

# STRESS MESSED ME UP

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## I. FIVE SOURCES OF STRESS

### 1. SITUATIONAL STRESS

**Acts 18:1** After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.

**A. Stress is often shaped by the pressures of the culture.**

**Acts 18:2** There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them,

**B. Seasons of transition are typically seasons of stress.**

- What is unknown can make us unsure.

**1 Corinthians 2:3** I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling.

### 2. FINANCIAL STRESS

**Acts 18:2-3** There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them.

**A. The pressure to provide brings a stress all its own.**

**B. Both poverty and riches come with stress.**

**Proverbs 30:7-9** “Two things I ask of you, Lord; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

**C. Greed is a trap.**

**1 Timothy 6:9-10** Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

### 3. EMOTIONAL STRESS

**Acts 18:4-6** Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”

**A. Stress creates anxiety.**

**B. Stress affects our relationships.**

**C. The stress of life can have a very real effect on our emotions.**

**Psalms 6:6-7** I am worn out from my groaning. All night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears. My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes.

**Psalms 13:2** How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?

### 4. PHYSICAL STRESS

**Acts 18:7-8** Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.

**2 Corinthians 11:21-30** Whatever anyone else dares to boast about—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast about. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.

- **Stress takes its toll on our bodies.**

## 5. SPIRITUAL STRESS

- A. Spiritual opposition produces stress.**
- B. Spiritual victory produces stress.**
- C. Sometimes, more stress comes from success than from failure.**

**1 Kings 19:3-5** Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.

## II. TWO SPIRITUAL STRESS RELIEVERS

**Acts 18:9-11** One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

### 1. JESUS GIVES US PEACE

**Acts 18:9** One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid;

- A. God does not give us fear.**

**2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT)** For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

- **God gives us peace.**

**John 14:27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

- B. We must deliberately develop rhythms of rest in our lives.**

**Psalms 127:2** In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves.

**Isaiah 30:15** This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.

- **Rest is not giving in or giving up. Rest is when we give it over to the Lord.**

**C. Our confidence comes from God's presence.**

**Psalms 43:5** Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

**D. We must deliberately engage in practices of peace.**

- **Peace is often chosen, not found.**

## 2. JESUS GIVES US STRENGTH

**Acts 18:9-11** One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

**Philippians 1:6** being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

**A. God will give you the strength to do what He has called you to do.**

**Philippians 4:11-13** I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

**B. Do not give up!**

**Acts 18:11** So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

- Do not allow stress to stop what God wants to start.
- God already knows what you do not know now.

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18** Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

**C. When I am weak, then I am strong.**

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10** But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (The Message)** and then He told me, My grace is enough; it's all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness. Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become.

**Matthew 11:28-30** “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

**Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message)** Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.