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Stress Management Study  
*Gaining a Biblical Framework for handling stress in life*

**Lesson One**  
**Repent of Stress**

MEMORY VERSES

**Romans 14:23b**~“*For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*”

**Philippians 4:6**~“*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*”

**Matthew 11:28**~“*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*”

**I Thessalonians 4:11**~“*And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.*”

Are you stressed out? What are the symptoms?

**You may be stressed out if you answer these in the affirmative:**

1. I eat fast. I walk fast.
2. I rush people to hurry up and say what they are going to say.
3. I think of my problems even when I am talking to someone else.
4. I take work on vacation.
5. I feel guilty when I sit down to rest.
6. I pack more and more activities into less and less time.
7. I am easily irritated by little things.
8. I often lash out at the people whom I love the most and who love me the most.
9. I sense a distance in my relationship with others.
10. I lack a sense of spiritual presence of God.

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**Symptoms of Stress**

**Emotional**

“Signs of anger, cynicism, negativism, or increased irritability spring up. Burnout victims may feel frustrated by a sense of helplessness, hopelessness, or self-doubt. . . Another common sign is guilt– false guilt over trying to be overly responsible.”

**Physical**

Headaches, migraines, neck aches, ulcers, fatigue, constant cold, insomnia, frequent accidents

**Spiritual**

1. Refusing to rely on God’s power alone
2. Thinking God doesn’t really care
3. Loneliness
4. Neglect of personal devotions
5. Neglect of church attendance/church fellowships
6. Joylessness
7. Loss of meaning
8. Emptiness
9. Selfishness
10. Trading in your spiritual activities for worldly pursuits
11. Pervading sense of irritability with self-church-staff-mate-family
12. Feeling trapped in the ministry

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<sup>1</sup>Frank Minirth, MC. T al., *The Stress Factor* (Chicago, IL: Northfield Publishing, 1992), 17. Brooks Faulkner, *Stress in the Life of the Minister* (Convention Press, Nashville, TN, 1981), 113.

## Stress Test

The questions below are designed to help you determine more clearly what stresses affect you. If you're married, have your spouse answer these questions for you as well and compare your responses.

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. I'm frequently late or missing appointments.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. My emotions are near the surface (anger or tears come easily).                               | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. I feel that my time is controlled by others.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. I find myself engaging in mental arguments with my employer, family, or others.              | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 5. I feel like I'm always with people and am rarely alone.                                      | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 6. I wonder when I'm going to get around to what I really want to do.                           | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 7. I feel tired emotionally, physically, or spiritually.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 8. On my day off, I feel compelled to return to the office to finish work.                      | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 9. If married: We seem too busy or tired for romance.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 10. I think "grass is greener" thoughts about my career.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 11. I find myself seeking escapes (food, sleep, TV, etc.).                                      | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 12. I seem to rush from one thing to the next and always feel busy.                             | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 13. I am not sleeping well.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 14. I'm overly concerned with finances.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 15. I don't have time to maintain my most important relationships.                              | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 16. I'm always busy but wonder if I'm doing the right things.                                   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 17. I'm dealing with stressful external circumstances(impending marriage, birth of baby, etc.). | 5 4 3 2 1 |

TOTALS: \_\_\_\_\_

FINAL SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

### Scoring:

61-85: Running on empty!

36-60: Medium stress. Make some adjustments.

17-35: Low stress in general, but address any 4s and 5s.

—Scott Morton

How do you respond to stress?  
List your typical responses to stress:

Definition of stress: Stress is a force exerted upon a body.<sup>2</sup>

Is stress always a bad thing?  
Christ in the garden endured stress much greater than any of us will ever face. Yet He sinned not.

Can stress be a bad thing? Yes.

Scott Morton, an author for Navigators tells this story:

I was on the phone complaining to a colleague about how stressed I was. I told him I was “honking at my taillights,” with too much to do and too little time to do it.

Silence.

I waited, eager for the call to end so I could get back to my busy schedule.

Chuck was breaking a custom. Usually when one Christian tells another Christian how stressed he is, the listener responds by describing how much more stressed he is, which prompts the original busy person to “outstress” him once again. Stress face-offs, I call them.

Silence.

Chuck was not playing the “how stressed I am” game.

Finally he spoke. “Got a verse for you,” he said.

Oh great, I thought, a Bible verse to patch up my shattered nerves. “Go ahead,” I said halfheartedly. “What’s the verse?”

“I John 1:9, ” he replied.

I recognized the passage immediately and was stunned. It says, “If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Did Chuck think I was sinning because I had too much on my plate? Didn’t he know that everyone is stressed? It’s not a sin. It’s just a way of life from which there’s no escape.

“Thanks,” I replied weakly. “That helps.”

That conversation was years ago, but it was a wake-up call. It made me realize I had lost the peace I’d found as a new believer. Since then, I’ve done a lot of thinking about why we fall so

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<sup>2</sup>David B. Guralnik, ed. *Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language* (Cleveland, Ohio: Williams Collins and World Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), 1409.

easily into the stress trap.<sup>3</sup>

I want to suggest a paradigm shift. Ask the question, Is stress really stress, or does stress simply reveal our sin?

The Bible doesn't use the term stress.

It does say, be anxious for nothing.

It does say, Fret not.

It does say, Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the world.

It does say, Let not your heart be troubled.

It does say, Martha was cumbered about.

The Bible identifies wrong responses to stress as sin.

Could it be that we've allowed our world to reformat our thinking, so that we are not thinking biblically? We've seen that happen with the sin of self-centeredness and pride – now replaced by self esteem. Instead of facing a sin problem, we hide behind the victim status of being stressed out!

What is the core sin problem behind stress?

I. Notice a contrast between Saul and Daniel

A. Saul's response to a pressurized problems was to:

Hide

Take matters into his own hands

Become depressed

Throw things

Make rash decisions

Observations

- Saul had to be the one in control.
- Saul lost his awareness of God's presence.
- Saul lacked purity.

For Saul, God was not a God to be trusted.

If we're responding the same way, insisting on control, lack of awareness of God, no purity, we are probably in the same position as Saul. No wonder we're stressed!

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<sup>3</sup>Scott Morton, "Stressed? Here's how to Experience a Calmer Life" *Discipleship Journal.com* ©2000 The Navigators. All rights reserved.

- B. Daniel's response to pressurized problems was to
- Stand by his convictions
  - Pray when he didn't know what to do
  - Proclaim the Word of God with boldness
  - Be a witness

Daniel 6:16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

Observations

- Daniel had an awareness of God's control.
- Daniel had an awareness of God's presence.
- Daniel had purity.

Daniel 6:22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him **innocency was found in me**; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

For Daniel, God was the Almighty God whom could be completely trusted!

II. Notice the contrast between Christ and his disciples in a pressurized situation

Read Matthew 8:23-26

And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

A. What was the response of the disciples to the crisis?  
"We're going to die!"

B. What was the Lord doing?  
Sleeping. Amazing! Why was He sleeping?  
He is omniscient. He is sovereign. He was God in control.

What did Jesus identify as the problem revealed in the disciple's response?  
"Little faith"

More often than not, life's pressures simply reveal that we have "little faith."

The kids are acting up, the wife meets her husband at the door, "DO SOMETHING NOW!"  
When you wake up in the morning and find a foot of water in your basement, does your blood pressure rise?  
When the husband worries about paying the bills, is he trusting God?

When the mom and dad fret over a teen's foolish choices, does that demonstrate to the child faith?  
When the parent sits in the waiting room, will that mom or dad trust God or become stressed out?

Romans 14:23 Whatsoever is not of faith is sin!

A young pastor named Wayne, just 29 years old, was told by his physician that he had to change occupations. He could no longer be a pastor and expect to live in good health. The stress was eating him up.

He went home. He said, "After a restless night—stressed about my stress—I went for a long morning walk beside a creek near our home. "Father, I don't understand. You called me to pastor, but I can't go on if it's going to tear my body apart."

Then he said that the Lord impressed upon his heart that "the pressures of ministry were not responsible for my stress; but how I handled them was. And that mishandling was ultimately caused by my mistrust of the God I was trying to serve."

He then prayed, "Father, forgive me and please do whatever You have to in me so that I can serve You even in great pressure and do so in peace."<sup>4</sup>

Repent of stress!

What will increase our faith?

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<sup>4</sup>Wayne Jacobsen, "Now I'm Winning My War With Stress," *Ministries* Winter 1984-85

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**Lesson Two**  
**Relationships**

MEMORY VERSES

**Romans 14:23b**~ *“For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”*

**Philippians 4:6**~ *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”*

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**I Thessalonians 4:11**~ *“And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.”*

**Title: Relationships that Relieve Stress**

The last lesson began our study of stress management by identifying the symptoms of stress. We saw that stress is a force exerted upon a body. Stress isn't necessarily a bad thing. However, our response to it can be.

“Stress is a sense of prolonged worry to the point of distraction. It is a state of the mind and condition of the emotions. We feel helpless and hapless, incapable and inadequate. We feel harassed, tormented and plagued. It is an incessant kind of frustration that causes us to become despondent, depressed and inactive. We don't know what decisions to make. We are not sure what alternatives to choose. We just don't have the right answers, and we really are not sure of the right answers.”<sup>5</sup>

How do you cope with stress?

1. Do you seek to escape?

“If I could just get another job... “

Men who forget repeatedly may be demonstrating their response to stress.

Men who won't talk may be demonstrating their response to stress.

Some guys go fishing.

You might remember the TV ad that showed a harried father running to his new car to avoid noisy kids, broken plumbing, and the bill collector. With the windows up, he leans back in his leather seat, closes his eyes, and enjoys the car's premium sound system, oblivious to his daughter tapping on the window.

Jonah tried this tactic. It didn't work.

2. Do you attempt to attack?

Remember the commercial with the wife who shows up at the golf course with her sledge hammer? She steps up to her husband's red convertible and attacks. Then her husband drives up in an identical red convertible. Opps. Wrong car.

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<sup>5</sup>Paul Walker, “How You Can Overcome The Power of Stress,” *Ministries*, Winter 1984.



Stressed out people take it out at any one who happens to be in the way. They can be critical. They may make a habit of blowing up at the kids.

What was the response of Saul to his stress? Whom did he attack?

3. Do you hang on for dear life?

The best picture of this response is the old poster of a cat hanging by its claws from a wire with a desperate expression. The caption reads, “Hang in there!”  
Many people live a life dominated by complaining, “I have it sooo bad...”

What was the response of Job to his stress?

**Goal:** Gaining a Biblical Framework for handling stress in life.

There are wrong ways to handle stress. There are right ways to handle stress.

**Review–**

First step, Repent of stress.

Second step, Develop relationships that decrease your stress level.

Two realities:

I. 1<sup>st</sup> reality– Bad relationships negatively effect our stress levels.

Read Psalm 120:1 In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

The context of Psalm 120 is important. Somebody was lying about David causing him countless problems. Doeg, we know a little about this guy, was an Edomite and an employee of Saul’s. Apparently, Doeg was a thorn in David’s side for years, a constant source of stress. Do you have in Doeg’s dogging you?

One of the questions in the stress survey that you took last week was this: I find myself engaging in mental arguments with my employer, family, or others.  
Something about that relationship has to change.

II. 2<sup>nd</sup> reality– Good relationships positively help our stress levels.

Be aware of the impact of two levels of relationships.

1<sup>st</sup> Level– Priority Relationship

What did Christ do when He was under stress?

When he faced a major decision. . .

Luke 6:12, 13 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to

pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

When he faced a major trial. . .

*Luke 22:41-45 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly (John 17) and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,*

*John 17:20-22 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:*

Christ understood the oneness of His relationship with His Father.  
For us to handle stress, we must come to a oneness with Christ.

You may be thinking, "OK, that's how Jesus handled stress. Fine.  
What does that have to do with me?"

*Luke 10:38-42 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and **Mary hath chosen that good part**, which shall not be taken away from her.*

When Martha began her day, what was in Martha's mind, what was her priority that day? To get things done.

When Mary began her day, what was inside Mary's mind, what was her priority that day? To meet with Jesus.

Choosing the good part does not mean we avoid responsibility.

Choosing the good part does mean that we place our priority on relationship above responsibility.

*Philippians 3:10 That I may know him (intimate relationship), and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

Priority above family. Priority above career. Priority above religion!

Do you recall from the last lesson a pastor named Wayne who came face to face with his stress problem. What did he do about his stress problem? We saw last week that he confessed his sin of stress. Then he focused on his personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

This is what he had to say about that: "Intimacy! I wasn't walking close enough to know His will or, if knowing it, close enough to follow when the consequences of doing so were painful. Those failures were

the breeding ground of my stress. Freedom came as I gave diligence to developing a more intimate relationship with Jesus, releasing His leadership and grace into all situations.

“This is not to say I wasn’t at the time already having daily devotions and prayer– but that demands on my life had overgrown the depth of my personal relationship with the Father. That intimacy needed to deepen by giving Him more time and more concentrated attention.”

Wayne went on to say that when an intimate relationship with Christ replaced his stress, he learned that: Jesus has a will about everything in our lives. He wants us to know that will.

God gives enough grace every day to follow that will.<sup>6</sup>

Christ never gives us more to handle than we can handle.

### **Three admonishments:**

1. Place urgency on memorizing Scripture.

Reason for memorizing– so you can pray!

Content of prayer... meaningful relationship prayer...

Michael Billester once gave a Bible to a humble villager in communist Poland. Returning a few years later, he learned that 200 people had become believers through using it. When the group gathered to hear him preach, he suggested that before he spoke he would like each person to quote some verses of Scripture. One man rose and said, "Perhaps, Brother, we've misunderstood you. Did you mean verses or chapters?" Billester was astonished. "Are you saying there are people here who could recite complete chapters of the Bible?" That was precisely the case. In fact, 13 of them knew half of Genesis and the books of Matthew and Luke. Another had committed all the psalms to memory. Combined, the 200 knew virtually the entire Bible.

Are you constantly hiding the Word of God in your heart? If not, begin today!

2. Place urgency on maintaining a clear conscience!

Become convinced the majority of stress mounts up in us because of impurity hindrances in our relationship with Christ!

Psalm 66:18 *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:*

3. Purpose to become intimate with Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 26:3,4 *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:*

There’s another relational level that strongly hinders or helps, depending upon the quality of the relationship.

2<sup>nd</sup> level– Personal relationships

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<sup>6</sup>Wayne Jacobsen, “Now I’m Winning My War With Stress,” *Ministries* Winter 1984-85

## Marriage

I've found this to be true. When my relationship with my wife is right, stress doesn't get to me. When my relationship with my wife isn't right, the littlest stresses get to me!

Proverbs 18:22 *Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing (cheer), and obtaineth favour (pleasure) of the LORD.*

Proverbs 21:19 *It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.*

Teens, if you're stressed out with your parents, you're going to be stressed out with other people too.

## Church

Read Acts 2. The church is established Read Acts 3. The church under attack.  
God knew what he was doing when he established the local church.  
God gave us our church family, relationships, to help us manage stress.

A secular viewpoint underscores this point.

"Many of us assume that our relationships should just work out by virtue of our inherent goodness and kindness. Our thinking goes something like this: "Human beings are naturally loving, caring, committed individuals who only need to find the right kind of partner to live happily ever after."

The truth about human relationships is often (?) the opposite, however. Most (ALL) of us have been "programmed" to fail in our interpersonal relationships (SIN!!), and if we follow our automatic tendencies, we will destroy any union that matters to us.

To succeed in our relationships, therefore, we must learn to recognize and deal with the **hidden relationship-destroying patterns within us**. Not only must we know how to deal with these patterns in ourselves, but we must also know how to deal with similar patterns in other people as well."<sup>7</sup>

Unresolved conflicts= added stress

Resolved conflicts= freedom from stress

Galatians 6:2 *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

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<sup>7</sup>*The 14 Day Stress Cure*, Copyright © 1991, M.C. Orman, MD, FLP. All Rights Reserved.

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**Lesson Three**  
**Rest**

MEMORY VERSES

**Romans 14:23b**~“*For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*”

**Philippians 4:6**~“*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*”

**Matthew 11:28**~“*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*”

**I Thessalonians 4:11**~“*And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.*” Romans 14:23b *For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

The Mexican culture has a tradition. It's called a siesta.  
Our American culture scoffs at the idea of a siesta. Why?

The Bible clearly denounces laziness.

Proverbs 6:6 *Go to the ant thou sluggard...*

Proverbs 6:10,11 *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

Laziness actually (as we'll see in our next lesson) adds to stress levels.

Yet, the Bible clearly demands that we rest.

Which sinner is in a worse condition, a lazy man or a workaholic?

Notice the foundational passage for the principle of rest.

Genesis 2:1-3 *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.*

*And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*

*And **God blessed the seventh day**, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*

Notice the purpose of the Sabbath.

Exodus 31:15 *Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, **holy to the LORD**: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.*

Leviticus 23:3 *Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, **an holy convocation**; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.*

The rest principle:

1. God intends that on a regular basis we break from work to rest for physical refreshment.
2. God intends that during that rest we pause for spiritual renewal.

Just taking a day off is not a day of rest. The focus of that day of rest must be on the Lord.

Interesting note:

Leviticus 26:32-35 *And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.*

Israel chose to ignore this command of God.

2 Chronicles 36:20,21 *And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.*

We are told that the time the children of Israel were in captivity to Babylon matches the time they ignored for the land Sabbaths.

There was an old commercial that made the point clear. The point of the commercial was, "Pay me now or pay me later."

What happens to believers who disobey God's rest principle? "Pay me now or pay me later."

The emotions become strained, short temper, frustration, burn out, stagnation. Relationships suffer, marriage face difficulties, children drift away.

The body falls apart, high blood pressure sets in, heart attacks occur, stomach problems develop.

We tend to blame these problems on our busy schedules. In reality, it is simply a problem of disobedience.

Why is rest principle so important to God?

The point of rest is that we remember that God is in control. (Trust)

The point of rest is that we allow room in our lives to delight in Him. (Relationship)

Psalm 37:7 *Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.*

Psalm 37:4 *Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

After a particularly difficult time after John the Baptist had been beheaded, when Jesus faced huge pressures of ministry he said, (Mark 6:31) *Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.*

Matthew 11:28, 29 *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

How can I learn to rest in the Lord?

Learn to take moment rests.

Driving  
In the middle of projects  
Deep breathing

Learn to develop proper sleep habits.  
7-8 hours  
Early to bed, early to rise...  
What you eat determines how you sleep...

Eat a healthy diet.

Prepare for Sunday.  
Saturday night rest and family time  
Step aside from work thoughts  
Don't begin your to do list until Monday morning

Take a restful vacation  
Relatives don't necessarily equal restful  
Expensive non-budgeted trips add to the stress...

Learn to play again!

“The family that prays together stays together. The family that plays together stays together.”

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**Lesson Four**  
**Responsibility**

MEMORY VERSES

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**Philippians 4:6**~“*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*”

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**I Thessalonians 4:11**~“*And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.*”

What is responsibility?

Dependability, accountability, and productivity

The word responsibility comes from a combination of two Latin words:

Re– return

Spondere – to promise

Making a promised response is the concept behind the word responsibility

What does responsibility have to do with stress management?

Abe Lincoln – “You can’t escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.”

Procrastinators eventually fail or become stressed out.

Why do people procrastinate?

When you think of responsibility, who in the Bible do you think of that had a struggle with it?

Moses Exodus 3:1 4:1 4:10

Two admonitions regarding responsibility

1<sup>st</sup> admonition

A. Accept responsibility

“God sometimes uses a man who never had a chance, but God never uses a man who had a chance and wouldn’t take it or who could make a chance and wouldn’t do it.”

“The measure of your responsibility is the measure of your opportunity.”

“If you start off in life backing off from everything except just what you want to do and leaving undone what you don’t want to do, you will never amount to a hill of beans.”

“A man can do anything he ought to do. If you ought to do a thing, you can do it. People say to me, “I don’t think that is correct. I ought to do so and so, but I can’t.” Well, if you can’t you



ought not to. I have found that there is always a way to do the thing that I should do.”<sup>8</sup>

How to develop responsibility

- \*Develop your relationship with the Lord and rest in the Lord
- \*Develop priorities
- \*Develop a routine
- \*Develop a strategy for your projects
- \*Develop orderliness

Moses became overwhelmed with his responsibilities.  
Exodus 18:13-26

Key verse 20

## B. Delegate responsibility

Learn to say no  
Learn to let others help you

If we don't learn to delegate we'll face:

- Fatigue
- Low Morale.... Why even try
- Limited involvement and therefore burnout of the people who matter most
- Health difficulties

How to Join the Coronary Club: Membership Requirements

1. Never say No to a request -- always say YES.
2. Your job comes first; personal considerations are secondary.
3. Accept all invitations to meetings, banquets, committees, etc.
4. Go to the office evenings, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.
5. Golf, bowling and hobbies are a waste of time.
6. It is a poor policy to take all the vacation time which is provided to you.
7. Never delegate responsibility to others; carry the whole load at all times.
8. Do not eat a restful, relaxing meal -- always plan a conference for the dinner hour.
9. If your work calls for traveling -- work all day and drive all night to make your appointment for the next morning.
10. Fishing and hunting are a waste of time and money -- you never bring back enough fish or game to justify the expense.
11. Take the briefcase home on the evenings when you do not go to the office. This provides an opportunity to review completely all the troubles and worries of the day.

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<sup>8</sup> Quotations from Dr. Bob Sr. *Things I Have Learned*

**How to delegate**

1. Plan the project – Know what needs to be done  
(Let the delegate participate in the plan!!!)  
Let the dream turn into a manageable goal.
2. Enthusiastically assign responsibilities  
Match abilities with responsibilities
3. Provide training
4. Double and triple check the work.
5. Praise!

**Maxim:** A shared load reduces stress!