

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion; seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.” (I Peter 5:6-10 ESV)

INTRODUCTION:

We all have stress in our lives.

- Those things that we worry about
- Those things that seem to hang over our heads
- Those things that consume our thoughts

Over time, our stresses change.

- Chances are, you are not stressed about the same things to the same degree now as you were as an elementary school student.
- Chances are, you will not be stressed about the same things to the same degree as an adult as you are right now.

NOT ALL STRESS IS THE SAME.

THINGS THAT CAUSE STRESS

THINGS I “HAVE” TO DO	THINGS I WANT TO DO	THINGS I BRING ON MYSELF
God	Friends	Consequences of bad decisions in my past
Family	Sports	Consequences of bad decisions in my present
School	Arts	Drama I continue to involve myself in
Job	Free Time	

Much of my stress occurs when:

- I have “things I have to do” in the wrong order...my relationship with God sets the stage for every other area in my life.
- I place “things I want to do” in my “things I have to do” category...not everything is essential.
- I continue to engage in “things that I bring on myself.”

There are certain principles that I must place in my life that will help reduce stress:

- If I say “yes” to one thing that means that I need to say “no” to something else.
- I must understand that not all stress is bad...and not all stress is good.
 - Stress that stretches me will strengthen me.
 - Stress that strains me will swallow me.

APART FROM A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, I WILL ALWAYS BE RULED BY STRESS.

I am ruled by something...

- What I see as most urgent (stress)
- What I see as an escape (pleasure)
- A daily surrender to God.

My relationship with God is not an "area" of my life...my relationship with God is to be the "umbrella" over my life.

HOW GOD TELLS ME TO HANDLE THE STRESS IN MY LIFE:

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.”

- Understand that you were never created with the ability to do life on your own...you were created with a hole in your life that can only be filled by the Holy Spirit of God. In order for the Holy Spirit to fill that hole, you have to acknowledge your need for God and accept Jesus's sacrifice on the cross for you.
- Intentionally giving everything that you are worried and stressed about to God through prayer.
 - There is nothing in your life that is too big for God.
 - There is nothing in your life that is too small for God.
 - If something in your life stresses you, God wants it.
- God gets you...He understands what is going on in your life, and as a loving Father, He loves you.

"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion; seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith..."

- Be mindful that you and I have a very real enemy who absolutely hates us. Satan's plans for our lives is to keep us from a relationship with God and to make us ineffective in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others.
- Stress keeps us fixated on our problems, not Jesus Christ. Stress keeps us fixated on ourselves, not the needs of others around us. For these reasons, a primary strategy of Satan is to keep you and I stressed!
- Satan is powerful...God is more powerful. As a son/daughter of God, we can actually overcome Satan and his plans.

"...knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world..."

- One of Satan's main tactics in our lives is to make us feel alone, isolated, like we're the only ones feeling what we feel, dealing with what we're dealing with, going through what we're going through.
- If the Holy Spirit lives in your life you're never alone or isolated.
- There is nothing that you are facing that is a new struggle...whatever you are facing, others are facing...whatever you are facing, God has brought others through.

WHAT IS IN YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW THAT YOU NEED TO GIVE TO GOD?

Write it down, pray over it, leave in the hands of God.

We pray that God will "...restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."