

Handling the Mess of Stress

Philippians 4:2-9

Stress is simply mental tension triggered by a threatening situation. Today we see that God lovingly recommends some key thoughts on how to keep stressful situations from popping up in our lives and wreaking havoc. But he leaves the choice in our hands.

These things apply not only to church, but to life in general. To have more success with stress

I. We should try and keep short accounts in our relationships.

Peace at all costs is not necessarily the answer but rather peace in the right way for the right reasons. Romans 12:18

When we have happy, peaceful relationships it's easier to be a happy person and a whole lot less stressful.

II. We should always try and choose joy in our attitudes

Philippians 2:5 The command (Have this attitude in yourselves)

Hebrews 12:2 Jesus and joy (He saw joy in the upcoming stress of the crucifixion because he saw the joy of the throne later on)

Question: "Am I going to be a grumbler all the time, about everything that comes along? Or am I going to operate in a higher, healthier, and happier more joyful way? Life goes better if you choose joy.

Thought: Joy is not in things; it is in us. The reason is because we hold the key. We can choose whether to be joyful and rejoice or not, and the choice we make will affect our stress.

III. In our reactions, we need to unload on God, not the person standing before us.

The words "do not be anxious" in Philippians 4:6 are easier said than done. We've all had days where there was a knot in our stomach. We wake up with it and we can't get it to go away. We try prayer, but we also fuss, fume, and fret yet it remains and we get messed up with the stress of it all.

I Peter 5:7 still says "Cast all your anxiety on Him for He cares for you."

So he is basically saying take responsibility to do what you can, but recognize what you can't, and cast that onto me rather than suffer the stress of worry over it.

IV. We need to look for the good in our circumstances

Proverbs 4:23 says, "Be careful what you think because your thoughts run your life."

- If you think things are hopeless, they will be.
- If you think you can't make it, you won't
- If you think you can't ask for help, you will bear it alone

But remember;

- Circumstances may and often do change - God remains the same
- Circumstances may seem to overwhelm - but God delivers
- Circumstances may seem dark - but God is still light

Note: He puts us in difficult circumstances, to refine us not destroy us.

Note: He puts us in difficult circumstances, not to drown us but to teach us how to swim

Note: As the diamond cannot be polished without friction, so the Christian cannot be perfected without trial.

The Bible says to endure hardships as discipline. In other words, whenever you're going through something where you feel stuck, you hate it, you are stressed, your life seems a mess; God is just working to build you up into the person you really ought to, and can be.

Hebrews 12:11 says, "No discipline seems pleasant at the time but painful. Later on however it produces the harvest of righteousness and peace by those who have been trained by it."

V. In our lifestyle we need to follow Jesus

If we will put into practice what Jesus has taught us to do, God with all His peace will be ours.

Don't forget: I will be less stressful if

I keep short accounts with people, not just get short with them.

I will be less stressful if I choose an attitude of joy

Happiness comes when we stop complaining about our troubles and begin to be thankful for the troubles we don't have.

I will be less stressful if I unload on God instead of carrying the extra weights myself. The fact is, he is the only one who can actually help me.

I will be less stressful if I look for good in the circumstances that I face instead of dwelling on the bad ones

I will be less stressful if I pattern my life after Jesus who never got stressed out from hurrying too fast or taking on tomorrow's problems today.

Or I can use the tongue in cheek reply of Henry Kissinger who once quipped, there cannot be a stressful crisis next week. My schedule is already full.

Final thoughts: If after reading these thoughts, you find you are now secretly stressed because you are not sure of what would happen if you were to die tonight.

Rather than letting that stress kill you, you have a chance right now to relieve all of that personal stress about your forever. You can do it simply by reading a few more lines and following the directions so you and God can do heart business as he relieves you stress.

Realize you are a sinner Rom. 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God. Rom. 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Rom. 6:23b and Jn. 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)