words: Some assembly required.
- School activities.
- Mailing Christmas cards.
- Arranging travel schedules.

The pressure of making a special memory for your family.

Stress is not unique to the holiday season, but experts in mental health agree that it can be exacerbated by several factors. Time and financial pressure. Isolation. Family tension. Separation. Or bereavement.

This week we are offering Biblical advice of how to cope with stress based on Philippians 4:4-9. Yesterday, we discussed the importance of rejoicing. Today, let's consider our faith and trust in God.

TRUST COMPLETELY

"Do not be anxious about anything," Paul penned. Notice he didn't say, "Don't sweat the small stuff." Or "don't be anxious about most things." Paul is stretching our thinking to rid our minds of worry, anxiety, and fear that leads to stress.

There is a difference between anxiety that breeds worry and a prudent concern that is legitimate. Don't fret over things outside of your control. Concern focuses on probable difficulties and results in action and solutions. Worry focuses on uncontrollable problems and results in inaction and mental and emotional gridlock.

There is an old adage that says, "worry is like a rocking chair. It will give you something to do, but won't get you anywhere!" In fact, worry is debilitating. It troubles your mind. Agitates your emotions. Disquiets your spirit. And drains your energy.

Dr. Walter Calvert did a study of the things we worry about. He discovered that:

- 40% of the things we worry about never happen
- 30% of our worries concern the past
- 12% are needless worries about our health
- 10% are insignificant or petty
- 8% are legitimate issues

So, 92% of our worries are a waste of time and energy. They are about things that either won't happen, or that we're unable to change.

In his book, Choose Your Attitudes Change Your Life, Dr. Robert Jeffress, called worry "Satan's flaming missile." He wrote, "unfounded worry is a favorite weapon of the Evil One." Indeed it is.

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

Worry impedes our relationship with God, weakens our faith, and gives birth to doubt that dampens our hope. Anxiety diminishes our focus and distracts us from spiritual priorities. In fact, brooding can lead us down a dark road of discouragement, depression, and finally despair.

The antidote to anxiety is trust. Trust in the Lord.

Over 100 times the Bible exhorts us to trust in the Lord. Here are three of those admonitions,

Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.
—Prov. 3:5-6

It is better to trust in the Lord
Than to put confidence in man.
It is better to trust in the Lord
Than to put confidence in princes.
—Ps. 118:8-9

Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD
GOD is an everlasting rock.. —Isa. 26:4

Trust in the Lord instead of fleeting feelings. Or human knowledge. Or secular reasoning. Or political parties.

Our faith, trust and confidence in the Almighty will go a long way in reducing and controlling stress. Numerous studies have shown that people who possess a vibrant faith, a Biblical perception of God, and are spiritually active, have lower levels of stress.

“People who are more involved in religious practices and who are more religiously committed seem to cope better with stress,” observed Dr. Harold G. Koenig, director of the Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health at Duke University Medical Center.

Koenig adds, “One of the reasons is because [religion] gives people a sense of purpose and meaning in life, and that helps them to make sense of negative things that happen to them. A person’s religious community can also provide support and encouragement through hard times.”

A recent study by the University of Toronto claims that “having faith in God can help block anxiety and minimize stress.” The research led by Assistant Psychology Professor Michael Inzlicht, concluded the stronger one’s religious zeal and deeper their faith in God, the less stress they experienced.

Author and speaker Mary Southerland, dubbed “the stress buster,” was right when she wrote, “Stress comes when we allow the many voices in life to drown out the only voice that matters, the voice Of God.”

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Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing treatments to strengthen his immune system. He is having some tests run for his lungs.

Karen Hallmark has improved but continues to struggle and could use our prayers.

Dinah Williams continues to have mobility issues.

Don Simmons is home and still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

Elaine Kersch is undergoing treatments for with her lungs.

Randall Vanaman is having difficulties with his feet.

Jim Trammel has been released from the hospital with antibiotics for bronchitis/pneumonia.

Baby Valor went home but will require more care.

Mike and Debbie McMurray are travelling.

Dorothy Steadman is staying with Hank in Seguin.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord’s body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord’s will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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